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LEONARDO AND THE ARTISTIC TOPOGRAPHY OF THE RENAISSANCE

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Abstract: *The study follows the history of one of the most frequent Western iconographic types, whilst capturing a mutation in its scheme. Although the entire bibliography with regards to Leonardo is counterpiointed by the statement that The Adoration of the Magi (1481–1482) is the first modern pictural conception, no author maintains enthusiastic and admirative stance in any compelling inquiry. My study contains such an inquiry, focused upon the inovative spatial organisation of the vincian composition. My effort consists in supplementing the traditional study of art history with an inquiry into the history of culture and the history of ideas, as well as hermeneutical parentheses. Their purpose is to explain all the conditions of possibility of Leonardo's innovation (Leonardo inherits and modifies the conventional iconographic scheme, but using the tool of representation already introduced by the first generation of florentine Quattrocento), as well as the inner sense of the visual "diagram" of his composition. As I will demonstrate below, this is based on the rhetorical figure of anagogy.*

Key-words: *The Adoration of the Magi, Epiphany, Leonardo da Vinci, iconographic type, pictural space, anagogy, Quattrocento*

Rezumat: *Studiul urmărește istoria unuia dintre cele mai frecvente tipuri iconografice occidentale, surprinzând totodată o mutație decisivă în schema sa. Deși întreaga bibliografie dedicată lui Leonardo da Vinci este contrapunctată de afirmația că Adorația Magilor (1481–1482) este cea dintâi concepție picturală modernă, nici un autor nu susține o astfel de aserțiune entuziastă și admirativă printr-o anchetă convingătoare. Studiul meu conține o astfel de anchetă, concentrată asupra organizării spațiale inovative a compoziției leonardești. Efortul meu constă în completarea studiului tradițional de istoria artei cu o cercetare de istoria culturii și de istoria ideilor, precum și cu paranteze hermeneutice. Scopul acestora este de a explica atât condițiile de posibilitate ale inovației lui Leonardo (care moștenește și care modifică o schemă iconografică convențională, apelând însă la instrumente de reprezentare deja introduse de generația de renascentiști anterioară lui), cât și semnificația de adâncime a „diagramei" vizuale pe care se fondează compoziția. După cum voi demonstra mai jos, aceasta este bazată pe figura retorică a anagogiei.*

Cuvinte-cheie: *Adorația Magilor, epifanie, Leonardo da Vinci, tip iconografic, spațiu pictural, anagogie, Quattrocento*

Introduction

In 1907, Gerolamo Calvi saw Leonardo da Vinci's *Adoration...* (Fig. 1.a.-b.), "although unfinished" (*benchè incompiuta*), as a "work resumative of Leonardo's progress in his Florentine period" (Calvi 1919, 8). The statement has been recently reformulated by Carmen Bambach: "Leonardo's work as an independent painter in culminated in his

altarpiece of the *Adoration of the Magi*." (Bambach 2003, 12) Even more than "the most ambitious and complex *Birth* to have ever been created", A. Chastel sees *The Adoration of the Magi* as "the manifest of a new style" and "the manifest of [Leonardo's] mature style" (Chastel 1981.a, 427, 425; *Idem* 1981.b, 238). Equally enthusiastically are the terms used by Paul Barolsky: "it is a work of such great power and importance, of such stylistic novelty" that it acquired "the keenest attention of art historians" (Barolsky 1991, 18). David Summers confirms this evaluation, considering the work to be "the beginning of

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mature Renaissance" (Summers 1977, 342), idea further confirmed by Daniel Arasse: "With his *Adoration of the Magi*, Leonardo unveils a new style of painting." (Arasse 1998, 359) Antonio Natali has recently highlighted Leonardo's "prophetic tendency in figurative expressions" while asserting that "a decisive, if not a sudden shift" arose by this *Adoration…* resides in "the invention of drama and in the concept of the entire visual system" (Galluzzi 2006, 63, 69). Maurizio Seracini subscribes to the opinions above and asserts, with regards to the perspectival drawing preparing the *Adoration...*, that it represents, out of all the mobile work of the florentine painter, "the most eclectic moment of his creativity, both with regards to the dimension of the work, and to the number of subjects and themes it holds within". (*ibidem*, 96). Very recently, as if citing Summers, Larry Feinberg sees Leonardo's *Adoration…* as "the beginning and the synthesis of mature Renaissance" (Feinberg 2011, 129).

The exegetic refrain regarding the *Adoration…* puts forward the total originality of perspective and the revolutionary image composition; these qualities have been frequently used as arguments reinforcing the *timely modernity* of European painting, whose origins would, thus, coincide with Leonardo's work. A "radical composition" (Barolsky 2008, 20) and "an image that constitutes the radical revision of a traditional theme" (*idem* 2002, 13), this work is even "the most revolutionary and nonconformist work of the 15th century" (Clark 1967, 69). By "inventing drama and the entire concept of the visual system", Leonardo "marks a decisive, if not sudden shift" (Galluzzi 2006, 69). Manifesting a "very cunning creative capacity", Leonardo defies the "familiar theme of the Epiphany and abandons the clichés of traditional iconography and ambitions to precisely build every particular character. […] the *Adoration…* is one of the first, if not the first work to be painted in «manera moderna»." (Camerota *et al.* 2006, 7, 26; see also Galluzzi 2006, 63, 84) Still, as I have already pinpointed, beyond such unanimous praise, some nuances have proven useful; for example, they allowed researchers to acknowledge the fact that the laboratory "documents" associated with the project of the *Adoration…* belong to a (larger or narrower)

cultural and artistic context whose pressures or influences ought to be investigated; more precisely, "most of these drawings highlight the perseverence of Tuscan tradition" (Ames 2000, 163). Leonardo either assimilates or gets assimilated by this tradition, which integrates his contribution in a larger evolutionary, moving landscape.

Leonardo and the representational tradition

The Contribution of High Renaissance (Ucello and Leonardo)

My analysis opens with an attempt to locate Leonardo within a slowly evolving and largely spreaded phenomenon (manifested through multiple fields of knowledge), resulting in the overcoming of medieval gnoseology (through the endeavour of solving its pitfalls and uncertainties). There are four important aspects I shall, for now, shortly focus upon: a) da Vinci seizes a conception of nature deeply rooted in the Middle Ages; b) he also seizes the technical "apparatus" translating the visible reality into pictural representation that was intensly practiced in the *Quattrocento* laboratory period; c) the Leonardesque shift takes place on the vertical axis, within the deepest stratum of the representational apparatus; d) da Vinci's art is particularly modern due to its author's attitude towards tradition, reality, knowledge and imaginary (imaginary that, for him, is free of any religious doctrine or of any pictural convention).

The construction of space in the *Adoration of the Magi* represents a speaking example of the maturing renascent art, in this case, developing itsels through the synthesis of a geometrical concept of the spatial *substratum* and an adequte plastic realisation of it. The intuition regarding the cantitative dimension of space and, more precisely, regarding the consequences of it being populated with objects or bodies may be identified, in the European visual arts, in as early as the 14th century (and, of course, the first half of the 15th century). There are multiple solutions and strategies – of different degrees of sysematicity[1] – that test this conscience that

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[1] Some examples of such strategies belonging to the *Trecento* (and valid for the *Quattrocento*, but

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acknowledges the existence of a (universal) spatial *substratum*. Starting with Duccio and with the Italian artists influenced by Giotto, the spatial substratum can no longer be ignored within pictural construction. However, the attempt to give it, in the bidimensional plain of image, the qualities it displays in the immediate world (according to the rules of geometry) is, at the time of Giotto – and even at a relatively later time, in the *Quattrocento* –, premature and only intuitively executed. John White shows that merely Ucello – whose name is a "synonym of the new science" (White 1987, 202) – and, with specific virtues, Leonardo manage to acquire the (relative) coherence and correctitude of spatial construction. Their success is a consequence of their sustained effort to convert natural perspective into art, to transfer objective appearances of the real world onto the pictural surface with the aid of synthetic perspective and, by the end of the *Quattrocento*, their effort to organize and frame a visual repertoire capable of translating subjectivity into figurative structures. Both artists belong, with their assumed limits and biases, at the intersection between two different moments of the very same revolution – (also) manifested within painting. This revolution covered the way in which reality was known, the way such knowledge was formalised and, especially, the way it was applied to the more particular field of pictural representation. They both achieve a victory over space by converting the natural laws of physics into the geometrical laws of (pictural) representation. The *nature* is, with them, plastically restored as *art*, with the help of a theoretical and technical apparatus ever more accurate (an apparatus which according to acclaimed scholars – White 1987; Kemp 1977 – refines the perspectival tools already familiar, in the first half of the *Quattrocento*, to the generation of Alberti, Brunelleschi, della Francesca).

The inherited representational tradition

However, this conquesst of space in the painting of the *Quattrocento* is preceded by a similar achievement, having taken place in the field of the *quadrivium* (in branches of mathematics such as geometry and optics, with which Leonardo was somewhat accustomed to). Such disciplines, although still chained to a certain epistemological tradition, acquire, by the end of the Middle Ages, some results relevant to the visual arts too. The fact that Leonardo's compulsory mathematical skills are emphatically evoked by the critical and theoretical discourse is the symptom of an overlap not seen before (with isolated and void of consequences exceptions), between the principles of reason and the modes of sensibility and artistic representation. Such modes are now adjoined in order to define a new visual *gestalt* which an epistemology scholar like Thomas Kuhn considers the necessary principle of any paradigmatical mutation, of any scientific revolution (Kuhn 2008, 176)[2]. Before being welcome among the representational arts, architecture had already been confronted, by action of circumstances, with the rigors of mathematical sciences. Therefore it is by no means fortuitous that the genesis of the artistic phenomena fo the Renaissance must be sought (also) in the field of architectural achievements of the 12–14th centuries (Toman 2008, 12, 15) (achievements that, in their turn, obtained through a complicated causality chains, located at an even bigger depth of cultural revelations, scientific achievements, mentalities, habits, reflexes and cultural necessities of the European medieval civilisation).

There are two examples selected from different (even divergent) areas of the medieval epistemological spectre that test the anterior existence of a coherent concept and of some incipient elements for a theory of space even before the West knew Renaissance. On one hand, I must mention the definitions and thomistic speculations regarding the fundamental categories; speculations founded,

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not for the *Duecento*) are: the space-narrative continuum; the "transparent plan" that allows the "permeation" of image; the usage of spatial "operators"; the skilled application of the so-called "bifocal method"; the recession of bodies' laterals; the projection of multiple overlapsed field; the sugestion of volume achieved through "oblique constructions".

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[2] The theory cited and used by Thomas Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) belongs to epistemologist and science historian Nerwood Russel Hanson and is discussed in *Patterns of Discovery*, Cambridge U.P., 1958, pp. 93-105.

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in most parts, on the Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics* (d'Aquino 2009, 464-465, 470-471). On the other hand, an emblematic case for the medieval (empirically oriented) science – which, although not dirrectly used by Leonardo in his projects, does, however, foreruns them – is the one of the Oxonian Roger Bacon (1214–1294). He emphatically demanded the renovation of the imagistic system of Catholic homilies and advocated for an empirical approach to knowledge. From this particular stance, although driven by different aims and values, he is an illustrious predecessor of Leonardo; "the implementation of Bacon's proposal had extraordinary consequences for the history of Western art in the postclassical period. The Reformation benefited of a rebirth of objective means of evaluating the intrinsic «rightousness» of a painting." (Toman 2008, 51) According the conclusion Émil Charles draws in their study, "Bacon had almost every idea that would later bloom in the Renaissance." (Charles 1861, XII)

Therefore, it must be once more highlighted that the fact that the realisation of Quattrocentist artists is not the descovery and organisation of a science of space, but the adjustment of pictural representation to the exigencies of physics, geometry and optics. Such an adjustment takes places in the framework of a larger phenomenon of de-sectoralisation of sciences and of formulating ambitious, yet not systematic, projects that aimed at interweaving disciplines of knowledge. Thus, the geometrical projection of space in the *Adoration of the Magi* belongs to a slow phenomenon of unraveling the knowledge of the world into a systematic structure of it; a phenomenon that had started right at the core of the byzantine Middle Ages and at the end of the Western one and that had manifested (with certain "underground" continuities that dig deep to ancient sciences), with some delays and specificities, even within representational arts. One of the consequences of such an evolution consists in art evolving to self-consciousness (as well as, on a socio-cultural layer, in the cristalisation of an artistic working branch). Thus, Leonardo disposes elements of the ontology of space inherited from Aristotle's *Physics* and present in the (quasi)scientific research of empiricists and nominalists and even in the scholastic

speculative science – for example, in Toma d'Aquino's theology (that otherwise excells in desconsidering the legitimacy of means like induction, experience or experiment). Da Vinci gets to know such elements first through empirical instruction and experience and only afterwards through reading and theoretical formulas. Such ideas, although familiar to the scientific reasoninf of medieval theological speculation (and even familiar, in the later *Quattrocento*, to one the likes of Brunelleschi, Alberti, Ghiberti, della Francesca, Ucello) received a decisive impulse at the dawn of the Renaissance, through the restoration of Greek-Roman patrimony. According to the structuralist psychological approach of Pierre Francastel, a distinction between *perception* and *representation* is mandatory, as it helps separate the building phases of notion and conception of space. Florentines distinguish themselves, in this history of pictural representation, through overcoming an intuitive approach, by virtue of acknowledging the strong epistemologic sense of euclidian coordinates. In other words, the contribution of the italian artists in Renaissance (excelling in the mid 1400^s) consists in the shift from (immediate) objects and qualities to (mental) categories (Francastel 1972.a, 180-215).

Continuity and innovation

Thus, there is no mistake in seeing the *Adoration…* as a visual synthesis that Leonardo does to a theory of space which must not be considered novel or original in 1481.[3] However, despite (or, perhaps,

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[3] This is why, along with other specialists, Martin Kemp explicitly polemics with the hazardous overestimations of Leonardo's scientific originality, demonstrating the Renaissance-Florentine and medieval genealogy of his solutions to the problem of perspective in painting: "Certainly Leonardo begins by taking the system advocated in *Della pittura* literally, adopting Alberti's pyramid and its apex as definitive facts." (Kemp 1977, 130; see also Bambach 2003, 8]. J. V. Field's survey of the relationship between art and mathematics in the Renaissance also provides very useful information: a) already at the end of the 13th century, "such mathematical tools were recognised as valuable in a wide range of situations" (Field 1999, 14), which led to their systematisation, after the Arab model, in *Liber abbaci* [1202]); b) the mutation produced in the 15th century does not primarily concern painting, but involves the

precisely by virtue of) being part of a continuity, there are remarkable, in Leonardo's *Adoration…*, a) the visual application of the Renaissance theory of pictorial space (with fruitful skepticism, for example, towards Alberti's technical prescriptions) and b) the new artistic attitude to the issue of sacred representation, *i.e.* the appearance of modern means of knowledge.

a) The visual realisation of a coherent theory of space resides in the perspectival construction, whose lines network remained visible on the preparatory drawings of the work. Da Vinci was interested in matching the image to the actual behaviour of the objects represented in space and, perhaps above all, in practising a geometrically based representational practice.

b) With regard to his attitude towards sacred representations, we should note the attempt (unfamiliar to the Middle Ages) to transpose the mythos into the (discursive and figurative) structures of reason, passing not through its speculative mechanism (a specifically scholastic gesture), but through the filter of a science based on analysis, calculation and experience. (In Hegelian language, Leonardo assumed not *speculative* reason, but *analytical* reason.) This incipient secular principle (which Leonardo shares, in the second half of the 15th century, with other Renaissance artists) is one of the early symptoms of Western Modernity (all the more obvious because it cannot be identified, for example, in contemporary Byzantine iconography, for example in Rubliov's).

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autonomisation of drawing / preparatory study in architectural practice; c) "...correct perspective did not disappear with Antiquity and did not begin only after Brunelleschi made his discovery (whatever it entailed) in or shortly after 1413. There are several examples from the 14th century of a certain perspective that seems to be entirely correct." (*ibidem*, 37); d) the research of della Francesca – "the only artist of the *Quattrocento* truly knowledgeable about mathematics" (*ibidem*, 61) – and his works (especially *De Prospectiva Pingendi* and *Libellus de Quinque Corporibus Regularibus*, later exploited fertilly by Luca Pacioli) are of great theoretical (and also practical) importance; they offer multiple solutions for approaching , in the field of pictorial representation, the laws and elements involved by *disegno*, *commensuratio*, plane figures, prismatic bodies, irregular shapes.

c) The gnoseology of this new age of European culture – whose first representatives include, at least symbolically, Leonardo da Vinci – is based on several elements, constantly invoked and exploited in his scientific concerns, the most important of which are the assumption of the mathematical foundations of science, the discipline of experience and the process of induction. All of them had already been formulated and promoted, since the Middle Ages, as alternatives to philosophical speculation and "speculative mysticism" (Gilson 1995, 639-652), which, in contrast, are based on the theory of transcendentals, deduction and contemplative exercise, and are proper to scholastic philosophy and theology (Cazaban 2005), respectively to Ficinian (Florentine) Neoplatonism; Leonardo had explicit doubts about them (opting for a model that combined theory with practice, no less reluctant to the deductive, theoretical, Aristotelian type of science, intensely promoted in the scholastic gnoseological paradigm)[4]. In this sense, we can say that – despite his theoretical shortcomings or his scientific dilettantism, impartially and at the same time decomplexly tested and commented upon, in recent decades,

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[4] On one hand, the distance that separates Leonardo's scientific conception from the doctrine of Florentine Neoplatonism is also proven by the fact that mathematics are considered superior in the hierarchy of disciplines (as advocated by Leonardo), as opposed to the metaphysically based (and essentially contemplative) gnoseology promoted at Villa Careggi; Kenneth Clark's proposes an illustrative cutout: "*Non mi legga chi non è matematico nelli mia principi.*" (Leonardo), "*Mathematicæ non sunt veræ scientiæ.*" (Picco della Mirandola) (Clark 1967, 78; see also Chastel 1981.b, 208, 230 [*infra* 11]). On the other hand, Leonardo "shares common points with certain scholastics of a scientific tendency" (*idem* 2002, 44) (such as Pierre de Maricourt [*i.e.* Petrus Peregrinus] or Roger Bacon), with whom he shares an anti-Aristotelianism (of course, opposed to the scholastic spirit, which took the Philosopher as role model), defined by attachment to calculation, experience, experiment and induction. The artist's manuscripts insist on the eminent value of experience in the gnoseological order (and his experiences and experiments – in engineering or medicine, architecture or astronomy – can only be understood within the horizon of this central gnoseological and epistemological category).

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by Western exegesis[5] – Leonardo is one of the first European artists to break away from medieval gnoseological modalities (a clivage that had already been made, albeit without decisive effects, in certain European areas, by the proto-modern physicists of the 13th and 14th centuries, for whom the figure of Roger Bacon remains emblematic).

Leonardo's projection of space: propaedeutics to a visual exegesis

Leonardo's art as a science of quality

The Adoration of the Magi involves two types of spatiality (or two qualitatively different dimensions of space), both explicitly depicted, the first in the preparatory plates (Fig. 2, 3), the second in the quasi-final panel of the work (Fig. 1). Geometric ("ideal") space represents the necessary substratum of all existence, while "real" (visible) space represents the place that hosts the pictorially represented history. The study preserved in the Cabinet of Drawings and Prints of the Uffizi Gallery (under inventory 436 [Fig. 3]) is the obligatory support for this analysis: Leonardo "set" the spatial coordinates of his work starting with the abstract, "theoretical", geometric dimension of space, and ending with the populating of this continuum with real "objects" according to the rules of perspective. This "lucidly simple geometric scheme" is thus designed "in order to understand the positions of the bodies" (Turner 1994, 26, 27).

In this case, Leonardo's originality does not lie in his firm awareness of the geometric autonomy of space (the premises of which had already been formulated, as we have said, by medieval reflection); moreover, the perspectival network (already used in the first

half of the 15th century as a tool for constructing the pictorial image) cannot be seen as a novel element in 1481. Despite some critics over-emphasizing on the modern nature of the preparatory sketch for the *Adoration…*, it must be accepted that it does not figure a spatiality (or an abstract "field") in its pure and neutral geometric existence (in the possible research interest on nature or the qualities of spatiality as a fundamental physical dimension of the universe, as a mathematical noethical topos or as an ontological and mathematical precondition of perspective)[6]. What is "modern" (without being original) in this work by Leonardo – participating, in this respect, in the adventure that began in Florence with the experiments and reflections of Brunelleschi, Alberti, della Francesca, Ucello – is the gesture of geometric foundation of the visual work and its plastic concretisation: more precisely, the methodical transfer of theoretical information and a geometric "tool" from the *quadrivium* sciences to an art (understood in the pre-modern sense of craft) still, at 1480, on the margins of the scientific spectrum or the established artistic system. The intermediary was the preparatory drawing; and it may be reasonable to suppose that one of Leonardo's innovations was the "anastatic" use of the sketch, its translation and transposition (by resizing) onto the final panel, in order to recover the dynamism that painting can inevitably suggest only in measures inferior to ones of drawing. Basically, the artist builds, in the preparatory drawing, an elementary perspectival "tool", an abstract "web" of recession lines, with the help of which he aims to define an isotropic pictorial space and to correctly transpose three-dimensional natural objects and phenomena onto the two-dimensional plane. When the "technical" operation is successfully completed, the artistic experience begins, within the parameters of which forms receive

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[5] Chastel's observation (unfortunately not sufficiently considered) on the fair assessment Leonardo's scientific research is eloquent: "The contribution of his inventions, the soundness of his calculations have been exaggerated. (...) Many of the statements which served to establish a scientific doctrine of Leonardo are passages copied from medieval or contemporary treatises, to which he addresses himself passionately, and they represent rather a problem he raises than a statement he makes." (*ibidem*, 18, 20). "Extremely curious as he was, he was never, however, a scholar in the modern sense ..." (Feinberg 2011, 41, 43; see also Arasse 1998, 62)

[6] Such an abstract projection of spatiality (represented in its pure geometric structure), in order to prepare a correct practice of perspective, common in the Renaissance, was made, a century after Leonardo, by Baruzzi da Vignola, in *Le due regole della prospettiva pratica* (1583), a volume edited and commented by Egnazio Danti, where (on p. 93) he reproduces "Tommaso Laureti's rule for composing a history of figures" (Camerota *et al.* 2006, 163; see also Fig. 4.a.).

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meaning and structure becomes dynamic; the science of quantity becomes the science of quality (which is, for Leonardo, according to an expression recovered from manuscripts, "the beauty of nature's works and the adornment of the world" (da Vinci 1971, 17).

Leonardo and the Florentine workshop culture

The preconditions of this new workshop "protocol" must be sought in the epistemological platform that underpins it and in its ontological premises.[7] Leonardo can be understood only to the extent of its integration into a specific cultural context and artistic tradition, context and tradition that are currently known and are, therefore, explainable. Most essential are (in the order of the gnoseological "reflexes" of a painter with an improvised, non-humanist, self-taught intellectual training)[8] the discipline of induction and the canon of experience,[9] cultivated in Verrocchio's "polytechnic" *bottega* (Arasse 1997, 48), where theoretical or speculative exercise is replaced by the set of strategies, tools and conventions specific to the "studio culture" of the 15th century (one of which products is Leonardo himself). Vasari is the first to draw attention to Verrocchio's graceful drawings ("*con bell'arie*"), constantly imitated by his young apprentice Leonardo. As early as 1919, G. Calvi emphasised the relationship of *derivation* and *contact* between the Leonardo's *Adoration…* and Florentine

painting (Calvi 1919, 9-10). Chastel develops this thesis: "... Leonardo's effort belongs to another order of concern, that of the Florentine workshops." (Chastel 2002, 20; see also *ibidem*, 73); moreover, "Leonardo's 'modernity' is entirely derived from Verrocchio", in whose workshop he had apprenticed, because here "interest was given particularly to the scientific foundations of art, that is, to the regrouping of activities close to the liberal arts" (*idem* 1981.b, 198, 206, 229 [*infra* 4]). The insistence on the intellectual and artistic genealogy of Leonardo becomes even more fruitful through scholars who, more recently, have investigated the defining habits of this *Quattrocento* studio culture and Leonardo's relationship to them (revealing the science of drawing and visual culture he acquired from his Florentine master, in the milieu of those who frequented his *bottega*: D. Ghirlandaio, P. Perugino, L. di Credi, S. Botticelli). Antonio Natali's assessment is unequivocal from this point of view: "... in his own unique way, Leonardo only elaborated the notions he learned in Verrocchio's workshop" (Galluzzi 2006, 69; see also Clark 1967, 26; Arasse 1997, 48; Bambach 1999, 82-83; *eadem* 2003, 8).

"The Adoration…" and a synthesis of theory and practice

Even the apparent contradiction, resulting from the painter's insistent affirmation of his mathematical competence[10] simultaneously with the celebration of the virtues of experience (both of which can be found in Leonardo's manuscripts), is resolved in the perspective of this specific society of knowledge, whose idiosyncrasies, habits and limits he assimilates. In Leonardo's autograph "the body formed by the laws of perspective by Leonardo, disciple of experience" (da Vinci 1956, 989; see also Cremante 2005, 364) one can see precisely this intellectual synthesis, symptomatic for Leonardo's *scientia*, situated

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[7] "Leonardo's empirical model of knowledge, is linked to his ontological convictions, to his conception of the world as a unitary whole, consistently organized from a 'cosmic' point of view, which is governed by 'necessity'." (Białostocki 1977, 35)

[8] "Leonardo is therefore founded on a *scientia* that is not – that no longer is – a theoretical knowledge, founded on nomenclature or memory." (Chastel 2002, 71-72; see also Taton 1971, 35; Białostocki 1977, 31)

[9] "... Experience, without which nothing can be proved certain"; "I find vain and full of errors those sciences which are not derived from experience, this mother of all certainty, as well as those which do not find their end in well-earned experience" (da Vinci 1971, 11); on tab 191r. of the *Codice Atlantico*, above a sinusoidal cylindrical shape, the artist noted (self-definitory on the epistemological scale): "Body formed by the laws of perspective by Leonardo Vinci, disciple of experience." (Cremante 2005, 364; da Vinci 1956, 989)

[10] "No human research can be called true science unless it has been passed through the proof of mathematics." (da Vinci 1971, 11) This statement continues the one made a few decades earlier by Alberti: "... mathematics, the spring from which nature gives birth to painting, this beautiful and so noble art. (...) I like the painter to be taught all the liberal arts, but above all I want him to know geometry." (Alberti 1969, 7, 67)

between law and experience, and therefore between concept and art. Understanding the higher stakes of the epistemological gesture that roots painting in mathematics (a gesture from which one can consecutively deduce the liberal status of representational arts and the reconsidered position occupied by the painter in the social-intellectual hierarchy), Leonardo complements it (without elaborating, in this sense, any integrating theoretical framework, therefore without a precise scientific doctrine)[11] with the gnoseological requirement of experience, compulsory for a connoisseur of nature's most intimate structures. The *giudizio dell'ochio* – an exercise both cerebral and manual (Bambach 1999, 86, 130) – is achieved, in his case, by the *ostinate rigore* of knowledge and imitation of this indisputable model that is nature, in accordance with the laws that govern it and according to the corresponding demands of the (now mathematically founded) science of painting; experience and mathematical calculation are the two obligatory landmarks of this double task that the artist carries with him, in Leonardo's vision. There is no lack of significance in the fact that da Vinci, in his effort to refine the apparatus for producing a pictorial correlative for the sensibly perceived image, has taken an interest in the physical phenomenon of optics[12]. In the same sense, the continuation of his Florentine predecessors' concern for perspective is eloquent; it is achieved through a personal investigation (which advances into complicated areas of geometry, as evidenced by the drawings in Luca Pacioli's treatise on *divine proportion*), as well as through recourse to authorities on geometry, optics and physics, from Antiquity (Euclid in particular) and the Middle Ages (Alhazen, Peckham, R. Bacon, Vitelius)[13].

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[11] "Numerous commentators who have sought to reconstruct Leonardo's epistemological approach have shown beforehand what is contained in the concept (thus valorized) of *verità*: it is both the appeal to mathematics (*C.A.* 190 v˚b), *i.e.* to strict reasoning, and the appeal to *esperienza*, *i.e.* to observation. This approach, in which the two principles are juxtaposed rather than compounded, can be regarded as pre-scientific." (Chastel 2002, 45; see also Bambach 1999, 130)

[12] Geometry and optics, in particular, are the disciplines that provided Leonardo with the theoretical (and, after 1490, experimental) foundations of this *scientia*-based pictorial practice (already intensely practised, especially on Albertian and Brunelleschian theoretical foundations, in the 15th century studio culture I mentioned above). Leonardo's manuscripts are evidence not only of his energetic preoccupation but also of his knowledge of optics and perspective. Among the aspects analysed or invoked by the painter in his reflections or in his researches on the science of perspective or optics, we can mention: the functioning of the human optical apparatus, the mathematical definition of perspective, the quantitative transformations of geometric perspective, the consequences of chromatic perspective in the artistic order, the changes generated by aerial perspective, *etc.* (da Vinci 1956, 207-261, 986-1004; *idem* 1971, 17, 32, 35, 37, 191, 231, 239-240; White 1987; Field 1999, 14).

[13] A study devoted to the history of optics in the Western Middle Ages would coincide with a study of the genesis of Renaissance culture: "The transformations of the paradigms of optics are scientific revolutions, and the successive transition from one paradigm to another by revolution is the usual pattern of development of mature science. (...)", since "the familiar demonstrations of the change of the visual *gestalt* prove so suggestive as elementary prototypes of these transformations of the scientist's world" (Kuhn 2008, 74, 176). Some scholars of the second half of the last century – and, following in their footsteps, some contemporary Western scholars – focusing on Leonardo's intellectual genesis (M. Kemp, D. Arasse, J. M. Greenstein, F. Frosini, *etc.*) have highlighted the consequences, in terms of pictorial execution, of Leonardo's contact with ancient and medieval scientific treatises present in his library. Among the authors familiar to the painter (after 1490) were Euclid, Archimedes, Vitruvius, Pliny, Alhazen, Albert of Saxony, Walter Burley, Mondinus de Leucis, John Peckham. Leonardo's synthesis in this direction (including its limitations and errors) is, however, more than a neutral recapitulation of earlier acquisitions. With him, pictorial perspective is clarified – certainly after 1490 (Kemp 1977, 137) – theoretically and practically, thanks to a complex research, which includes an interest in the geometry of individual bodies, the effort to conquer a unity of space that embraces them, the investigation of the relationship between geometric forms and human or animal bodies, the realization of the difference between the painters' perspective (*artificialis*) and the natural perspective (*communis*), discovering the phenomena of curvilinear distortion specific to natural perspective (based on the spherical shape of the eyeball and peripheral vision) and, hence,

However, as far as Leonardo's work is concerned, it is the result of an intellectual and artistic effort lasting several decades, which in the *Adoration of the Magi* has only just begun; it will culminate in the mature works. A detail remains relevant (a detail otherwise lost in the very dense mass of information and analysis) that we find both in a study by John White (1957) (recently confirmed by Filippo Camerota) and in one by Martin Kemp (1977), both of which focus on the science of Leonardo's perspective: White dates the first theoretical concerns with optics and geometry to around 1492 (based on the unanimously accepted dating of *Ms. A*) (White 1987, 208; see also Camerota *et al.* 2006, 115, 116-117; Bambach 1999, 128), and Kemp evokes a drawing showing the closure of the visual pyramid in an indivisible point inside the eye (see Alberti 1969, 15), which can be found in the *Codice Atlantico*, thus datable to 1483-1485 (Kemp 1977, 129; see also *ibidem*, 132). *The Adoration of the Magi* is abandoned at least a year earlier, *i.e.* before the painter's stay in Milan (at the court of Ludovico Sforza), which begins in 1482; F. Camerota's observation in this respect is conclusive: "In Milan he began to study intensily Euclid and Archimedes, the philosophers of perspective." (Camerota *et al.* 2006, 118)

The bifocal method

Consequently, the method that Leonardo knew and (successfully) practiced in 1481's Florence – therefore prior to his systematic perspectival preoccupations – when he was preparing, in an initial sketch, the construction of the *Adoration…* scene, is the one learned in Verrocchio's workshop.[14] The Albertian "window" and the visual pyramid – "the secret of pyramidal composition, which was to become an academic dogma in the early Renaissance" (Clark 1967, 54) – are some *rudimental* optics that the young painter practised in order to construct a coherent image. He would use, as to serve this purpose, a network of recessive lines generated (according to Filippo Camerota's recent demonstration – Camerota *et al.* 2006, 114) by the conventional bifocal method of pavement perspective. A comparison of Fig. 4.a.-4.c. and 5.a.-5.c. is instructive in this respect. From the "family" of tools derived from *velum* / *velo* (Alberti) or *rette* / *telaro* (Leonardo), this network of orthogonals and parallels, to which the painter attributes an auxiliary role, is part of a strategy that was in great demand in Florentine art for two centuries, decisive in overcoming the medieval eon,[15] in a constant effort to deepen the study of proportions and perspective. Carmen Bambach sums up this development in an enlightening way: "... the network of squares shares a noble history with the study of proportion and perspective (...). The network of proportional squares was part of the process of constructing a perspectival space." (Bambach 1999, 130-131; see also *ibidem*, 224); in turn, Keneth Clark concludes, "Clearly, it is no more than an exercise in formal perspective, common in Florence after Brunelleschi." (Clark 1967, 63)

This fact, however, does not diminish its importance for the investigation of Leonardo's work, its stages of evolution and its cultural and artistic context.[16] This "close-meshed

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correcting the perspective constructed by visual art ("*fatta dall' arte*"), by intersecting the visual pyramid not – in an albertian sense – with a straight surface (which diminishes the objects or their sides equally), but with a circular surface, which generates a correct rate of diminution (uniform but unequal, dependent on the visual angle, not on the distance from the perceptive organ), corresponding to the natural laws governing the human sight.

[14] In the credible bibliography, praise for this drawing is subject to the proviso that it exercises methods extracted from the Florentine artistic context. For D. Arasse, the drawing "seems to be a demonstration of linear perspective, as impeccable as it is brilliant" (Arasse 1998, 297]); Gigetta D. Regoli appreciates that, in it, "the artist has adopted

with great skill the methods used in workshops concerning «legitimate construction»" (Galluzzi 2006, 90).

[15] "These people ended the Middle Ages when they established the principle of spatial organization based on size." (Francastel 1972.a, 211)

[16] The reason this study is so important lies in its documentary qualities, relevant in the understanding of the theoretical foundations behind Florentine pictorial practice in the *Quattrocento* and for capturing the moments of Leonardo's intellectual evolution, both as a researcher and as a painter. ("It is, in fact, the first testimony we have of Leonardo's scientific spirit." [Clark 1967, 63]) In this regard, no one could deny the fascinating nature of this document, equal to the one of any sketch or drawing (however pragmatic the purpose of their elaboration) from Leonardo's laboratory.

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perspective grid" (Camerota *et al*. 2006, 7) is obtained by sectioning the terrestrial line into 12 equal parts, each in turn fragmented into 9 other segments. Using a focal point located slightly eccentric in the pictorial plane, the artist projected 55 recessive units corresponding to the 12 horizontal sections, thus generating the depth of the image (Fig. 5.a.-c.). The modular grid serves, as such, a pictorial verisimilitude of reality, *i.e.* a high degree of control (though not void of hesitation)[17] over the pictorial space. He initially built the hosting space for his *historia* and conceived it not as a neutral container, but as a function of the future pictorial objects (architecture, vegetation, animal and human characters).

The fascination they produce resides, in this case, to their unexpected visual beauty (especially surprising in the sketches of natural studies). K. Clark believes that Leonardo united two Florentine pictorial directions of the *Quattrocento* – the grace and linear fantasy of L. Monaco, F. Lippi, S. Botticelli, and the scientific naturalism of Masaccio or Verrocchio – (*ibidem*, 50), "by nature", belonging to the stylistic "family" of the former, but by "his training, as well as his vigour of spirit", attaching himself to the "professional family" (Feinberg 2011, 29) of the latter; personally, I think that this synthesis is brilliantly illustrated in his drawings or sketches, which is precisely what explains the (eminently aesthetic) fascination they produce. (In fact, as a confirmation of his ideas, Clark himself speaks of "a great composition in which the genius of rapid notation will for the first time be controlled by its speculative intelligence: the *Adoration of the Magi*." [Clark 1967, 57]) It should not be ignored, on the other hand, that this fascination produced by the sketches and drawings of Leonardo may have extra-aesthetic causes, the most plausible being their impressive authorship, their belonging to a corpus of monumental documents, by virtue of the (genial-romantic) mythology that has adorned their author (understood, described, evaluated, celebrated, since the mid-nineteenth century, in the exalted terms of exceptionality [Turner 1994]). This is, I believe, one of the reasons for Arasse's impulse to praise "the admirable perspectival study for the *Adoration of the Magi*" (Arasse 1998, 297).
[17] Although fascinated by the "aura" of this Leonardesque document (see previous note), Arasse is nevertheless the only critic to correctly point out inaccuracies in the perspectival grid (see the pillar on the left, incoherent with the whole design of the space) (*loc. cit.*).

"Perspective as a symbolic form"

However, the stakes may be even more subtle. Specific to the spatial projection of this work is the avoidance of the Albertian recommendation concerning the central location of the vanishing point (which implies the intersection of the central axis and the line of the horizon) and its positioning according to the rule of the *golden ratio* (therefore on the 8th segment of the terrestrial line). Such rule was known to Leonardo even from the *scuole d'abaco* and very probably present in the repertoire of notions and geometric instruments of the Florentine workshops (Galluzzi 2006, 91); or, certainly, familiar to his contemporary artists. A coherent proof of this is the fact that Fra Luca Pacioli dedicated a work to him in 1498 (published in 1509), illustrated by Leonardo himself, as attested by Pacioli's dedication on the copy given to Lodovico Sforza: "*Leonardo da Venci hauedo gia con tutta diligetia al degno libro de pictura e movimenti humani posto fine.*" (da Vinci 1883.a, 167, 134) Consequently, this work would be based on a superior synthesis, which goes beyond the Albertian one, already traditional in 1482, between *reason* and *image*, a synthesis which consists in combining their product – the visual system – with an intellectual "object"; this is, as I will show below, the meaning that *historia* obtained through exegesis. Without allowing myself an excursion into a complex (and yet related) problem here, I will limit myself to integrating Camerota's appreciation into my analytical approach by pointing out the following fact (which may serve as a conclusion to the present sub-chapter): the artist's gesture of going beyond elementary (or, at least, common) strategies of space construction, and his appeal to complex solutions (such as the *divine proportion*) encourage a reading of the *Adoration...* more profound than the one – limited to the problems of plastic language – presupposed by the technical analysis above.[18]

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[18] Describing the *Adoration...* as a reverie comparable in its mystery to Giorgione's *Tempest* (1508), K. Clark points out that "the work is conceived in a spirit that deliberately evades mere descriptive representation" (Clark 1967, 76). A rapprochement between the two artists has also recently been made by Anne Barriault (Barriault 2010).

This reading is also encouraged by other clues: I will demonstrate, in a future study devoted to this work, the painter's attempt to update (geographically) and present (temporally) the prototypical moment of adoration, using Florentine urban "quotations" that are well known to the recipients of his image; one of these is the carriage in Piazza della Signoria, represented in all the works of the period, or the pavement carriage used by all the illustrators of the ideal city or of the scenes recommended for theatrical scenery (see Fig. 3, 5.c., 6.a.-f.), a cartouche prepared, in Leonardo's perspective drawing, by the network of orthogonals and parallels painstakingly practised. Such a reading – which I propose below –, whose ambition is to go beyond the immediately perceptible level of the image, will attempt to investigate, at successive levels of depth, this work, with the (justified) prospect of obtaining a comprehensive and legitimate interpretative model.

Preliminary conclusion

Spatiality, as a dimension of pictorial construction and also as a necessary category of (visual) perception, has provided me with useful insights into Leonardo's science of drawing and painting. The geometric parameters of spatial projection are speculated by the painter in the interest of elaborating an unfolding "horizon" for a *historia* (under conditions and with purposes that remain to be analysed); in other words, spatiality (as a plastic, visual category, as a subject of mathematical reflection or as the physical substratum of existence) has, in the representational field of art, specific qualities and functions, speculated by the artist in order to satisfy those demands imposed on him by the subject of the work, the devotional purpose of the image, the tradition of the iconographic type, the expectations of the commissioner, the ambitions and limits of art, his own vision of the work in progress; "it is therefore very important to study the Plastic Form in terms of space" (Francastel 1972.a, 180). As such, the present research will be developed by deepening the analysis dedicated to the spatial dimension, a dimension which, however, with the highlighting of the painter's *symbolic intentions*, ceases to be an abstract dimension with strictly geometric qualities, to become a

field or *horizon* with narrative and metanarrative functions. The *eloquence* of space in this work is of extraordinary significance, involving information that can make the image more "permeable" (than it is in its immediate and inert appearance), both to aesthetic gaze and contemplation, and to in-depth analysis and interpretation. This is why I find it appropriate, here, to see *space* not as the rigorous object of technical analysis, but rather as an interpretative platform, a veritable "window" into the interiority of the work (as all the critics – from Luca Giordano to Daniel Arasse or Michel Foucault – who have interpreted Diego Velászquez's *Meninas* through a similar strategy will have considered, for example). The topography of the visible manifests the structure of the idea, and deducing the latter is the aim of any visual exegesis, this one included. This inference will make the next section of the study.

Dialectics of plans

Florentine practice of perspective scaling

An essential document for this exegesis is the first preparatory drawing of the *Adoration...* (Fig. 3). It contains the perspectival project of an architectural framework that would move into secondary plane, in the final version of the work.[19] The meaning and symbolism of this architectural framework need to be elucidated. The meaning of the multiple spatial compartments must also be investigated; the dynamics of the work stem from the juxtaposition of these thematic ensembles, which could provide the key to an appropriate reading. D. Arasse had already noted (Arasse 1997, 356) that, unlike the preparatory studies, in the final panel, perspective is no longer an agent of uniformity, and the two planes are not spatially convergent; the perspectival project of the preparatory drawing at the Uffizi is

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[19] I wonder, therefore, if it is not possible that this preparatory sketch represents the preliminary stage of another work (not unrelated to the theme of the Magi's journey, but illustrating another moment of it), whose architectural "landscape" has been transferred, together with its symbolism and meanings, to the unfinished *Adoration of the Magi* of 1481. Without precise information on the dating criteria and the exact chronology (in relation to the dating of the manuscripts) of this sketch, although plausible (and benefiting from some clues), my suggestion remains hardly verifiable.

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illustrative, not preparatory, and therefore can not subject the foreground of the final panel to its laws. However, it does subject to said laws the secondary plane, where the architectural framework is located (for the elaboration of which, moreover, the network of orthogonals and parallels discussed above had been created). The option for layering the work on two planes, remains, however, significant; "such a complex and unusual visual composition" (Galluzzi 2006, 69) cannot be indifferent or gratuitous; on the contrary, it communicates useful information for the effort to deduce an overall meaning of the work. Therefore, I hasten to specify that, despite P. Galluzzi's enthusiastic appreciation of this ingenuity, which would reveal "the greater complexity of the Vincian cogitations" (*ibidem*, 84), it is possible that Leonardo followed an earlier concept in his achievement, as Larry Feinberg suggests: a concept identifiable in the compositional scheme of Pollaiuolo's *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* (1475) (Feinberg 2011, 132)[20]. Both artists participate, in this sense, in an authentic mutation of visual and, implicitly, artistic sensibility, inasmuch as "only at the end of the fifteenth century, the Florentines identify symmetry and consonance" (Francastel 1972.b, 245). In the *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian*, Pollaiuolo divided the pictorial space into two "territories": the first, organising the main scene through the triangular arrangement of the central figures and the semi-circular arrangement of the "witnesses", the second, constructing the background as a distant (but agitated) panorama with figures or equestrian groups (Fig. 7). This depiction is equally faithful to Leonardo's *Adoration...* in which the two

planes counterpoint and presuppose each other. Moreover, other elements of the construction are also likely to bear a different authorship from that of Leonardo (such as the rock on which the sacred couple is seated, present, for example, in Filippo Lippi's *Adoration...* (Fig. 8), having the same contextual function, as a visual symbol of the messianic nature of the Child, who fulfils the prophecy concerning the "rock at the head of the corner" (*Ps*. CXVII 22; *Zech*. X 4; *Matt*. XXI 42; *Mk*. XII 10; *Luc*. XX 17; *FA* IV 11; *Eph*. II 20; *I Pet*. II 6-7). Botticelli, as noted, exerts, in turn, an "undeniable" influence (Arasse 1997, 352) in this order: frontal arrangement, liturgical suggestion, ruin symbolism, and the use of "thinking" side figures (Fig. 9) are used in Florence six years earlier by Leonardo, who may therefore have taken them over, admiringly, from Botticelli. Jealousy might have come together with such an admiration, hence the eventuality of competitive impulses and ambitions (Feinberg 2011, 99-100).

The established reading of the two plans

These affiliations or "contaminations" are not, however, such as to compromise – on the contrary, they confirm – Leonardo's project of making the representation of the *Adoration...* "a great scene of human history" (Chastel 1981.a, 431). The criterion for the interpretation of this history is the very epiphany of the Child, in relation to which pre-Christian humanity and Christian humanity are ethically and ontologically differentiated. This is the hermeneutical operation (familiar to all Christian theology and art) by means of which art critics have found it possible to interpret the two planes of Leonardo's work – as they have done for others, such as Michelangelo's *Doni Tondo* (c. 1507) – as qualitatively different moments of universal history. In this key, the second plane, with its aggressive equestrian deployments and ruined architecture, signifies "blindness" (Forero-Mendoza 2002, 164), "moral blindness" (Arasse 1997, 355), "the old centuries of intense and ceaseless conflict" (Feinberg 2011, 136), while the foreground communicates "revelation" (Forero-Mendoza 2002, 164), "the glorious message of salvation, peace, love" (Arasse 1997, 355), the spiritual unity between absolute Objectivity and absolute

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[20] "Besides Verrocchio, Antonio del Pollaiuolo was the artist who most influenced the young Leonardo..." (Bambach 2003, 274; v. şi *ibidem*, 121, 312). The fact that Leonardo practiced, in fugitive sketches, the figure of Saint Sebastian in martyrdom is also evident; there is an autograph regarding the "eight Saints Sebastian" that he carried in his successive moves; one of these sketches (today, in Hamburg) is dated 1478–1483 (*ibidem*, 343), being therefore prior to or contemporary with the *Adoration...* project. Moreover, the martyrdom of this saint represented a privileged theme of meditation and concern for Renaissance artists.

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Subjectivity (Bambulea 2022). The compositional strategies themselves encourage this reading: the figures in the second plane appear to be inhabitants of a distant realm, a realm that pictorially has its own internal perspective, its own spatial logic, and its own energetic activity (Feinberg 2011, 136); at the same time, in the absence of a regulative perspectival order for the entire visual construction, the relief serves the painter in creating the effect of depth – both of the pictorial surface in relation to the viewer and, in varying amounts, of the planes of the painting in relation to each other (Arasse 1997, 358).

Deduced from the preserved sketches and preparatory studies, the "genesis" of these two planes provides an additional argument for the interpretation summarised above. The sketch in the Louvre Museum (Fig. 2) suggests that the painter's original concept already involved doubling the devotional scene in the foreground with a symbolic scene in the background; the significance of the latter gave it the character of a "hermeneutic context" in relation to the main scene. The animal sacrifice being prepared in the sacred space (recognizable in its architectural structure, despite the precarious state of the building) (Feinberg 2011, 138) explains the sacrificial status and redemptive task of the adored Child in the foreground.[21] The Uffizi study (Fig. 3)

elaborates the architectural framework (conventionally treated in the Louvre sketch), preparing a precise final perspectival representation of it; the foreground is not, here, excerpted. Finally, in the final panel, the second plane retains its function (of "hermeneutic context"), explaining, through the ruined temple and the combative scenes, how the scene in the main plane is to be understood. As such, rather than providing the framework for a "continuous narrative" (or a "framed narrative"), the compartmentalisation serves the ingenious articulation of a meta-narrative; the implied meanings of the iconic foreground scene are made explicit, through *objective correlatives*,[22] in the secondary

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[21] In writing this chapter, I have wholeheartedly embraced Larry Feinberg's hypothesis (see also Bambach 2003, 317, 319) concerning the secondary plan of the Parisian *Adoration...* (Louvre) (Fig. 2), because I had already attributed similar meanings to it myself during my first investigation. However, a more insistent iconographic "reading" leads me to return to the question, to point out the possibility that this plan represents not a Jewish procession / animal sacrifice, but the traditional scene of the arrival of the Magi in Jerusalem: a) none of the sacrificial animals prescribed in the *Exodus*, *Leviticus* or *Deuteronomy* (ox, cow, sheep, ram, lamb, goat, goat, dove) can be identified in this agglomeration of forms, hastily drawn in the secondary plan; b) in the very clear representation of this sketch in the complete Leonardo edited by Frank Zöllner (Zöllner 2003, 57, 261 [6]), the arrival of some figures in the fortress (including an equestrian) can be seen, as well as, in the distance, the late arrival of another horse; the latter is climbing a slope, which corresponds precisely to the geography of

Jerusalem (the city being situated on the height of Zion); according to the sacred text, before reaching Bethlehem, the Magi visited Jerusalem, where they met Herod the Great (*Matt.* II 1-9); c) the two staircases (which will also appear in the Uffizi drawing and in the final panel) are a recognizable element of the Temple in Jerusalem (as I will show in a future study), as are "[the] three musicians playing trumpets" (Bambach, 2003, 319; see also *ibidem*, 334), expressly mentioned in the *Old Testament* (in the Davidic era, Levites of the family of Jeduthun trumpeted at the Temple gate, *I Chr.* XVI 42; *II Chr.* V 12; see also *I Chr.* XIII 8, XV 24, XVI 6; *II Chr.* XXIX 26; *I Kings* I 24; *Joel* II 1, 15). Therefore, I think it is more plausible to read this scene as the arrival of the Magi in Jerusalem, otherwise present in many of the *Adoration...* prior to the Leonardic one. This change of reading does not compromise my demonstration above: whether it represented a Jewish sacrifice (in typological relation to the main scene) or the *arrival of the Magi in Jerusalem* (which is a moment in a continuous narrative, completed, in the foreground, by the representation of a later moment), both formulas belong to a conventional construction of the iconographic type in question and have with the foreground scene a relation of a traditional, conventional type, whereas the final version of the work establishes, as I have shown, a dialectical relation between the planes, the stake of which is an anagogical reading of the event of the Incarnation.

[22] The concept's authorship belongs to Washington Allston, *Introductory Discourse*, in *Lectures on art* (1840); its modern career, however, is owed to T. S. Eliot, who exploited it in *Hamlet and His Troubles* (1919). In my argument above, the concept is used in the sense attributed to it by the English critic and poet: "The only way to express emotion in art is to find an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain

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plane. The work both re-presents and comments; the represented event contains its exegesis; the image is the exegesis itself.

Hermeneutical offer

However, the precision of this analysis can reach a higher degree: it is decisive that the relationship of the two planes functions differently in the Louvre sketch and in the final panel of the *Adoration...* (as the perspectival drawing at the Uffizi only represents what would later on become the second plane, in the final painting). While in the sketch the scene in the background – a typical *Old Testament* animal sacrifice – is in a *typological* relationship with the scene in the close-up, in the final panel the planes are no longer linked by a unidirectional relationship but are, on the contrary, engaged in the pictorial representation of a speculative theology of the Incarnation, more precisely, of an *anagogical*[23] reading of it.

On the one hand, developed in the biblical theology of the early Christian centuries (on the foundations of Alexandrian philology and,

above all, through the contribution of Philo the Alexandrian), the typological reading involves considering (by analogy) certain events, gestures, statements or *Old Testament* characters as prefigurations, anticipations, *types* of the *New Testament* history of salvation. On the other hand, in the sense of medieval (proto)semiotics and hermeneutics (already systematised in the 12th century), anagogy ("super-sense", as Dante calls it in *Il Convivio*, II.1) involves the speculative processing of a (literary, visual) image by moving from its immediate, referential, particular meaning to its metaphysical, transcendent, universal or eschatological significance. Dante uses the distinction between *literal* meaning, *allegorical* meaning, *moral* meaning and *anagogical* meaning, the latter ("*sovrasenso*") assuming that "*per le cose significate significa de la superne cose de l'etternal gloria*" (Dante 2014, 35). This Dantean definition faithfully explains the stakes of Leonardo's *Adoration...*, namely the signification, through represented things, of the unseen "supreme things of eternal glory".

As such, while, in the sketch, the animal sacrifice prefigured the saving sacrifice of Christ (thus having an undoubted typological character: the *type* represents the *Old Testament* sacrifice, and the *antitype*, the future Christic sacrifice), in the final panel, the secondary plane (with the devastating signs of a damned history, contrasting in relation to the bliss that dominates the scene of the foreground) allows the reading of the Incarnation as a fundamental event of history, thanks to which pre-Christian time and Christian time are necessarily qualitatively, ontologically differentiated; therefore, the secondary plane is (or functions), here, (as a) building block of the rhetorical figure of anagogy. Antonio Natali describes the same self-explanatory mechanism of the image based on the relation of the planes, but from an opposite direction; for him, "the two levels of the story are linked together. The scene in the second plane is explained in the foreground." (Camerota *et al.* 2006, 22) I don't think this reading refutes mine. Natali was attempting to identify the architectural edifice in the second plane by appealing to the meaning of the foreground scene, a meaning that (presumably) this edifice is charged with confirming rather than refuting. As such, the

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of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when external facts are given which must terminate in sensory experience, the emotion is immediately evoked." (Eliot 1948, 145).
[23] For Hugo de Saint-Victor (1096–1141), the understanding of Scripture is carried out according to its entire sacred intelligence: a) "*expositio historica*" ("*quod est video et narro*"), b) "*simplex allegoria*" and "*anagoge*" (both modalities of the "*expositio allegorica*"), respectively c) "*tropologia*" (moral sense): "*Et est simplex allegoria, cum per visibile factum aliud visibile factum significatur. Anagoge id est sursum ductio, cum per visibile invisibile factum declaratur.*" (De Saint-Victor 1879, 13). A very plausible source of Leonardo's – Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda aurea* – repeatedly presents the sacred moments of Christianity "*selon le sens anagogique*", "*Secunda ratio sumitur penes intellectum anagogicum sive coelestem*" (de Voragine 1902, 143; *Idem* 1850: 85). When interpreting the Circumcision, Voragine emphasises on the need to understand the recapitulation of history in the eight days starting with the Birth of Christ and his entering the Temple; these eight days are, in fact, the eight ages of humanity, from Adam to the Resurrection. When commenting on Epiphany, Voragine elaborates the fivefold meaning (material, spiritual, intellectual, rational, super-substantial) of the Eastern Star (*ibidem*, 154-155).

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foreground explains, for Natali, the background. For my part, I think the relationship between the planes is more subtle than that.

a) First, I have to formulate a methodological requirement. To understand the relationship between the two planes, one must not start from the a priori meanings attributed to one of them, but from percieving the role played by these planes in the mechanism of visual signification of the whole work and from capturing the type of relationship existing between them in the sketches or in the preparatory studies of the work, and later, in the final panel.

b) The relationship between the planes is precisely defined by capturing, aided by iconographic and iconological investigation, the type of relationship that exists between them.

c) What I have been able to see above is that the second plane is one of the building blocks of a unitary image, an image which represents an anagogical reading of the Incarnation and which, through the presence of the devotional motif of *Adoration...*, exercises, from a liturgical and cultic point of view, "mobilising" functions. The distant plane is therefore the one through which one of the mutually contradictory dimensions (pre-Christian damned world / Christian pneumatological world) involved in the anagogical reading of the Incarnation is established. In this sense, the foreground does not *explain* (as Natali thinks), but *implies* (as I think) the background, both providing the poles of the contrastive reading of history from the perspective of the major event that is the Birth (otherwise unrepresented – but only hinted at – here).

Thus, the *specific* "reading" of the biblical text that painters represented visually in the Middle Ages and early Renaissance – a literary, allegorical or, at best, moral reading – now becomes *anagogical* reading, by moving from particular meanings to universal meanings, which, precisely, give *Adoration...* of Leonardo's theological breadth (achieved through ingenious compositional strategies). The function of this mode of appropriation of the image is, par excellence, a "disturbing" and "mobilizing"[24] one; it serves the devotional needs of private and public worship, satisfied not so much by the visual narrative translation of the evangelical event (for the supposedly *illiterate*) as by the plastic capture and psychological imprinting, in the consciousness of the devotee, of its sacred nature and its mystical implications. Leonardo thus participates in the revision of the iconographic type of the *Adoration of the Magi*, which he reorders compositionally, intervening in a very rich – and at the same time stable – tradition in the art of the Peninsula and, by doing so, responding to a paradigmatic shift slowly produced in European sensibility and "visual *gestalt*" (Kuhn 2008, 176) at the end of the Middle Ages.

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[24] These functions of the image coincide with those of the myth, in the sense of structural and functional thematizations (Roger Caillois, Marcel Detienne, Raoul Girardet, Roger Bastide, Sorin Antohi). In this sense, we can consider the *Adoration...* as a *myth-image*. This approach will be the subject of further study.

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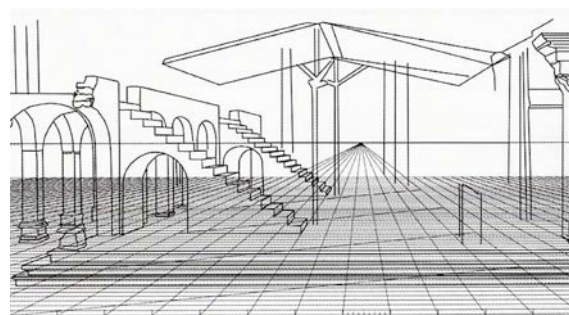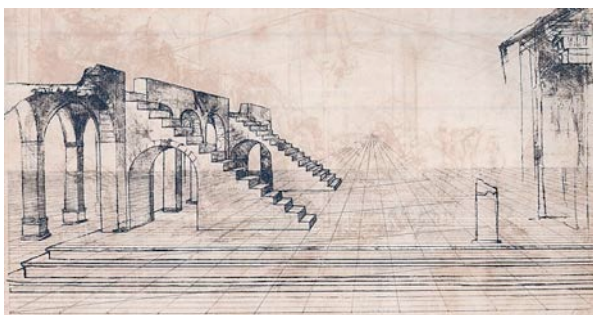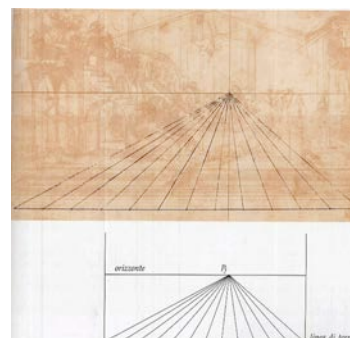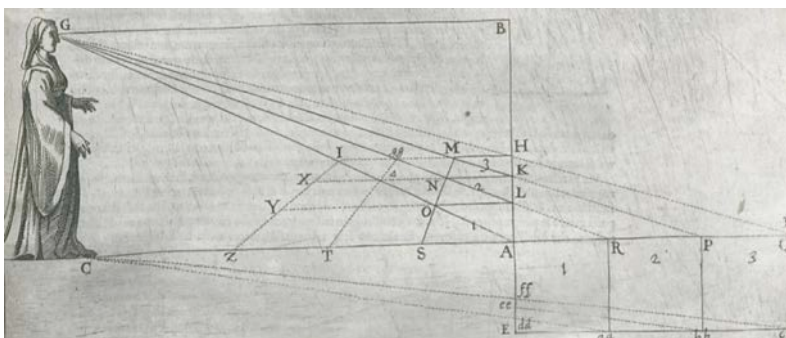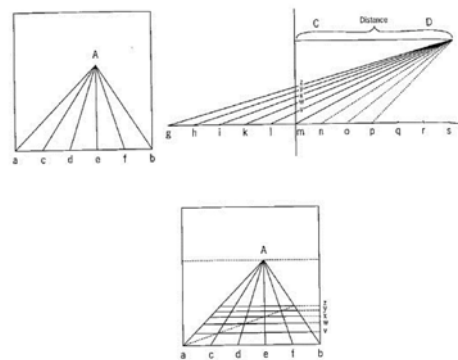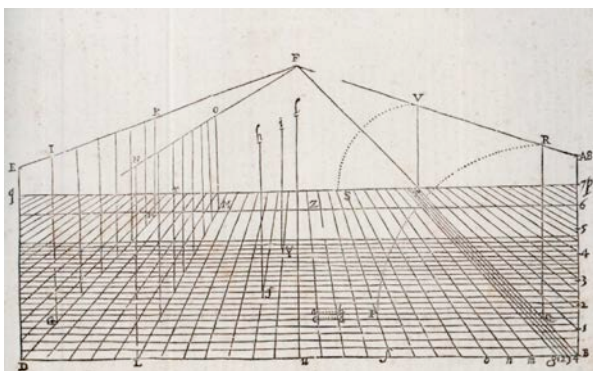
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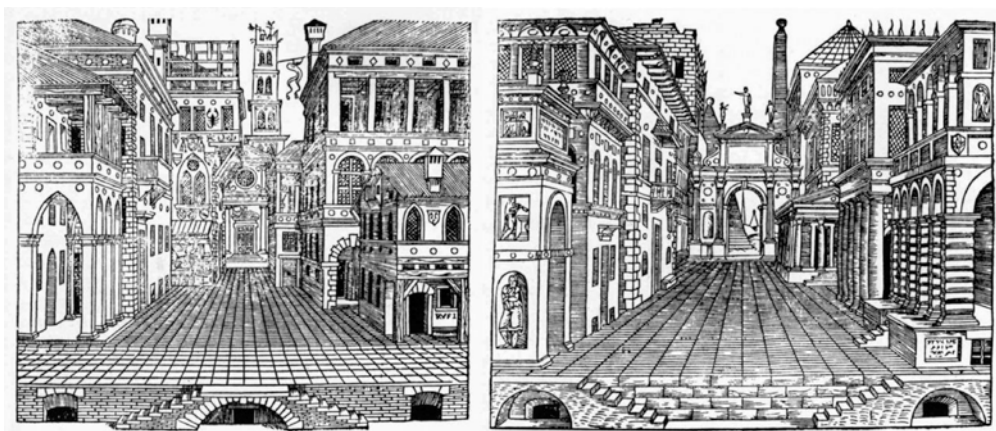
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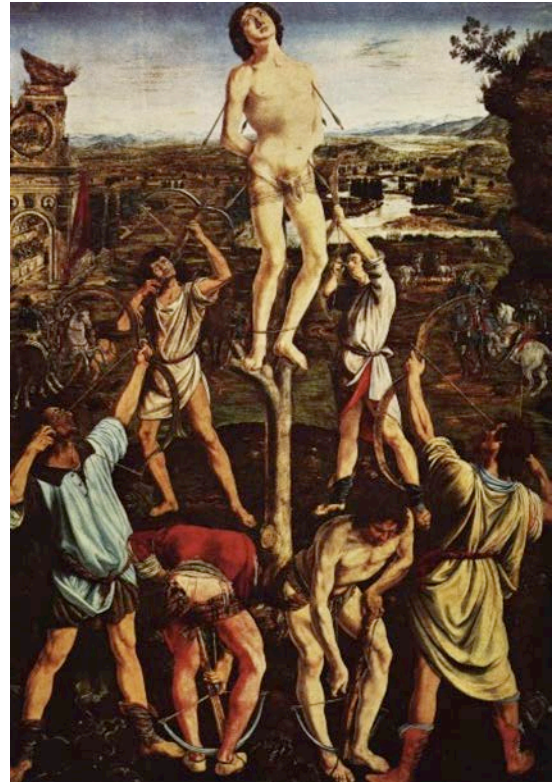
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THE "PORTRAIT OF A MAN" DEBATE: AMBERGER, GIORGIONE OR TITIAN?

(A STOLEN AND STILL MISSING PAINTING FROM THE BRUKENTHAL ART GALLERY)

Daniela DÂMBOIU*, Doina ENE**

Abstract: *The painting "Portrait of a Man", which was in the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum until the unfortunate theft in 1968 and has not yet been recovered, sparked a real debate among the most famous art historians of the time. The painting was once attributed to Christoph Amberger – a painter active in Augsburg who was heavily influenced by Titian – and was brought to the attention of professional world by Teodor Ionescu, head of the Art Gallery of the Brukenthal Museum (1956−1971), who believed it to be the work of a 16th century Venetian painter. While he did not dare to make an attribution as bold as Titian, although his research pointed to certain portraits by this artist, he intended to do all the necessary investigations for a correct attribution of the painting in question. Certain details, notably the hand resting on the parapet, the "habitus" of the character, the vague and lost gaze etc., led several art historians to associate the author of the painting with Giorgione. Because of the "Iron Curtain" that Romania found itself in at the time, the debates between specialists were based on the photographs of the painting sent by Ionescu, which, unfortunately, in the absence of the painting, we continue to do nowadays. Ionescu's detailed description of the painting and its X-ray complete our visual image of the portrait, and the comparisons with various portraits from the period reflect the obvious Titianesque style of the missing painting, whose recovery is much desired in Sibiu.*

Key words: *Portrait of a Man, Amberger, Giorgione, Titian, Brukenthal National Museum, archives of correspondence, Teodor Ionescu, Roberto Longhi*

Rezumat: *Tabloul „Portret de bărbat" aflat în colecția Muzeului Național Brukenthal până la nefericitul furt din 1968 și nerecuperat până în prezent, a stârnit o adevărată dezbatere între cei mai cunoscuți istorici de artă ai vremii. Atribuit la un moment dat lui Christoph Amberger − pictor activ la Augsburg, puternic influențat de Tițian −, tabloul a fost adus în atenția specialiștilor în domeniu de Teodor Ionescu, șeful Galeriei de Artă a Muzeului Brukenthal (1956−1971), care opina că era opera unui pictor venețian din secolul al XVI-lea. Nu s-a încumetat să facă o atribuire atât de îndrăzneață precum Tizian, deși cercetările sale îi indicau asemănări cu anumite portrete ale acestui artist, dar intenționa să întreprindă toate investigațiile necesare unei atribuiri corecte a tabloului în discuție. Anumite detalii, în special mâna sprijinită pe parapet, „habitus"-ul personajului, privirea vagă și pierdută etc., i-au determinat pe unii istorici de artă să-l apropie de Giorgione. Datorită „Cortinei de fier" în care se afla România atunci, dezbaterile între specialiști s-au făcut pe baza pozelor tabloului trimise de Ionescu, ceea ce, din păcate, în lipsa tabloului, suntem nevoiți să continuăm și astăzi. Descrierea amănunțită făcută de Ionescu tabloului și radiografiei acestuia ne completează imaginea vizuală a portretului, iar prin comparațiile pe care le propunem cu diverse portrete din epocă se remarcă stilul tițianesc evident al tabloului dispărut.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Portret de bărbat, Amberger, Giorgione, Titian, Muzeul Național Brukenthal, arhive de corespondență, Teodor Ionescu, Roberto Longhi*

Two archives of correspondence related to art history − the "Teodor Ionescu Archive" from the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu and the "Roberto Longhi Foundation" in Florence – still prove to be important sources of information for researchers in the field.

The "Ionescu Archive" preserved by the Brukenthal National Museum contains the

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correspondence of over 1000 letters sent or received by Teodor Ionescu − curator and art historian, head of the Brukenthal Gallery between 1956−1971 – to / from the "working group of the external friends of the Brukenthal Museum"; regarding the correspondence with Longhi, only copies of the approximately 50 letters written by Ionescu survived to this day, but none of Longhi's answers (Dâmboiu, Ene 2023, 319-349).

Correspondence between Teodor Ionescu (1915−1998) and Roberto Longhi (1890−1970) spanned about a decade, from the late 1950s to the late 1960s. The "Fondazione Roberto Longhi" in Florence owns the original letters from Teodor Ionescu to Prof. Roberto Longhi, as well as photocopies of the Italian art historian's answers – i.e. 63 letters plus 9 letters from other art historians (Ene 2021).

Both archives allow us not only to reconstruct and analyze the unprecedented correspondence between the two art historians, but also the possibility to follow the ideas and opinions of those in the "working group" created by Ionescu with the most famous specialists in the field at that time in Europe, Canada, America, in order to identify and attribute the paintings of the Brukenthal Art Gallery in Sibiu.

Ionescu's main interest was the attribution of Italian School paintings from the Brukenthal Art Gallery. After the exchange of letters with the other correspondents, Ionescu regularly sent copies to Longhi in order to give him a complete picture of the evaluations carried out in the "working group", as well as his own conclusions. In some cases, Ionescu managed to provide the Italian scholar with photographs of several paintings examined using X-ray or UV techniques, as well as color clichés and macro photographs, taken in Bucharest (the only place in the country where such investigations could have been carried out at that time).

One of the works that particularly concerned Teodor Ionescu was the painting *Portrait of a Man*, attributed to Christoph Amberger (1505−1562), registered under inv. no. 19 (oil on chestnut, 56 x 50 cm, poor state of conservation). (Fig. 1) The working group initiated for debates in this regard included the following art historians and critics: Prof. Wart Arslan (University of Pavia, Milan), Giuseppe Fiocco (Director of the Institute of Art History of the Giorgio Cini Foundation in Venice), Antonio Morassi (Cultural Inspector for Milan and Geneva), Prof. Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti (Institute of Art History in Florence), Prof. Francesco Valcanover (Director of the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice), Dr. Emma Zocca (National Institute of Archeology and History of Art in Rome), Thomas Mac Greavy (Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin), V.F. Levinson-Lessing (art historian, curator at The Hermitage, Leningrad, and University Professor), Erwin Panofsky (The Institute for Advanced Study, Princepton, New Jersey), Rüdiger Klessmann (Director of the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum in Braunschweig), Dr. Günther Heinz (researcher, art curator and staff member of the Picture Gallery of the Kunsthistorischen Museum in Vienna), Dr. Hermann Voss (art historian, expert on the painting of the Seicento and Settecento, advisor to the Bavarian State Government on art acquisitions, Munich; former Head of the Drawing Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Leipzig; Head the municipal art collection at the Nassauisches Landesmuseum in Wiesbaden/Museum Wiesbaden; Director of the *Führermuseum* in Linz), Prof. Dr. Friedrich Winkler (Director of the Print Cabinet / Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin), Dr. Karl Bunch (Munich), Dr. Christian Altgraf zu Salm (Senior curator at the Bavarian State Painting Collections/Department of old German painting in the Alte Pinachohek in Munich etc.), Dr. Kurt Löcher (Central Institute for Art History in Munich, later, Director of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg), Dr. Peter Strieder (Senior Director of the Department of "Painting until 1800", Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg), Cornelius Müller (formerly Director of the Picture Gallery of the Staatliche Museen in Berlin), and Prof. Dr. Baron Götz von Pölnitz (Director of the Fugger Archives and Administrator of the Princely Count's Fugger Foundation in Augsburg).

Due to the "Iron Curtain", the researches could only be carried out using the photos sent by Ionescu; unfortunately, even nowadays we have no other chance to examine the painting

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other than on the basis of photographs, as the *Portrait of a Man* (inv. no. 19) is one of the paintings stolen in 1968 and still not recovered. (Hrib, Chituță 2022, 30-43)[1]

In a letter from August 28th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum, no. 2193/1962), Ionescu described the painting to Professor Wart Arslan[2] as follows:

"The painting inv. no. 19 was bought as a work of Raphael School. In the 1893 catalog, it was considered made by an «Anonymous Italian». In 1894, Teodor von Frimmel wrote: «Nice picture. Portrait of an Italian nobleman. Almost half figure. But who is the unknown master?» (Kleine Galeriestudien 1894, 81). *At some point, however, Michael Csaki − the museum's custodian at the time − assigned the painting to* [Christoph] *Amberger in the 1901 catalogue, without any reservation and without any justification* (Csaki 1901, cat. no. 17).[3] *And this attribution has remained to this* day. *The fact that the dictionaries mention that Amberger was influenced by the Venetians put my doubts to rest for a while. But when I saw a portrait in Bucharest that seems to be correctly attributed to Amberger* (Fig. 6)*, I started to document myself. Having recently procured some good reproductions of genuine Amberger paintings, I have at last noticed that our painting not only does not belong to Amberger, but to the Italian school, being too pictorial for the Germans, and thus the old attribution to the «School of Raphael» has, in this sense, a foundation. Obviously, we must not think of the Florentines, but of the Venetians. In this case, in front of such a portrait, the name Titian immediately comes to mind, as the portrait closely resembles the portraits of men* [painted by him] *in the '40s and '50s. At this point, however, I hesitate to categorically confirm this paternity because of the limited existing evidence. I also think of the School of: Palma il Vecchio, Cariani or Bordone. But these are rather Giorgionesque. The energy of feeling and execution of the picture makes us think directly to Titian. Titian or not, his technique is definitely Venetian; the color is saturated, dense and concentrated, and not tense and smooth as with the Germans. Noteworthy are the lyrical complexion and the extraordinary intensity of light on the character's shirt. (What title of nobility did he have?) The harmony of colors is reduced: the black of the sumptuous coat, the white of the shirt, the light brown of the collar, the gold of the chain. The background is light brown. All is underlined with a red line (table, window?). The painting is now almost monochrome, which is probably why no one thought of Titian, although many of his portraits are «monochrome». On the back of the chestnut wood support is the sign of one of the former owners ... Is chestnut wood common for Titian? The entire back of the stand is covered with an aged matte gray lacquer."*

Two days later, on August 30th, 1962, Ionescu wrote a letter to Prof. Longhi (Brukenthal Museum, no. 2218/1962) and Dr. Emma

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[1] On May 26, 1968, eight masterpieces were stolen from the Brukenthal Museum (the theft was not noticed until the 28th of May, after two days when the exhibitions were closed). The paintings stolen were: Rosalba Carriera, *Portrait of a Woman with a Dog*; Titian, *Ecce Homo*; Frans van Mieris the Elder, *The Man with the Pipe at the Window*; Albrecht Bouts, *Self-Portrait*; Anton van Dyck, *Death of Cleopatra*; Jörg Breu, *Portrait of a Man*; Cristoph Amberger, *Portrait of a Man*; A 15th century German Anonymous, *Portrait of a Man in fur coat*. In 1998, four of them were brought back from the US, while the remaining four await discovery.

[2] Wart Arslan, also Edoardo Arslan (Padua, 1899–1968, Milan): Italian art historian.

[3] *"**Christoph Amberger**. Geb. in Nürnberg, gest. 1561 oder 1562 in Augsburg. Wahrscheinlich Schüller des Hans Burgkmair. Tätig in Augsburg ...: 19. (III v.) **Vornehmer Herr in deutscher Tracht**. Stellung nach von. Kopf mit dunklem Haar etwas nach l[inks]. Schwachner Schnurrß und Vollbart. Dunkles Gewand mit Verbrümung. Um den Hals zwei goldene Ketten, die eine mit Anhängsel. Die r[echte]. Hand ruht auf einem Tisch. / Brustb[ild]. L. Gr. Holz. Br. 0,50, H. 0,56. / Literature: – 1901: Nr. 17;* [Frimmel 1894, p. 81, cat. no. 108: *Schönes Bild. Porträt eines vornehmen Italieners. Fast halbe Figur. Wer aber ist der „unbekannter Meister?"*]; – 1893: Nr. 108, *i[talienische]. Schule, Unbek[annter]. Meister. (Unbekannter Meister. Das Bildnis eines vornehmen Italieners im schwarzen Pelzrocke mit goldener Kette. Brustb[bild]. Fast. Lgr. Holz.); −*

1844, Nr. 104, i[talienische]. Sch[ule]., Raphaels Schule; – Ä.K: Nr. 17, i[talienische]. Sch[ule]. II, wie 1844 (Schule des Raphael Sanzio). / ... / Schlecht erhaltenes Bild." (The same notification in Csaki's catalogue from 1909, cat. 19!)

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Zocca[4] (Brukenthal Museum, no. 2219/1962), almost similar to the one previously addressed to Prof. Arslan. According to Longhi, in his reply letter of September 8th, 1962 (Longhi Foundation), the attribution of the painting to Christoph Amberger was based on the somatic features of the portrayed character, which looked German. The Italian art historian wondered if the portrait might not be one of the Fuggers, who had close ties to Venice. Longhi believed that the depicted character resembled Jakob Fugger, portrayed by Bellini in a painting then in the Contini Bonacossi collection in Florence and later in the collection of the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena. Giovanni Bellini actually portrayed in 1474 Georg Fugger (Fig. 2), son of Jakob Fugger the Elder and brother of Jakob the Younger – who, in turn, was later portrayed by Albrecht Dürer, in 1518, painting now in the Staatsgalerie Altdeutsche Meister, Augsburg. For the necessary comparisons, we mention that, in 1541, Christoph Amberger also painted a member of the Fugger Family, namely Johan (Hans) Jakob Fugger (1516−1575), a portrait that entered a private collection after its sale at a Sotheby's auction on 28 January 2010 (Fig. 7).

The letter sent in response by Emma Zocca (written in Rome, on September 19th, 1962, prot. 325/A, not registered at the entrance to the Brukenthal Museum) opened a new research direction. Recognizing the difficulty and danger of making attributions based solely on a photograph, Zocca agreed with Ionescu that the painter could have been of Venetian and not of Nordic origin. But she excluded Titian a priori, because she did not know any work of the great master that represented a portrait in a similar way as the one in this "*fascinating picture*". Due to the rendering of the figure with the hand on the parapet, the subtlety of the impasto etc., Zocca proposed dating the painting to the early 16th century and suggested Giorgione as the possible author. The complete reproduction of Emma Zocca's letter is an important source for the analysis of the issues raised by the experimented Italian art historian and researcher:

"*... But the last photograph (portrait no. 19) is of exceptional quality to which, although I thank you for sending me the photographs, I do not hesitate to share my impressions, albeit with some apprehension and pleading to listen carefully. I would like to point out that the documentation you sent me is a confirmation of how dangerous it is to make attributions based on photographs: in fact, the overall photograph, no matter how good, is rather flat and does not reveal at all the depth, spiritual intensity and the beauty or brushwork, that emerge from the photographs of the details. I agree with you that it is a Venetian. The attribution to a German can be explained by a certain Nordic aspect which, indeed, this portrait presents at first sight; however, it does not necessarily have to be a Nordic painter, but rather the person depicted. In fact, although I haven't researched it, it doesn't seem to me that hairstyle (hair with bangs, short beard that completely surrounds the jaw) was in use in Venice: I would say instead it is typically German* [sic!]*, and if I'm not mistaken it can be found in some portraits, for example, by Dürer. But I wouldn't think of Titian. The very simple layout of the figure with the hand on the parapet (still of Flemish origin), the use of the panel, the subtlety of the impasto, are all elements that indicate a rather ancient date, in the very first years of the sixteenth century. I know of nothing by Titian that comes close to this fascinating painting* [sic!]*; and even if I shouldn't have the courage to pronounce such a great name without directly knowing the work, I have to confess that the more I think about this photo, the more insistently Giorgione's name is suggested to me. I do not know of any other artist who manages to express such an intense and dreamy expression of spirituality, to model that hand so tenderly wrapped in the atmosphere, in short, to reach such a high poetry with such simple means and modest restraint. I would say that what Morassi wrote about the «Terria Portrait» might be appropriate for this portrait «... an immense power of transfiguration, almost a ghostly apparition of Luca, in a vision of art that transcends a Carpaccio, an Alvise or even the old Giambellino (who incidentally went*

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[4] Emma Zocca (Rome, no biographical data is specified): prominent and prolific Italian art historian.

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through a parallel phase with Giorgione's portrait in those years. Titian will start from here, but his painting, if it had a more dramatic impetus and greater plastic resolution, would lack a subtle context, a magical astral fluid that made Giorgione's creatures infinitely more suggestive», Morasi 1942, 100). I do not want to get carried away by enthusiasm. I repeat, I do not know the painting directly and therefore, I am not able to evaluate what can be revealed only through a direct examination, my words have, even for me, a very relative value. So take into account only what you consider. But I would appreciate if you could get me a color slide, which I would send back to you as soon as possible. I am going to do some research on my own, certainly not to find documentation (all possible investigations about Giorgione have been done and published many times, and as for portraits, as you know, apart from «Laura» there is none whose attribution is based on contemporary indications), but to see if common knowledge at least allows for more accurate dating. We should also look and see if the use of chestnut wood is any indication; but unfortunately it is very rare to find the quality of the wood indicated in the descriptions of the paintings. Finally, since you tell me there is a sign of the old owners on the back of the panel, if you send it to me it might be a research item, albeit a difficult one."

A month later, in a new detailed letter (from Rome, on November 21st, 1962, prot. no. 398/A; Brukenthal Museum, unregistered), Emma Zoca − as Longhi also did − recommended Ionescu to consult the renowned specialists in Venetian painting, Prof. Giuseppe Fiocco (Padua) and Antonio Morassi (Milan); she also mentioned that she did not notice any similarity between *Georg Fugger* by Bellini, from 1474, with the painting in Sibiu − proposed by Longhi − and suggested consulting the Fugger House in Augsburg for a possible identification of a member of the Fugger family in the Sibiu painting.

In a letter from October 13th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum, unregistered), Prof. Wart Arslan (Milan) expressed the opinion that the painting is a "*German matter*", but then he supported Ionescu's opinion about the possibility that the author was a Venetian painter. Arslan

proposed the attribution of the painting to Bernardino Licinio, inviting Ionescu to see Berenson's latest volume *The Italian Renaissance painters* (1957), published by Sansoni and Phaidon, to grasp the details and references "*of Titian imprint*". Roberto Longhi (November 14th, 1962) categorically excluded Licino as the author of the painting, "*mainly because he never achieved such a high quality*".

Prof. Carlo L. Ragghianti[5] (Florence) noticed (in his letter sent from Florence, on October 22nd, 1962; Brukenthal Museum, unregistered) that "*looking at the large gold chain, the painting appears to have been repainted*" and that the pictorial layer seemed to have been thoroughly cleaned several times. Regarding the author, Ragghianti believed that he was a German artist, not necessarily Amberger, although "*a certain Italianism*" was evident and "*some affinities with Lotto, who was sensitive to Germanic models*" could be identified. He stressed that given the impossibility of seeing the painting live, his opinions should be taken with reservations. He considered that there were certain similarities between Brukenthal's painting and the portrait made by Amberger in 1543 from the Viennese collections (*i.e.* Christoph Amberger, *Portrait of Christoph Baumgartner*, 1543, Kunsthistorisches Museum; Fig. 9).

Francesco Valcanover[6] (Venice) replied twenty days later (letter from December 12th, 1962; Brukenthal Museum, unregistered) to the letter that Ionescu had sent him on November 20th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum / Post office register no. 1636). According to him, the painting inv. no. 19 was a "*great work that deserved a great attribution*". However, he excluded the name Amberger and emphasized the names Giorgione and Titian, as Ionescu had suspected, considering Giorgione more plausible; he concluded that

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[5] Prof. Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti (Lucca, 1910–1987, Florence): one of the most important Italian historians, critics and theorists of art of the 20th century.
[6] Francesco Valcanover (Belluno, 1926–2016): in his youth, assistant to the chair of Giuseppe Fiocco; numerous important cultural functions; art historian, dedicated especially to Venetian painting (14th c. – 18th c.); among his many publications: *Tiziano* (1960; 1969; 1999).

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identifying "*Giorgione at the last moment – Titian at the first moment*" was difficult.

Giving credit to the Italian researchers' opinions, which coincided with his own, Ionescu informed Longhi, in the letter from December 18th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum / Post office register no. 1781), that he had exhibited the painting inv. no. 19 in the Gallery, "*next to Titian's Ecce Homo, with the (hopefully provisional) label*: «*Anonymous Venetian, 16th century*»"; he also added that he was still waiting for an answer from the Fugger-Haus if they consider it to be a portrait of a family member.

Antonio Morassi[7] (Milan) replied very quickly to Ionescu's letter of December 5th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum / Post office register no. indecipherable), on December 14th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum, late registration with no. 5.XII.1971), that the old attribution of the painting had to be replaced, as Teodor Ionescu had already noted, with an attribution within the Venetian school, which excludes "*Titian's pictorial world*" and indicates the more "*delicate and sensitive Giorgione*" due to the "*fine with soft brushstrokes*" style of painting. Analyzing a simple photographic reproduction of the painting, Morassi complained that he could not certainly affirm that it was a work by Giorgione, but added that the attribution of the painting to the German painter Amberger was due to the way of representation of the portrayed person: "*This is undoubtedly a German, ...but the style of the painting, so delicate, softly paneled with its subtle nuances, decidedly takes us back to Giorgione or his immediate circle. In this painting there are unmistakable Giorgionesque characteristics, such as the «cut» of the figure in space, the careful treatment of the shirt with its dense folds, the soft rendering of the hair and fur; but above all the presence of that hand resting lightly on the parapet, that almost declares itself as a signature. The same hand appears in a similar pose in various paintings by Giorgione: from the «Madonna of Castelfranco», to «Laura» in Vienna and the*

«*Portrait of a Young Man*» in Berlin (Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 12A; Fig. 3). *But it's actually the «habitus», I would say the «feeling» of the character that speaks for the great Master; that is, this dreamy atmosphere, this vague and lost looks ..., similar to that of «Laura».*" However, Morassi wrote that there was an element that kept him from expressing definitively on Giorgione, and that was "*the weakness of facial modeling*". The Italian scholar suggested to Ionescu to bring the painting for restoration in Italy, maybe even in Venice, so that he can evaluate it live. Like Ragghianti, Morassi also asked for a color photo, from which it can be deduced that the previously photos sent by Ionesco were black and white. Morasi ends his letter by expressing his satisfaction to be informed about this work: "*... the «Portrait» from Sibiu is a profitable addition to my Giorgionesque field of knowledge: and I thank you for having given me this new emotion.*"

Giuseppe Fiocco[8] (Venice) began his letter of December 15th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum, unregistered), in response to Ionescu's letter from December 5th, 1962, with: "*I am very pleased to approach this old scholar*", specifying from the beginning that it was "*very difficult to give an opinion without seeing the work live*". Recalling the Brukenthal Museum's loan of the magnificent *Crucifixion* by Antonello da Messina, which he obtained as President of the "Cini Foundation" in Venice, Fiocco rejected the attribution to Amberger since it was "*a definitely Venetian work*", indicating Lorenzo Lotto as the possible author. Like Morassi, Fiocco also mentioned Giorgione for the hand resting on the parapet; he also questioned plates 18 and 288 in Berenson's monograph, where "*everything belongs to Lotto*". The Italian scholar proposed to Ionescu to start collaboration by exchanging photos and publications with the USSR and Hungary, as he was already doing.

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[7] Antonio Morassi (Gorizia, 1893−1976, Milano): Italian art historian, widely appreciated by the specialists from all over the world. Among his publications: *Giorgione* (1942); *Titian: the frescoes in the Scuola del Santo in Padua* (1956).

[8] Giuseppe Fiocco (Giacciano con Baruchella, Venice, 1884−1971, Padua): eminent Italian art historian, art critic and academic, with numerous writings on Venetians and Florentine artists; since 1954, until his death, he was the first Director of the Institute of Art History of the Giorgio Cini Foundation in Venice.

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On January 22nd, 1963 (Brukenthal Museum / Post office register no. 126), Ionescu sent Longhi copies of the other scholars' letters. From the various Italian art historians' replies emerged their favorable views regarding the attribution to Giorgione of the painting in the Brukenthal Museum ("*Am I so lucky?*" – added Ionescu), with the exception of the German scholars, who did not abandon Amberger's authorship. Ionescu mentioned the attribution orientation proposed by Giuseppe Fiocco for Loto, an attribution that Ionescu considered would be "*ideal*", "*somewhere in the middle for your «Venice–Southern Germany» dilemma*", although the solution seemed problematic, "*because our portrait is not restless, rather lost in fantasy, as Morassi noted*".

The debate became even more complicated when, following the scientific investigations carried out during the restoration of the painting in Bucharest, another portrait appeared under the pictorial layer.

In his letters from May 13th and 18th, 1963, Prof. Longhi also noticed (like Prof. Ranghiatti) that the work had apparently been repainted. Ionescu, having the same impression, sent the painting to Bucharest for investigations with X-rays and infrared light, following which a second portrait was discovered underneath the first (Fig. 10). Ionescu reported the surprising discovery to Longhi and expressed his opinions in a letter dated July 25th, 1963, which deserves to be reproduced in full, due to the detailed description of the two portraits and the interpretations he made:

"*… Finally, here is a «document» that can help us to solve the problem properly. Judging by the hairdo, the costume and − as far as the X-ray allows us − it seems to have been painted by a German, contemporary with Amberger, if not by him. The original portrait shows retouched gradations, peeling, even cracks. Therefore, a considerable period of time must have passed since it was painted. The repainting is almost complete. It usually consists of «Lasuren Malerei» [glaze painting] and has a delicate modeling. The more pigmented layers are in the head and hand areas. The background was repainted in thin, olive green paste; its original color is visible in small places and has a dull reddish tint. The*

shirt and the central part of the garment, with the jewelry (large chain and pendant) are lightly repainted in thin, transparent layers, spread in a yellowish color that perfectly merges the two paintings. The parapet has been there since the beginning. In infrared, along almost its entire length, a network of craquelures is evident. The hand was probably painted at the same time, because without it the parapet would have been meaningless. The restorers could only give an answer by deduction. It has not been possible to establish with objective data to what extent the repainting has wasted the hand, but I am convinced that it is repainted. The restorers (from Bucharest) claim that the author would be a skilled restorer, who may have intentionally imitated the Venetian manner. I doubt that a «restorer» − no matter how technically good he was − could have so expressively transfigured portrait no. 1, if he wasn't also a good painter at the same time. If portrait no. 1 was painted around 1530 (the hairdo and costume), the repainting should have been done after 10−15 years and maybe even more, but not after 1600 in my opinion. From a possible follower of Giorgione from 1550, to Titian, Lotto, even Licinius, although you excluded him. You have informed me that Titian repainted some German pictures, especially by Cranach. I would be grateful if you could tell me where these paintings are located. Lotto, as claimed by Prof. Giuseppe Fiocco? In view of his own relations with the German world, this cannot be ruled out. In conclusion, we are dealing with a portrait painted by a German already influenced by the Venetians and then repainted by a veritable Venetian. I can't believe the technique of repainting is by a German, even though he was also influenced by the Venetians. I started from here and it seems to me that I was not wrong, but, despite my zeal, I have not been able to take a step further. In the specific case of this painting, it is difficult to arrive at a correct attribution based on the photograph alone."

In addition to the Italian scholars, Ionescu had also exchanged letters regarding painting inv. no. 19 with German art historians, who mostly claimed Amberger's authorship of the painting. Their views were consistent with the spirit of the painting's presentation in the 1936

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"Old Master" catalogue (*Alte Meister* 1936, 18, ill. 30):

"*While number 28* [ill. 28: Hans Schwab von Wertingen, «Herzog Wilhelm IV. von Bayern»] *showed the joy in finery and brightly colored glittering things, which at the beginning of the 16th century still prevailed in the highest circles, this portrait represents the change in taste that occurred at the time of the Reformation. Black and white, plus the brown of fine furs and lusterless gold, together with the little use of red, now form the harmony in men's clothing, and instead of the colorful multitude of stripes and embroideries, a few calm and large masses now appear. Above all, however, a progress in spiritual deepening is to be noticed. The eyes look sharply to the left of the picture, the fairly full red lips are pressed slightly together, as if the man, outwardly calm and polite, inwardly burning with impatience, was waiting for the end of someone else's speech, and then he objected quietly in a somewhat high voice, polite but firm. Amberger was probably born around 1500 in Amberg, in the Upper Palatinate, trained under the great portrait painter Hans Holbein the Younger and the Venetians, especially Titian, and worked in what was then the richest city in Germany, Augsburg, where he died in 1561/2. He joins the other famous painters of Augsburg, Altdorfer, Burgkmair and Holbein. His main works, portraits of «Emperor Charles V» and «Sebastian Münster», are exhibited in Berlin.*"

We present below some of the German art historians' opinions:

Dr. C.A. Salm[9] (Munich): "(January 1st, 1962) *I see no resemblance to any member of the Fugger family. ... May I have one more question and observation? Don't you have the impression that your picture is very heavily overpainted? Parts such as the second chain in the coat's fur collar, but perhaps also the mustache almost suggest that there is a*

significantly different picture underneath the overpainting. X-ray and luminescent images could perhaps bring surprises."

Rüdiger Klessmann[10] (Berlin) wrote in a reply letter to Ionescu, on August 20th, 1962, that he had spoken to Professor Friedrich Horst Winkler (Berlin) to get his opinion. According to him, the author of the painting in Sibiu could be Amberger or at least from his circle, although it was so difficult to be sure without examining the original. Prof. Dr. Friedrich Winkler (Berlin) also wrote a letter to Ionescu, in which he personally expressed his viewpoint: "(November 22nd, 1963) *Let me tell you that your museum seems to hold a real Amberger ...*"

Prof. Dr. Baron G. v. Pölnitz[11] (Fuggerei, Augsburg): "(December 11th, 1962) *I think there is a possibility that the portrait, of which you attached a photograph, was made by Amberger. − The answer to the question whether the person portrayed is Jakob Fugger (1459−1525) is definitely no. ... − As far as the painter of the picture in question is concerned, I consider it to be an Amberger rather than a Venetian. That is Amberger's taste and style. ... Unfortunately, we cannot identify the marks on the back of your painting.*"

In his letter from December 28th, 1962, Prof. Günther Heinz[12] (Vienna) declared himself unsure of the attribution of painting inv. 19 to Titian or Giorgione. He pointed out that he did not know the original, but that Amberger was

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[9] Christian Altgraf zu Salm (Vienna, 1906−1973, Duck Casle at Bedburdyck): a prestigious German art historian; formerly Head of the Princely Fürstenberg Collections in Donaueschinge, later Senior curator at the Bavarian State Painting Collections, implied in the reorganization of the Department of old German painting in the Alte Pinachohek in Munich etc.

[10] Rüdiger Klessmann (Lemgo, 1927−2020, Augsburg): a German art historian; curator at the Picture Gallery of the State Museums of Prussian Cultural Heritage, then in Berlin-Dahlem, and from 1970 to 1990 Director of the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum in Braunschweig

[11] Prof. Dr. Baron Götz von Pölnitz (Munich, 1906−1967, Erlangen): a German economic and social historian and archivist; University Professor, founding Rector of the University of Regensburg in 1965; Director of the Fugger Archives and Administrator of the Princely Count's Fugger Foundation in Augsburg.

[12] Dr. Günther Heinz (Salzburg, 1927−1992): researcher, art curator and staff member of the Picture Gallery of the Kunsthistorischen Museum in Vienna; University Professor at the Institute for Art History at the University of Vienna etc.

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nevertheless influenced by Venetian art, citing again the *Portrait of Christoph Baumgartner* (Fig. 9) as an example. He questioned even Giorgione's portrait in Berlin, writing that "*an attribution to this master is extremely problematic*"; he believed that "*the picture could not have been painted before 1510...*"

Cornelis Müller Hofstede[13] (Berlin) replied to Ionescu's letter of October 16th, 1962, that the author of the painting was Amberger, a case he discussed with his colleagues. He opined that some features such as "*the treatment of facial shapes, the type of expression*" corresponded to authentic portraits by Amberger. However, he added that he was only expressing himself based on a photo, "*which is also quite dark*".

Prof. Erwin Panofsky[14] (Princeton, New Jersey) in his letter from December 12th, 1962 (Brukenthal Museum, unregistered), specified that: "*The Augsburg School in Germany was at times very close to the Venetians, and it is perhaps no accident that Titian's favorite assistant in his later years was none other than Emmanuel Amberger of Augsburg. ... I am certainly not able to say more than that picture seems to be Venetian, but may be the work of an Augsburg master operating in Venice.*"

Dr. Kurt Löcher[15] (Munich): "(May 16th, 1963) *Despite the opinions of Prof. Longhi and Dr. Emma Zocca, I think Frimmel's old definition is correct* [sic!][16]. *Men in early Venetian portraits up to ca. 1525 appear with long hair and bare necks. ... The layout of no. 19*

corresponds perfectly with Amberger's «Sebastian Münster» from 1552 in Berlin (Fig. 4), while the head conspicuously with that of «Christoph Baumgartner» in Vienna, 1543 (Fig. 9). The «Portrait of Anton Welser» (Freiherrlich von Welsersche Familienstiftung, Schloss Neudorf) shows how Venetian Amberger can be ...*" In a later letter he continued to claim that it was Amberger's work, given the German fashion of the time, and suggested that the portrait probably depicted a Nuremberg patrician, pointing to comparisons with the − already mentioned several times so far − *Portrait of Christopher Baumgartner* from Vienna, painted by Amberger in 1543.

Despite intensive teamwork and numerous analyses, the researchers did not reach a common conclusion whether this painting was a work of the Venetian School of painting or of the North European School. When Ionescu once complained to Prof. Longhi that some opinions were unrealistic or contradictory, Longhi reacted (at the end of January 1963) with a popular Greek saying: "*Where too many roosters crow, the day is slow to come. ... But I hope it won't be the case here and that it is not too late. This beautiful portrait deserves to be brought to light.*" He agreed with Antonio Morassi that the painting depicted a Western character, and wondered if "*a more concrete result can be achieved; can one hope for it?*" Ionescu later added that when: "*A fool throws a stone into a lake, which a hundred wise men try to pull it out,*" adding that "*I, a rather inexperienced rooster, find this exchange of views very useful*". Due to the different opinions, Ionescu retained, in the art gallery guide he edited in 1964, the attribution of Amberger, with which the painting was registered at the museum, hoping for further research (Ionescu 1964, 20, ill. 115).

Taking into account all these opinions and the state of the research carried out up to that point, we dare to add a few more observations, however, still based on the photos for the known reasons.

It must be said that, examining the works of art in the Brukenthal Collection, Ionescu repeatedly demonstrated a clear outlook and an extremely keen perception, as well as the use of the synthesis of evidence. (Among the attributions he established with tenacity and

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[13] Cornelis Müller Hofstede (Geisa, 1898−1974, Berlin): a German art historian; formerly Director of the Picture Gallery in Braunschweig (in 1947), Director of the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum in Braunschweig (from 1955), Director of the Picture Gallery of the former State Museums in West Berlin/Dahlem (from 1957).

[14] Erwin Panofski (Hannover, 1892−1968, Princeton, New Jersey): a prominent German essayist and art historian considered one of the founders of academic iconography and iconology, active since 1933 in the United State of America.

[15] Dr. Kurt Löcher (Duinsburg am Rhein, 1932−2018, Cologne): a German art historian and researcher at the Central Institute for Art History in Munich etc., later, Director of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg (1978−1998).

[16] See Frimmel's opinion mentioned above, in Ionescu's letter to Prof. Arslan on August 28th, 1962.

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erudite arguments against prominent art historians are, for example: Jan van Eyck, *Man with a Blue Cap* − later confirmed by laboratory tests −, Antonello da Messina, *The Crucifixion* or Titian, *Ecce Homo*). We should give credit to Ionescu's conviction precisely because he was the one who saw and studied the painting live, whose artistic quality particularly attracted his attention and interest. When he began to doubt Amberger as the author of the painting inventory no. 19, his intuition led him to Titian:

"... In this case, in front of such a portrait, the name Titian immediately comes to mind, as the portrait closely resembles the portraits of men [painted by him] *in the '40s and '50s. At this point, however, I hesitate to categorically confirm this paternity due to the limited evidence I have.... The energy of feeling and execution of the picture makes us think directly of Titian. Titian or not, his technique is definitely Venetian, the color is saturated, dense and concentrated, and not tense and smooth as with the Germans.... The painting is now almost monochrome, which is probably why no one thought of Titian, although many of his portraits are «monochrome». ... "* (See above the letter addressed to Prof. Arslan on August 28th, 1962.)

Seeing the divergent opinions expressed in the extensive correspondence, Ionescu realized that he reached again the point which he had started from: from the beginning his flair had directed him to Titan. We also cannot help but notice the affinity of the painting from Sibiu with some portraits of the famous Venetian artist Titian, cut into space in the same way, the similar monochrome range of colors, black and white clothing, close facial features and hairstyles etc. (Figs. 11-16).

In addition, it is known that Titian traveled to Augsburg in 1548 to meet Emperor Charles V (and that he returned there in 1550−1551); in Augsburg "*he also met local painters such as Christoph Amberger, who helped him with the restoration of the famous «Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg» painting from the damage it suffered during an accidental fall and whose son, Emanuel, would later become a faithful disciple and collaborator. Perhaps he also met Lucas Cranach, who had followed his patron, the Prince elector of Sassonia during his*

imprisonment. In Augsburg, in the Fugger houses and naturally at Biri Grande [in Venice]*, Titian had a private «room» where he withdrew to paint, distinct from the large space of the atelier were all the collective work took place. The members of the workshops participated in the master's work in various ways, both directly and indirectly. They completed barely sketched canvases and dressed them with «clothes and apparel», replicated themes and compositions of successful work, and reproduced the most popular portraits such as those of pontiffs or sovereigns.*" (Castelnuovo 2010) Around 1548, Titian painted in Augsburg (in oil on wood) the *Portrait of Nicolas Perrenot de Granvelele* (1486−1550)*,* a Burgundian politician, one of the most trusted advisers in Germany of the Emperor Charles V (Fig. 16). Despite the differences in age and in the facial features of the characters, if we look in parallel at the portrait from Sibiu and that of Nicolas Perrenot de Granvelele, we can see the same cut into space of the figures and the exaggerated width of the shoulders − marked by the sumptuous fur coat −, the monochromatism of both paintings etc., features that we also notice in the other portraits by Titian exemplified above (Figs. 11-16).

Longhi had once informed Ionescu that "*Titian repainted some German paintings, especially by Cranach*", and knowing that Titian also repainted some of his paintings (i.e. Fig. 15: the *Portrait of Gabriel de Luetz d'Aramont*[17] − commissioned in Venice, ca. 1541−1542 −, of which X-ray analysis showed that it was repainted three times by Titian), the painting in Sibiu and its radiography might reflect a similar case. Ionescu assumed that picture no. 1 (discovered by infrared) had probably been painted by a German artist (10−15 years before the 2nd portrait) and later, painting no. 2 was repainted by a 16th century Venetian master (its artistic achievement leading him to Titian).

The debate among art historians reflected in Ionescu's correspondence presents reasons and

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[17] Gabriel de Luetz d'Aramont was a highly skilled diplomat and man of arms, in the service of Francis I of France.

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explanations why the Sibiu painting might or might not be "Amberger, Giorgione or Titian?" It would be a tremendous opportunity if the debate could continue where it left off and come to a clear conclusion. Whatever the answer, as Roberto Longhi said in 1963: "*This beautiful portrait deserves to be brought to light.*"

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AN 'ANASTASIS' BY WENCESLAS COBERGER, A FLEMISH PAINTER, DRAFTSMAN, ARCHITECT, NUMISMATIST AND ENGINEER IN ITALY

Jan DE MAERE*

Abstract: *The 'Anastasis' painting by Marten de Vos as well as the engravings after it inspired many artists in the Netherlands and Italy. Thus, in the Brukenthal collection there is a painting dated c. 1600 by an anonymous contemporary Flemish follower. Stylistic analysis situates it in the circle of Francesco da Castello and Wenceslas Coberger. A similar emulation but of another level of quality is the van Baarle collection 'Anastasis' by Wenceslas Coberger painted in Naples c. 1589/1590. It illustrates the early career of Coberger, his artistic Flemish, Roman and Neapolitan sources. His activity in Naples, where an important and successful Flemish and Dutch community of artists was active from 1570 on and until the 1640's, is less known than his work realized after his return to Flanders.*

Keywords: *Marten de Vos, Wenceslas Coberger, Naples, Marco Pino, Brukenthal collection*

Rezumat: *Tabloul "Anastasis" de Marten de Vos şi gravurile după acesta au inspirat mai mulţi artişti din Ţările de Jos şi din Italia. Astfel, în colecţia Brukenthal se găseşte un tablou datat cca. 1600, datorat unui imitator anonim flamand contemporan. Analiza stilistică îl situează în cercul lui Francesco da Castello şi Wenceslas Coberger. O astfel de imitaţie, dar de un alt nivel calitativ este "Anastasis" de Wenceslas Coberger din colecţiavan Baarle, pictată la Napoli la cca. 1589/1590. Ea este reprezentativă pentru începutul carierei lui Coberger, pentru sursele sale flamande, romane şi napolitane. Activitatea sa de la Napoli, unde de la 1570 şi până în anii 1640 a activat cu success o importantă comunitate de artişti flamanzi şi olandezi, este mai puţin cunoscută decât creaţia sa realizată după întoarcerea sa în Flandra.*

Cuvinte-cheie: *Marten de Vos, Wenceslas Coberger, Naples, Marco Pino, colecţia Brukenthal*

1. Flemish artists and Italy in the mid-16th century

Since the early 16th century, Italian art became fashionable all over Europe. All ambitious artists were drawn there to update their inventions. Fontainebleau was the nearest direct source of Italian Mannerism for Flemish Artists. By their travels, Jan Gossaert Mabuse, Jan van Scorel, Michiel Coxie, Frans Floris, Maerten van Heemskerck and others initiated the Italianate style in the North. The abdication of Charles V in 1555 triggered religious and political conflicts, leading among other disasters to the Iconoclasm (August 1566), the outbreak of the Eighty Years War in 1568 and the Duke of Alva's military campaign of 1572. His troops rampaged and looted all over

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Flanders. Curious about the new developments in the arts there, many artists left for Italy because of these troubles and found a temporary or permanent refuge there. Almost all passed by Venice, Naples and Rome, where a Flemish artistic communities flourished. In Naples there were more northern artists active than in Rome and in Venice. Not having been trained in the *fresco* technique, they were specialists in the *maniera piccolo* (Sapori 2007, 14). Prints were an as important inspiration for their creations as for Italian artists. In 1587, Giovanni Battista Armenini complained about painters slavishly following prints and about the patrons accepting it (Armenini 1587, 222). Some Flemish artists settled in Italian towns and welcomed fellow locals, introducing them to the art market there.

After the return of his Italian study trip, Lodewijk Toeput called Pozzoserrato (Anwerp

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1550–1603/1605 Treviso) became, like Wenceslas Coberger somewhat later, a pupil of Marten de Vos in Antwerp. In 1573 he left for Venice and became a famous landscape painter in the Veneto, after a passage of 8 years in Jacopo Tintoretto's studio in Venice. Frescoing several villas in the Veneto, his Flemish style landscapes, indebted to Titian's and Domenico Campagnola's designs, influenced the early careers of Paul Bril, Joos de Momper, Tobias Verhaecht, Gillis and Frederick van Valckenborch when they passed in Treviso.

Hendrick van den Broeck (Paludanus) called *Arrigo Fiammingo* (Malines 1523–1597 Rome), the former court painter of Cosimo I de Medici (1557/58), was recorded in Naples in the years 1567/1568. He worked in the Catacombs of Saint Gaudiosus and painted a *Life of the Virgin* in the Santi Severino e Sossio church. Back in Rome, he became famous when he painted the *Resurrection of Christ* on opposite wall of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in the Sistine chapel in the Vatican (1571/1572), a few years before Coberger's arrival in Rome (1579). This composition was one of the influences on Coberger's '*van Baarle Anastasis*', painted in Naples (c. 1590).

After 1574, a strong Flemish community of artists was active and successful in Naples: the Malines born Cornelis Smet (Vargas 1991), also called *Pyp, Ferraro* or *Terrazzo*, was active in Naples during 1574–1592. Aert Mijtens called *Rinaldo Fiammingo* (master in Naples, 1578) was Smet's collaborator and married later his widow (1592). Dirck Hendricksz Centen (Teodoro d'Errico), Gaspard Hovic, Pieter Torres (Todos), Abraham Vincx, Jan Soens, Bartholomeus Spranger and others were successful in obtaining commissions there. Centen, active in Naples 1574–1606 (see his *Madonna del Rosario* dated 1578 in the Farnese collection at the Museo del Capodimento, Fig. 18 and his *Resurrection* in San Domenico Maggiore, Naples, dated 1605–1606) and Smet (see his *Madonna del Rosario* dated c. 1590, in the Cathedral of Muro Lucano, Fig. 17) had large and successful studios, serving as a base for Flemish artists arriving in Naples (Previtali 1980). Smet exercised a strong influence on the early work of Coberger and on the local

artists until the turn of the century, as is evidenced by the *Madona del Rosario* by Aert Mijtens in the St Priscus Cathedral of Nocera Inferiore (Fig. 19). In Naples, Coberger lived in a house in the Strada Toledo in front of the Cesare d'Avalos Palace.

2. Coberger's early career in Antwerp, Rome and Naples

Wenceslas Cobergher (Antwerp 1557/1561–23 November 1634 Brussels) was a painter, engraver, numismatist, archeologist, chemist, architect antiquarian, economist, mathematician, and engineer, the natural child of Wenceslas I Cobergher, Duke of Bohemia, and Catharina Raems (attested by a deed – the will of his deceased mother – dated May 1579, Antwerp). He is one of the fathers of the Flemish Baroque style in Architecture, inspired by the Il Gesu church, Santa Maria in Transpontina church and Santa Maria in Vallicella in Rome. In 1573, he was an apprentice to Marten de Vos, whose style influenced him strongly, even later in his Italian period. In 1579, he left briefly for Paris, returned to Antwerp to be informed about his deceased mother's will and then moved to Naples and to Rome in 1579. A friend had lent him 130 florins Carolus (i. e. Carolus d'Or) to finance the trip. He settled in Naples on 5 October 1580 (as attested by a contract) where he remained until 1604. Initially, he worked '*locatio personae*' for another artist from Mechelen, Cornelis Smet, established in Naples since 1574. Smet paid him 8 *Ducaten* a day plus housing. Landscape settings and realistic elements were greatly in demand and appeared in Neapolitan art, influenced by the many northern artists there.

In 1583, Coberger returned briefly to Antwerp. He is mentioned again in Naples as '*maestro Vincenzo*' in 1587, when he painted his first documented commission: the *Martyr of Saint Bartholomew*. Rapidly, he was appreciated by the wealthy Neapolitan families. He was held in high esteem by the Carafa family. He painted a *Resurrection* in San Domenico Maggiore church, Capella del Crussificio (Fig. 12) for the funeral monument of Ferranti and Giovanni Pietro Carafa (1593) commissioned by the Grand Admiral of the Viceregno Francesco Carafa. Other members of the family such as Tiberio, Diomede (Francesco's

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father) and the abbess Beatrice also commissioned him paintings. In Rome (1590), he witnessed the completion of the dome of Saint Peter's Basilica and gathered an important collection of medals and coins, which he documented by drawings and described them in a catalogue (Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium). As an architect, he designed fountains and canals, palaces, and fortifications.

In 1591, he befriended the Flemish painter Jacob Francaert the Elder (b. 1551/1601) for whom he worked some time. He also became acquainted there with Jan Breughel and Paul Bril. In 1592, he collaborated with Giovanni Battista Cavagna, Girolamo Imperato and Fabrizio Santafede at the decoration of the Church in La Vid, and in 1594 for the ceiling of the Church of the Annunciation.

In 1597, he moved to Rome (as attested in a letter to Peter Paul Rubens by Jacques Cools), where he, Paul Bril and Cristoforo Roncalli appraised the art collection of Cardinal Bonelli. He was recognized as a renowned connoisseur. After the death of his first wife Michaela Cerf, he (40 years old) married on 7 July 1599 in Rome the Brussels born Suzanna Francaert. The 15 years old daughter of Jacob Francaert gave him 9 children. In 1601, he is mentioned in the register of the Santa Maria del Populo parish church in Rome as having 41 years of age. He met probably the French humanist and friend of Rubens Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc in Rome in 1601 and later in Flanders in 1606 in connection with his numismatic expertise. In Rome, he met Paul Bril again and befriended Frans van de Casteele and Balthazar Lauwers. On 23rd of February 1601, also there, he supervised and participated in the realization of 90 *Scenes of Eremites* for Don Pedro Toledo Marquess di Villafranca for the Monasterio dell'Annunziata at Villafranca del Bierzo. The compositions were inspired by the engravings after Maerten de Vos (engraved by Johan I Sadeler and Raphael Sadeler), his former master. He collaborated in this project with Paul Bril, Willem van Nieulandt and Jacob Francaert. He tried to sell his important collection of antique coins which he cataloged in a set of manuscripts to the Duke of Aerschot.

In Naples, his post-Tridentine style incorporated Mannerist elements (from Marten de Vos) and Renaissance elements (from Raphael and Michelangelo), strongly influenced by the then leading artist there, Marco Pino (On Marco Pino and his work: Fiorillo 1984; Zezza 2003). A precise anatomical rendering, a dark contrasting color harmony and a well-studied complex composition were the foundation of his style. '*De Jonge Handboog*' archers guild of Antwerp commissioned him a 'Saint Sebastian' (now in the Nancy Museum) for the cathedral of Our Lady in 1598, when he worked still in Rome.

3. Coberger in Flanders

The Catholic governors of the Low Countries, Archduke Albrecht and Infant Isabella, allowed him an annual pension of 1,500 florins as their architect and engineer. He returned to Brussels (established in the Violetstraat) in September 1601. From September 1603 until April 1604, he was back in Rome to settle family matters because of the death of in-laws. On 12 November 1604, the archdukes appointed him as '*architecte imaginaire*' and in the same year he was admitted as free master in the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke and a year later as member of the Guild of Romanists there.

As many of his colleagues, back in his native country, he adapted to the local style, watering down the stylistic innovations he knew from his Italian stay. He eliminated the Mannerist effect and adapted his style to the local demand for Classicist Baroque paintings by the Archdukes. In 1610, when he designed with the French engineer the fountains for the ponds near the archducal palace in Brussels in the 'tempietto' style. He designed the cloister of the Discalced Carmelites in Brussel (1607-11).

After 1615, he worked mainly as a successful architect. He included Roman Baroque style architecture in all his designs for churches, castles, town halls (in Ath) and in 1618 '*Bergen van Barmhartigheid*' (1618, public pawnshops) in the Spanish Netherlands. His most important achievement is the church of the Virgin in Scherpenheuvel (design 1606; built 1609 – 1624, the belfry remained unfinished). He designed this bastion of the Catholic Counter Reformation as a pilgrim church, an allegoric homage to the Virgin

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Mary. He also designed the Saint Augustine church in Antwerp (started 1615). The Archdukes mentionned him as '*uomo universal'* and augmented in 1610 his salary from 1,500 to 1,800 guilders (Rubens' salary was then only 500 guilders). In 1618, he was appointed as General Superintendent of the public pawn shops (*monts-de-piété*), a concept he introduced in Flanders following the example of the Italian *Monti di Pietà*. As a hydraulic engineer he designed successful drainage works in the *Kempen* and in *de Moëren* near *Dunckercke* (1619 à 1625)*,* for which the Archdukes bestowed the title of baron upon him (1618), master of the seigneuries of Coberger, Sint Antheunis and Groenlandt. He died in Brussels on 23 November 1634, leaving his family in big financial trouble because of the cost of these drainage works. All his possessions had to be sold at his death. (On the life and work of W. Coberger: Plantenga 1926, 3-46; Fokker 1930–1931, 170; Mörsch 1965, 21-82; Bodart 1970; Soetaert 1978; Soetaert 1979, 164–174; Previtali 1980; Causa 1983, 90; Sotaert 1986, 89-104; De Castris 1991, 88-106 and 323-324; De Maere, Wabbes 1994, I, 102-103 and II, 262-264; Nappi 1995, 145-147; Meganck 1998; De Mieri 2012; Nappi 2015).

4. The v*an Baarle Resurrection* by Coberger (Figs. 1–2)

After 1525, all the later *Resurrection* compositions are indebted to Titian's *Averoldi altarpiece* in Saints Nazzaro e Celso church in Brescia (1522) and to Michelangelo's sinuous figures and natural corporality. This was also the case for the *Resurrection* by Martin de Vos (Fig. 8). Prints and book illustrations provide important information about the transmission of images, styles, and their diffusion. Engravings after this work by Marten de Vos (Figs. 4–7) inspired many artists, not only in Flanders but also in Italy.

Among the artists inspired by them should be noted the anonymous author of the *Anastasis* (panel with a 6-pointed star as panel mark on the back 54.5 x 41 cm, inv. no. 1231) in the Baron Samuel von Brukenthal collection in Sibiu (Die Gemälde- Galerie 1844, 39, cat. nr. 6; Führer 1893, 19, cat. nr. 44; Csaki 1901, 332, cat. nr. 1183; Csaki 1909, 370, cat. nr. 1231; Csaki 1926, 30, cat. nr. 1231; Jan De

Maere inventory 2005, inv. 255), purchased as a work of Marten de Vos, but attributed later (since 1893) to the manner of Marten de Vos and here to the circle of Francesco da Castello, a Flemish artist born as Frans van de Kasteele (Brussels 1541–1621 Rome) ca. 1600 in Italy (On Francesco da Castello: Dacos 1979; Borsellino 1983/1984; Fiamminghi a Roma 1995; Carretero Calvo *et al.* 2021; Dacos *et al.* 1995). It shows a certain stylistic similarity with the works by Francesco da Castello (Figs. 9–11), as *The Last Judgement* (266 x 223 cm, auctioned at Dorotheum in Vienna on 21 April 2015, no. 210), *The Resurrection of the Virgin* (32 x 24 cm, auctioned by La Suite on 27 April 2013, no. 63) and *Virgin with Saints*, dated 1595, in the St Bernardine Capucin convent in Orte, but also some connections with the Coberger *Resurrection*. It is apparently painted on an Antwerp panel marked with a six-pointed star on the back (of a panel maker?). Its composition (Fig. 3) is obviously derived from one of these prints, but the artist, as Coberger did, adapted the de Vos inspiration to his own stylistic expression. Both paintings have besides their Antwerp Mannerist style also an Italian flavor, as well in their chromatic as in Italian style influences. De Vos' dynamic iconography bestows the scene with dramatic power. The general composition, Christ's appearance in a circle of divine light and the running, sleeping, and panicked soldiers are adopted by many artists in different countries. But the soldier on the right in the Brukenthal painting is quite similar in casquet and outfit to the same figure in the Coberger *Resurrection*.

The van Baarle 'Anastasis' (Figs. 1-2) by Wenceslas Coberger (oil on panel, 82 x 62 cm), was painted in Naples and is datable at circa 1589/1590. Its oldest documented provenance is with Jonkheer Pieter van Baarle (1896–1963) in the Netherlands. Since 1932 it belonged to Baron Jean Joseph Marie Benoit van Caloen de Bassegem (1884–1972). In 1950 it was included in the Baron Jean van Caloen Foundation and was kept in the Loppem castle in Zedelgem (Belgium). His son Baron Roland van Caloen de Bassegem (1920–2014) sold it in the 1990's. In November 2002 it was auctioned at Servarts in Brussels (nr. 77) and entered the M. Marx collection in Leuven. Nowadays it belongs to a

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private collection in Luxemburg. An infrared radiograph made by Maximiliaan Martens at the Ghent University's Laboratory on March 21, 2023 (Fig. 2) reveals a fine and secure free-handed underdrawing for the figures. Initially, a much wider red mantle was painted, but in the work's final stage Coberger reduced it, eliminating also details in the landscape.

In the van Baarle and the Carafa Resurrections, Coberger did not follow Martin de Vos literally, but as many of the latter's many pupils, he was early on influenced by the Italian sources of his master. Later through his travels in Rome and Naples he integrated all these influences in his personal style.

In the vigorous *Resurrection* (Fig. 12) in San Domenico Maggiore (canvas, 233 x 150 cm, signed on banderole lower left, commissioned in 1589), Coberger was influenced by the narrative style of Hendrick van den Broeck (Figs. 13–14), enhancing the latter's Christ's statuesque presence by a strong divine light and in a chromatic closer to Marco Pino's (Figs. 15–16).

The lying soldiers are seen from behind and the running one create the link between the two halves of the composition. The painter observes the scene from a 30° angle from the left viewpoint (De Maere 2011, 143-145), the construction lines of this spatial concept unite with the vanishing point of the diagonal construction lines of the central perspective. This gives the Christ figure in the upper V construction a sense of ascension and movement, adding a spectacular spatial dimension to the composition.

Marco Pino da Siena (Costa da Pino 1517/22–1588 (?) Naples), his most famous contemporary in Naples, also was influential on the *van Baarle Resurrection*. The latter died shortly before Carafa was able to commission the '*Resurrection altar piece*' for the Capella del Crussificio in the Church San Domenico Maggiore. Compared to that altarpiece, Coberger displayed a more realistic approach and simplified the setting. The much smaller *van Baarle Resurrection* (probably earlier) is carefully painted in a more typical Flemish Mannerist style on panel. He changed the pastel halve-tones in the big canvas for the Carafa Resurrecction to a Flemish chromatism in primary blue, red and yellow. He also changed the light effect by introducing a chiaroscuro effect by combining two light sources: the realistic early morning light, and the blinding divine refulgence without shadow. In San Domenico Maggiore, the divine light is the only source. In both works the latter cast shadows on the blinded soldiers. In both, the body of Christ is transluminant and idealized, but more subdued in the van Baarle composition. There, Christ's body is more physically present. Its radiance is heavenly and limited to the inside of the cloud. It does not cast shadows. Christ's victory is total. He looks up to the Father, announcing Salvation. The powerful sculptural and muscular bodies of the blinded soldiers create a dynamic effect, enhancing their value as witnesses of the fact that Christ did arise from the tomb that morning of the third day. The *van Baarle Resurrection* illustrates a shift in theological concept, since in the New Testament the Holy Ladies discover the empty tomb, not knowing what happened. An angel came and told them. The Apostle Peter came later, saw and believed.

Michelangelo's nudes were a source of emulation as well for Hendrick Van den Broeck (Figs. 13-14), Marten de Vos (Figs. 9-11) and Marco Pino (Figs. 15-16), as for Coberger. The latter combined here Flemish realistic elements and the Italian tradition, drawing on artistic precedents. He illustrates in this resurrection scene his Faith of a high order, an exalted state of mystic consciousness. The characteristics of the *Resurrection* (signed and dated 1564) by his former master Marten de Vos (Zweite, 1980, cat. nr. 12 p. 266, fig 14) and earlier examples by Barent van Orley, were still strongly determining his style in Naples. Also, drawings by the then (1577) already deceased Hans Speckaert, frequently shown by his heir Anthonis van Santvoort (via Cornelis Cort) to visiting artists in Rome, had an impact probably on Coberger. This was also the case for paintings by the artists visiting van Santvoort, such as Hans Speckaert. His figures in the Louvre *Conversion of Saint Paul*, dated 1570–1577 have the same muscular-monumental presence and empathic-theatrical attitudes (Fig. 20). Coberger's colour harmony is comparable to the Louvre painting and the *Jael and Sissera* in the Boymans van Beuningen (Rotterdam). Dionys Calvaert

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(1540–1619), active in Rome and in Bologna since the 1560's, had also an impact on Coberger, as we see in Coberger's copy (Warsaw National Museum of Fine Arts) after Calvaert's *Noli me Tangere* (Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art Luxembourg, inv. 2015-225/001; canvas 118.5 x 87.3 cm).

The *van Baarle Resurrection* combines all these different aspects in a harmonious and dynamic concept, illustrating the very moment of Christ's raising from the tomb as a theological 'verifiable fact'. Some stylistic elements are taken from earlier compositions by Pino, such as the arms and hands gestures and the running soldier (also in Pino's drawing '*Caduto di S. Paolo*', Pin Nat Siena). The facial expressions are derived from the Marten de Vos figures in the latter's *Resurrection* (1564). The Christ figure is almost identical to the drawing by Hendrick Van den Broeck, dated c. 1570/1580 (Fig. 14).

The *van Baarle Resurrection* is vigorous in color, still lacking the Caravaggesque effect of Coberger's later baroque style. The sculptural frightened soldiers in the foreground move their powerful muscles in the shadows of the early morning light. Both legs and the right arm of the strongly lit Christ figure are directly derived from Pino's *Resurrection* in S. Lucia del Gonfalone (Fig. 16), Roma (c. 1569/1570: Zezza 2003, cat. nr. A 76).

The divine blinding light is beyond the sense of sight. Its radiant splendor acts as a spiritual encounter, a heavenly vision defying earthly optics. It does not cast a shadow. The observing soldiers shield their eyes. The divine refulgence is an aspect of the divine presence, a spiritual communication. In the first chapter of the Bible (*Genesis*, 1:3: '*Be light made and light was made*'), Elohim creates light by '*fiat*'. In the *Gospel of Saint John* (*John*, 1:5), the first verse describes God as Light. The Flemish Augustine mystic canon Jan van Ruysbroeck (1293–1381) described in middle Dutch vernacular in *The Book of Beguines* (Van Ruysbroek 1913, 40) the 'Uncreated Light' as an intermediary stage leading to the fourth step in mystic elevation.

The New Testament writings do not contain a description of the moment of the resurrection (literally: *awakening*), only accounts of the empty tomb and the later appearances of Christ as '*Kyrios*' (Vermes 2008, 46-51). The visionary Saint Paul described the resurrection as a physical event, which should not to be taken in a literal sense. He sees the celestial resurrected body (*soma*) animated by Light of the Spirit (*pneumatikos*) instead of the soul (*psychikos*), as a mythological metaphoric understanding of Christ's victory over dead (Øistein Endsjø 2009, 223-224). This idea was taken over by the Gospels, which emphasize more the material aspect to counter the spiritual interpretation, as a historical event that can be verified by the empty tomb. The two opposing interpretations were still alive in Coberger's time. Therefore, in the interpretation in the van Baarle Resurrection, the very moment is exemplified as a kind of visual proof, the witnessing of the event, is enhanced by the dramatic reaction of the soldiers.

5. External influences and tradition in Coberger's *van Baarle Resurrection*

Around 1540, there was a noticeable change in the style of Netherlandish figure painting. The leading painters began to design in a mode that was directly oriented toward the works of the post-Raphaelesque artists working in Italy and France. Even the paintings of seasoned artists such as Jan van Scorel, Maerten van Heemskerck and stained glass concepts by Michiel Coxie show evidence of this stylistic shift and the demand for it by patrons. Northern artists had learned to observe human anatomy as a scientific tool, leading to the '*antico-Italianate nude*' (Van Den Boogert 1992). The circulation of French and Italian prints after Raphael and the early works of his followers helped to stimulate the overall shift in taste in the late 1520s and 1530s. From 1540 on, the output of Parisian and Fontainebleau etchers and engravers was critical for the development of new stylistic trends, adapting foreign models to local traditions in the Netherlands and especially in Antwerp. Extended Italian study trips led often to the permanent establishment of northern artists all over Italy.

In Naples, Coberger emulated Michelangelo, Raphael, Barend van Orley, Marten de Vos, Hans Speckaert, Cornelis Smet and Marco Pino in a personal Late Mannerist style (e.g.,

Pino works in Naples in the church S. Severino e Sossio in 1571). His style bears witness of Taddeo Zuccaro's, Perino's '*svoltessa di disegno'*, Pellegrino Tibaldi's Mannerism, Frederico Barocci's influences; but above all of Michelangelo's heroic '*Terrabilita'* and of Raphael's complex pyramidal compositional formulas. Coberger uses contrapposto and above all '*Furia'*, like fire in motion. The narrative *decorum* and *affetti* are sacrificed to the ideal of the superhuman beauty of Christ's body.

The main aspect of Christ's attitude of this composition is derived from Raphael's '*Transfiguration*' and Nicolas Beatrizet's engraving after it. It influenced Marten de Vos and Marco Pino (and Coberger as well) in various paintings, such as Pino's '*Transfiguration*' in the Chiesa del Gesù Vecchio in Naples. Different other versions of Pino's '*Resurrection*' are in the Galleria Borghese (inv. 205) in Rome (Fig. 15), dated circa 1569/1570, in the Oratory of the Gonfalone (Fig. 16) in Rome, dated circa 1569/1570 and in Chiesa di S. Maria del Populo agli Incurabili in Naples, dated in 1577 (46.5 x 81.5 cm). Coberger most probably studied Pino's and Hendrick van den Broeck's works (Figs. 13-14) in Rome and Naples and adopted some stylistic elements in his personal style.

The young Giuseppe Cesari Cavalier d'Arpino (1568–1640) was in Naples where he received the commission on 28 June 1589 for the fresco murals of the choir vault of the Certosa di San Martino. Before he left for Rome in 1591, he most probably met Coberger. In Rome and in Naples Cavalier d'Arpino became familiar with the Flemish painting style. His mannerist *Christ Taken* (panel 89 x 62 cm) for the Osservatori Domenico, dated c. 1597 illustrates the assimilation by this mayor artist of a great number of Italian and Flemish examples. He was probably also a source for Coberger.

6. A catalogue of paintings by Coberger

a. Painted in the Naples region (1579–1598):

- *Martyrdom of S. Barthelemew*, Naples, Sancta Maria di Costantinopoli, 1587;
- lost panel, Chiesa della Sapienza, 1588;
- *Ecce Homo*, Naples, Santa Maria di Piedigrotta, 1588–1589, commissioned by

Alfonso de Herrera, Bishop of Ariano (*Calvario* and 4 small panels mentioned for the Capello di Passione: *Ecce Homo/Flagellation/San Dismo* and *Elevation of the Cross*);
- *Elevazione delle Croce*, Naples, Santa Maria di Piedigrotta, in collaboration with his studio, 1588–1589;
- *Calvario,* Naples, Santa Maria di Piedigrotta, 1588–1589;
- *Raising of Lazar*, Santa Maria di Piedigrotta church, 1588-1589;
- *Resurrection*, San Domenico Maggiore church (Fig. 12), Capella del Crussificio, canvas 233 x 150 cm, signed on banderole lower left, 1589, tomb monument of Ferranti and Giovanni Pietro Carafa (1593);
- *Virgin and Child with Saint Catarina of Alexandria, Thomas Aquinas and Catarina of Siena*, Santa Catarina church, Formello, 1588/1590 for Bishop Tiberio Carafa;
- *San Silvestro tra I Santi Giuliano, Giuliano e Basilio*, for the Chiesa di San Francisco di Assisi, Lecce, now in Museo Provinciale Sigismundo Castromediana, Lecce;
- *unidentified subject,* Maria del Porto, church of Maria di Constantinopel;
- *unidentified subject,* Vibo, Valentia, church di San Leoluca;
- *Annunciation,* signed, Ariano Irpino, Palazzo Vescovile, panel c. 1590/1595 (Fig. 22);
- *Giubileo di S. Pietro ad Aram* church, 1590's;
- *Procession of the Madonna of Lepanto*;
- *Baptism of Christ*, S. Sebastiano church;
- *S. Catherina,* Vibo Valentia church;
- *Immaculate Virgin*, Palazzo Arcivescovile, 1588;
- *Saint Gregory, Bishop of Armenia*, San Gregorio Armeno for Abbess Beatrice Carafa, 1580–1582;
- *Madonna del Rosario*, Chiesa della Trinita at Piano di Sorrento (Naples);
- *Christ as a Gardener*, National Museum Fine Arts in Warsaw (Fig. 21);
- *Martirio di Sant Erasmo* (lost) Chiesa dello Spirito Santo, c. 1590;
- *Nativita a lume di notte*, Burgos, Church Santa Maria de la Vid, 1592 at the request of the Viceroy Juan de Zuniga y Avellaneda;
- *Aspettatione della Virgine*, Capela di Ospedale di Santa Maria della Pieta di Penerenda de Duero, where he finished the painting *Aspettatione della Vergine*

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commenced by '*Giovanni Scurs fiammingo'(Soens?)* paid 33 Ducati;
- *A copy after Raffaello*, for Diomede Carafa, April 1596.

b. Painted in Rome and before his return to Flanders (1598-1604):

- *Holy Spirit*, Chiesa Nuova S. Maria in Vallicella, 1598;
- *Portrait of Cardinal Francesco-Maria Tarugi*, mezzo busto, signed and dated 1598, collection Pisani, Naples;
- *Portrait of Cardinal Francesco-Maria Tarugi,* full length with a landscape in the style of Paul Bril;
- *Pentecost*, Santa Maria in Vallicella, Capella di Diego del Campo;
- *Martyrdom of S. Sebastian* (Fig. 23), commissioned by the Antwerp Young Archers Guild for the Antwerp cathedral (dated 1598, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nancy inv. 92), later modified (1605).

c. Painted in the Southern Netherlands (Antwerp 1604/ Brussels Violetstraat, 1605-1634):

- *Deposition*, painted for the S. Goriks chapel, Brussels (Brussels, Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts) 1605 (Fig. 25);
- *St. Helena with the Cross*, S. Jacobs church Antwerp, 1605 (Fig. 24);
- *Ecce Homo*, Museum Toulouse B A, 1604/1610.

W. Coberger realised also one engraving: *Virgin and Child*, dated 1586 and monogrammed W.C.L.E.F (Strauss, Spike 1982, nr. 578).

7. The Brukenthal Ressurection after Martin de Vos

Prints and book illustrations provide important information about the transmission of images, styles, and their diffusion. Engravings after Marten de Vos inspired many artists, not only in Flanders but also in Italy. The Brukenthal Resurrection has a certain stylistic similarity with the work by Frans van de Kasteele (Francesco da Castello) and some connections with the Coberger *Resurrection*. It is painted on an apparent Antwerp panel marked with a six-pointed star on the back (of a panel maker?). It is obviously derived from one of these prints, but the artist, as Coberger did, adapted the de Vos inspiration to his own stylistic expression. Both paintings have besides their Antwerp Mannerist style also an Italian flavor, as well in their chromatism as in Italian style influences. De Vos' dynamic iconography bestows the scene with dramatic power. The general composition, Christ's appearance in a circle of divine light and the running soldiers and the sleeping and panicked soldiers are taken over by many artists in different countries. But the soldier on the right in the Brukenthal painting is quite similar in casquet and outfit to the same figure in the Coberger Resurrection.

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Fig. 2. Infrared reflectography of *The van Baarle 'Anastasis'*.

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Fig. 1. Wenceslas Coberger, *Resurrection* / *The van Baarle 'Anastasis'*, c. 1589–1590. (Private collection, Luxemburg)
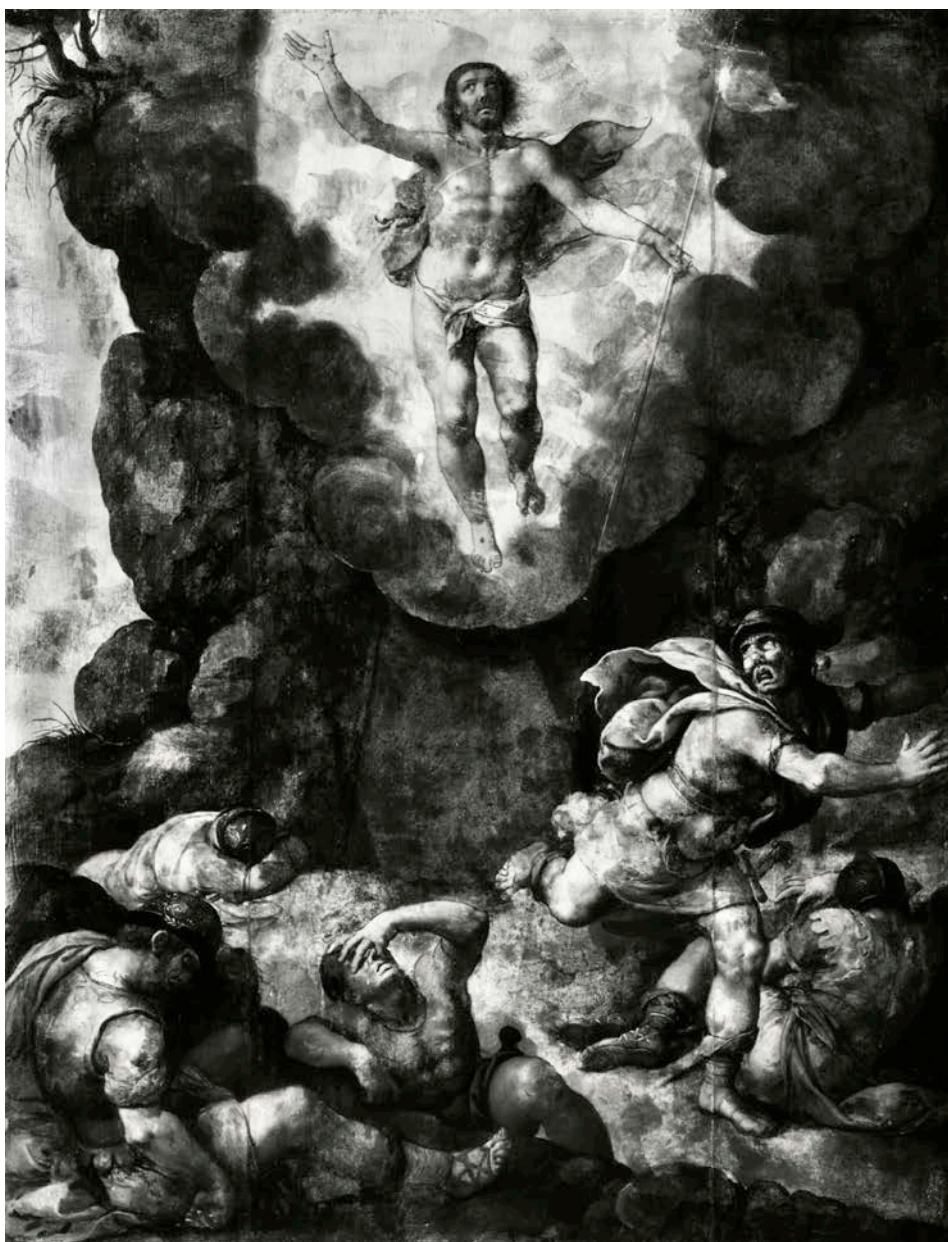
Fig. 2. Infrared reflectography of *The van Baarle 'Anastasis'*

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Fig. 20 Hans Speckaert, *Conversion of Saint Paul*, 1570–1577

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"THE VISION OF SAINT FRANCIS", A WORK FROM THE ITALIAN PAINTING COLLECTION OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM

Raluca-Georgiana COBUZ*

Abstract: *One of the works from the Italian Painting Collection of the Brukenthal National Museum, attributed to an anonymous artist after Guido Reni, represents Saint Francis of Assisi kneeled, having a vision with singing angels. The aim of the present paper is to analyze this work of art, to identify other similar contemporary compositions and to explain why this painting was considered a copy after Guido Reni. Besides searching for analogies and the chromatic analysis, in hopes of finding the original source of inspiration, one may notice that instead an approach towards the fresh, optimist style of the Bolognese School of painting (respectively, in this case, of Guido Reni), the work is closer to the tenebrism and to the dramatic realism of Caravaggio's style, even more towards his followers in the Neapolitan School of painting. This suggests either the Roman artistic environment or even the Kingdom of Naples as the place where the painting from the Sibiu museum collection was made. Last but not least, after the comparison with numerous other works with this subject, we may suggest the reattribution of the work to an anonymous of the Neapolitan school, working most likely in mid-17th century.*

Keywords: *Guido Reni, St Francis of Assisi, church of Assisi, vision, angels*

Rezumat: *Una dintre lucrările din Colecția de Pictură Italiană a Muzeului Național Brukenthal, atribuită unui artist anonim după Guido Reni, îl reprezintă pe Sfântul Francisc de Assisi îngenuncheat în timp ce are o viziune cu îngeri muzicanți. Articolul de față își propune să analizeze pictura în discuție, să identifice alte compoziții de epocă similare și să elucideze de ce a fost considerată această lucrare drept copie după Guido Reni. Pe lângă căutarea de analogii și analiza cromaticii tabloului, în speranța de a găsi sursa de inspirație originală, se constată o tendință nu înspre stilul proaspăt, aerisit și optimist al școlii bologneze (reprezentate de Guido Reni în acest caz), ci înspre tenebrismul și realismul dramatic al stilului caravagist și mai mult, spre școala napolitană. Acest lucru sugerează fie spațiul artistic roman drept loc de execuție al tabloului din colecția muzeului sibian, fie Regatul Neapolelui. Nu în ultimul rând, în urma comparației cu numeroase alte lucrări cu această temă, se propune reatribuirea lucrării pentru un anonim al școlii napolitane de pictură, activ cel mai probabil la mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Guido Reni, Sf. Francisc din Assisi, biserica din Assisi, viziune, îngeri*

Introduction

In the Italian Painting Collection of the Brukenthal National Museum there are three works depicting Saint Francis. The first one, the subject of this study, simply entitled *Saint Francis*, is listed in the electronic register as a 19th century copy after Guido Reni (1575–1642), and as coming from the Brukenthal Collection. In the past it was attributed also to Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, called Guercino

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(1591–1666) (Fig 1, inv. PI. 51, oil on canvas, 169,5 x 117 cm). The second work, entitled *Saint Franciscus Seraphicus*, was made after Agostino Carracci (1557–1602) by an anonymous painter of the 17th century. This painting also comes from the Brukenthal Collection and was restored in 1922 (Fig 2, Inv. PI. 179, oil on canvas, 91 x 72 cm). The third painting *Saint Francis*, purchased by Samuel von Brukenthal as *Saint Augustine* (Fig. 3, inv. PI. 782, oil on canvas, 105 x 78 cm) by an anonymous Italian painter, it appears in the catalogues from 1844 (Die Gemälde-Galerie 1844, 7, nr. cat. 32), 1893 (Csaki 1893, 8, nr. crt. 90). In 1894 Theodor

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von Frimmel mentions that the painting was made by an 17th c. anonymous Neapolitan painter (Frimmel 1894, 81), attribution present also in catalogue from 1909 (Csaki 1909, 236, nr. cat. 782), 1926 (Csaki 1923, 20, nr. crt. 782) and 1941 (Spek 1941, 24, nr. crt. 782). Currently, the painting is attributed to Pietro Vecchia (1602/3–1670). As previously stated, the present study will focus on the first painting, the so-called copy after Guido Reni, in the hope of finding the original of the Brukenthal Pinacoteca painting.

This painting is one of the less researched works in the Brukenthal European Art Gallery. It appears in the catalogue from 1844 as attributed to Franz Barbieri, called Guercino da Cento (Cento, 1591–Bologna, 1666), a student of the Carraccis (Die Gemälde-Galerie 1844, 10, nr. cat. 48) and in the catalogues from 1893, 1901 and 1909 as attributed to the School of Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, called Guercino (Csaki 1893, 4, nr. crt. 49; Csaki 1901, 14, nr. crt. 45; Csaki 1909, 17, nr. cat. 51). In the catalogue from 1921 the inventory number 51 appears „in the storage" and nearby it is written in pencil „School of Guercino, Saint Francis" (Csaki 1921, 6), as well as in the 1923 and 1926 editions (Csaki 1923, 6; Csaki 1926, 6). In the 1894 edition the inventory numbers between 52 and 55 are missing altogether, as well as in the catalogue from 1937, where the numbers 50 and 53 are missing as well (Spek 1937, 12), for the same reason. Only in 2008 this work is mentioned by Dana Hrib, with the attribution „Guido Reni?, previous attribution Guercino, the school of Guercino" (Hrib 2008, 32), as the electronic register states. Considering all this, we might state that this change of attribution took place in the second half of the 20th century without it being published anywhere, except in the museum's registers.

In order to discuss the work, it is important to first analyze its composition. The vertically arranged composition has three figures, one being Saint Francis, rendered kneeling in semi-profile to the left, placed to the right side. To the upper left corner of the image two angels appear to the saint, singing towards him. On the stone in front of Francis, on which he rests his right arm, there is a skull laid on the right side, the crucifix and a rosary hanging on

the side of the stone, with its cross facing us, and much lower, an opened book. The saint is dressed in a brown robe, given by the very bishop of Assisi when Francis donated all his wealth, at the beginning of his new life dedicated entirely to worshipping God. The skull in front of him represents the invitation to meditation upon death, as well as the extinguished rushlight nearby. These two symbols of *Vanitas* highlight the passing of Time and Life, along with the symbols specific to Francis and his glory such as the book, crucifix and the rosary (Giorgi 2010, 57).

The scene is placed inside a cave, judging by the darkness of the background, the large plant rising from the ground and the opening towards a simple yet suggestive landscape in the background to the right. The building rendered on the horizon line might be the saint's church in Assisi, because its appearance resembles the actual one, although simplified. In the painting, the church has the same façade and the bell tower nearby, to the left side. The presence of the saint's church in the image is symbolical, as it usually happens, because the construction of his church was finished in 1253 (so after more than two decades after his death), and also, the La Verna mountain (on which the episode rendered happened) is about 110 kilometers away from the actual church in Assisi, so it would not be visible from there.

Some notes on Saint Francis

Before discussing the moment rendered in the painting, it is necessary to first contextualize the event. The earliest sources that discuss Saint Francis' life are the writings of Thomas de Celano, *Vita prima/secunda S. Francisci*, published around 1228–1229/1246, *Tractatus de miraculis beati Francisci* from 1250–1252 and (Sanctus) Bonaventura, *Legenda maior S. Francisci* from 1262 (Kirschbaum 1974, VI, 259). It is known about his life that in 1181, in the town of Assisi, Giovanna (also known as Lady Pica) gave birth to a boy called Giovanni. At that time, the boy's father – a rich textile merchant called Pietro di Bernardone – was in France in a business trip, and on his return he decided to change the little boy's name to Francis, because of his love for the French lands (Hesse 2015, 17), and also because his wife was from Provence (Farmer 1999, 214).

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In the summer of 1224, feeling that he would not have long to live, Francis decided to return to the La Verna mountain, which he was very fond of (Hesse 2015, 54). He told his three companions to remain at the bottom of the mountain, while Francis went alone in the woods, concentrated in his thoughts, moment in which it is said that he recieved his stigmata during a vision in which Christ himself appeared (Hesse 2015, 55). This event of major importance for Francis' life occured on September 17th, 1224 (when he was 43 years old, two years before his death), and shortly after that vision he felt ill and lost his eyesight the next year (Farmer 1999, 215). The Brukenthal painting shows an event after St. Francis received the stigmata, when the saint, already blind and sick, asks one of the friars to sing to him. The friar, shy, refuses and in that night Francis heared the angels of God singing for him in Heaven (Hesse 2015, 57). Despite these events, his stigmata are not visible in our painting. Francis died at the age of 45, in Portiuncula and was canonised in 1228 by his old time friend, Pope Gregory IX, the former Cardinal Ugolino, and since then Francis has become one of the most beloved saints who ever existed, according to the painter Cimabue (1240–1302), being celebrated on October the 4th (Farmer 1999, 215-216).

Guido Reni

I am starting the analysis following the present attribution that this painting is considered a copy after Guido Reni. Guido Reni was a painter from Bologna who was inspired by the School of Carracci and became so highly regarded that his craftsmanship was placed on the same level as that of Raphael (Gombrich 2012, 394). In his art, Guido pursued the ideal beauty of nature, the perfection of the ancient Greek sculpture, rejecting any imperfection and ugly element from reality, principles that were completely opposed to what Caravaggio preached in his work at the same time (Gombrich 2012, 394-395). The admiration for the classical era and the ancient art was taken from Annibale Carracci, who inspired other great artists such as Domenichino and Francesco Albani (Bertelli; Briganti; Giuliano 2000, 15). At the beginning of the 17th century, Bologna was considered the cradle of art as a consequence of the Academy founded by the

Carraccis, where Guido Reni perfected his technique. Later, following his first trip to Rome, where he felt the full influence of the works of Raphael and Carravaggio, Reni soon became one of the greatest personalities of the early Baroque period (Giorgi 2010, 180, 310). He settled in Bologna, where he revived the classical ideal intertwined with Renaissance elements, resulting in a solemn beauty, as close as possible to the natural reality (Giorgi 2010, 310). It should also be mentioned that at the beginning of the 17th century Bologna was the second city as importance after Rome, amongst the Papal States, in terms of number of cardinals, artists and religious buildings (Morselli 2022, 7).

In order to look at some examples of compositions with this subject by Guido Reni, one may look to the painting kept at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, entitled *Saint Francis consoled by angelic music* (Fig. 4, oil on copper, 44 x 43 cm, 1605–1610), where we have a reverse image, "in the mirror", unlike ours, with Francis seated, eyes closed and head resting on his left hand, while in the opposite corner descends an angel playing the violin. The landscape in the background is similar, except the church, which is not to be seen. The crucifix at the base of which are two opened books is placed here at the entrance of the cave, unlike our painting where it is near the wall, on the opposite side.

A kneeling Saint Francis stands out in the work *Palla della Peste* (Altarpiece of the Bubonic Plague), from the same Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, dated in 1630 (Fig. 5, oil on silk, 382 x 242). The painting was commissioned by the Senate in honor of the Virgin Mary, in hopes of protecting the city from the plague epidemic that decimated the population in 1630, Bologna being illustrated in the lower part of the work, in a suffocating atmosphere, with carts carrying the corpses of the victims outside the walls (Morselli 2022, 11). The situation was so desperate that Reni painted this work on silk, because silk production was the main manufacture that Bologna produced in those times and was very well known for. Francis is shown kneeling and praying to the Virgin with Child Jesus above him, the saint being surrounded by other patron saints of the city. The art historian

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Carlo Cesare Malvasia, a contemporary of Guido Reni, stated that the character of Saint Francis was inspired by Reni's close friend Saulo Guidotti, a local senator and patron of the arts (Morselli 2022, 253). Reni chose to paint his friend in the pose of St. Francis because of the veneration he had for this saint, being impressed by the modest lifestyle that St. Francis had preached (Morselli 2022, 253).

The same figure of Francis appears in another painting in the Palazzo Colonna in Rome, entitled *Saint Francis Praying* (Fig. 6, oil on canvas, 196 x 117 cm, cca, 1631–1642). The position of the saint is almost identical to the painting in the Brukenthal Museum, as is the general placement of the other details. The two angels are appearing to the saint in the upper left, while below them we can see the skull, the crucifix, the rosary and the opened book located slightly below the rest of the objects. There is also an engraving by another bolognese artist named Domenico Maria Canuti (1625–1684), which was executed after this painting, located now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Fig. 7, 23,2 x 17,5 cm, 1643–1644), made about 10 years later than the original in the Galleria Colonna. Of course, in our painting the details such as the skull, the rosary, the crucifix and the book are not reproduced identically to those in the original painting or in the engraving. However, it is noticeable that they keep their location and the saint is still rendered kneeling, even if the attitude and his appearance differs, as does the general atmosphere of the image and the landscape in the background.

The same pose of the saint is also captured to some degree in the work kept in the Chiesa dei Girolamini in Naples, entitled *Saint Francis in ecstasy* (Fig. 8, oil on canvas, 198 x 133 cm, 1622). Although the angels no longer appear here, the skull, crucifix and the rosary are in the same place, the saint kneeling before them, while the exit from the cave is placed in the background to the right.

Other works

As previously mentioned, in the old registers of the museum the painting also appears as attributed to Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, called Guercino da Cento (Cento, 1591–Bologna, 1666). Guercino was a painter originally from Romagna but also worked in Bologna and Ferrara, being appreciated especially for his altar paintings with religious, mythological and profane themes from the Classicist genre (Giorgi 2010, 180). He was as well a follower of the tenebrism and the theatrical settings specific to Caravaggio, being at the same time influenced also by the Carracci brothers, as his paintings show also a tendency towards idealization (Giorgi 2010, 269). These caracteristics are evident as well in the work *Saint Benedict and Saint Francis listening to a musicant Angel*, kept at the National Art Museum of Romania (Fig. 9, oil on canvas, 263 x 184 cm, not dated), where Saint Benedict and Saint Francis are surprised by the apparition of the musicant angels (Boicescu 2007, 15). This time, though, the composition is much more complex, the event being captured in an apparently ruined architectural setting, so not in a cave, the presence of Saint Benedict being a new iconographic element in this context. The musicant angel coming from the upper left and Francis kneeled, having a pale skin and red eyes due to his illness, with the rosary and the book in his arms can be seen also in our painting. His attitude indicates that he is surprised by the angel's coming, so the moment of the vision is rendered here too, the saint being blinded by the light and by the psychological impact of this appearance.

The appearance of the musical angels may be often noted in depictions of the vision of Saint Francis, in various poses as seen at Sisto Badalocchio (1585–after 1619) in a painting preserved in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, entitled *Saint Francis of Assisi consoled by Angels* (Fig. 10, oil on panel, 69,5 x 49,5 cm, 1610–1613) or in the work of Francisco Ribalta (1565–1628) from the Museo del Prado in Madrid (Fig. 11, oil on canvas, 204 x 158 cm, ca. 1620), named *Saint Francis comforted by an Angel*. Also, still in the category of Saint Francis kneeling and praying to the crucifix may be noted also the work *St. Francis* of Lodovico Cardi, known as Cigoli (1559–1613) from the Hermitage Museum (Fig. 12, oil on canvas, 198 x 147 cm, 1597–1599) and Federico Barocci's *Saint Francis* from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 13, oil on canvas, 89,9 x 78,4 cm, 1600–1604). It is clearly that this composition with

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Francis kneeled before the crucifixion and the vision with musicant angels was of great interest for the artists in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

Preliminary results

Coming back to our work in the Brukenthal Museum's collection, we can state that the chances are quite high that this painting was not made in Vienna because most of the paintings executed there were copies of the originals kept in the imperial collection, now part of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, and among the paintings from their collection we could not identify any work by Guido Reni, Guercino or any other artist that resembles the painting in Sibiu. It is also possible that the original was in a private collection, which makes it even more difficult to trace the original source of inspiration. However, from the information known so far, one may think that our painting was made either in Bologna, where Guido Reni and Guercino flourished, either in Rome, the heart of the Italian art at that time in the Papal States, and Baron Samuel von Brukenthal subsequently purchased the work, at that time already on the Viennese market, along with other paintings.

Since we have not yet identified up to the current stage of the research any work that is identical from a compositional point of view, the painting in the Brukenthal's Collection can be considered a work in the manner of Guido Reni. Moreover, to get closer to a possible source of inspiration one may analyse also the chromatics of this painting. In our work, the image looks darkened at the moment, which can be probably fixed in the future with a proper restoration intervention. However, the space in which the event takes place is obviously a cave and usually the color range is not very large, unlike in Reni's works which are usually more airy, optimistic, lightened and fresh, in tune with the style of the Bolognese school.

It is also possible that the work was made after an engraving, judging by the narrow color range, but I have not yet identified any other engraving with an identical composition, except the one mentioned above, by Canuti. The closest in terms of composition would be the engraving by Nicholas Bazin (1636–1710), from the Wellcome Collection, entitled *Saint*

Francis of Assisi in the wilderness, kneeling in front of a crucifix, a book and a skull, in which we see Francis kneeling with his hands on his chest, in ecstasy before the opened book and nearby the skull and the crucifix, but the saint's head is not rendered identically to our painting, the musicant angels are missing and the scene takes place in a forest, not in the cave, while the landscape is rocky with no trace of a church in the background (Fig. 14, engraving, 20,9 x 15 cm, undated).

In our work, however, a chiaroscuro tendency can be observed due to the dark background, therefore it is possible that the artist was also influenced by the Caravaggio's followers' tenebrist style, occurring mainly in the late 16th c. Roman artistic environment, which leads me to believe that the painting in the Brukenthal Museum might have been made in Rome. The saint is rendered in mid-vision, in ecstasy, red-eyed and visibly in pain, already blind and ill. It is therefore a realistic approach to the final years of his life, in suffering. Caravaggio painted indeed several works rendering St Francis of Assisi, in which may be identified almost the same chromatics and the same realistic approach to the event, as in *Saint Francis in meditation*, a painting from 1616–1607 at the Barberini Gallerie Corsini Nazionale (Fig. 15, oil on canvas, 123 x 92,5 cm). This work resembles with ours only in chromatics and the general atmosphere, and also in his other painting with the same title, kept at Museo Civico `Ala Ponzone` in Cremona, dated also in those years (Fig. 16, oil on canvas, 130 x 90 cm, ca. 1616), although the composition is different.

By contrary, a strong influence of the Neapolitan or even of the Spanish school of painting may be noticed. Francisco de Zurbarán (1598–1664) painted *Saint Francis in meditation*, in which the saint appears kneeling, with his head covered, hands on the chest and gazing reverently at the sky. Although it is a mirrored image, he sits in almost the same position as in the Brukenthal painting (Fig. 17, oil on canvas, 152 x 99 cm, 1635–1639, National Gallery in London). The painting by Zurbaran was on display at the exhibition dedicated to Francis, at the National Gallery, which was opened until July 30th 2023. In a different composition but with identic chromatics and also with reddened

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eyes the saint apears in a work by Jusepe de Ribera (1591–1652) at Palazzo Pitti in Florence (Fig. 18, oil on canvas, 103 x 77 cm, 1643). Last but not least, two works found on auction websites bring us even closer to our painting. One of them, attributed to Zurbaran's school, was sold on March 21st 2021, as recorded on the Artnet website (Fig. 19, oil on canvas, 121 x 85 cm, undated). Until now, his position is the closest to our work. Last but not least, another painting, attributed to a Neapolitan anonymous and dated in early 17th century (Fig. 20, oil on canvas, 85,5 x 69 cm), confirms what I have stated earlier, namely that it is a work depicting the vision of Saint Francis of Assisi, due to a painter from Naples, working under the influence of Caravaggio (according to the description on the website). In the painting from the Brukenthal Collection, the saint has the same pose, the ecstasic expression and the same chromatics, while the stigmata is not to be seen either. The light comes to the upper left side and the skull and rosary are also present.

Conclusion

Following this analysis and after a discussion with Dr. Alexandru Sonoc, Head of the European Art Galleries of the Brukenthal Museum, we concluded that our *Saint Francis* is a work inspired by the usual compositions of Guido Reni, rendering the saint kneeling to the left, with the crucifix and his other specific attributes and the musical angels depicted in the upper left part of the image. The closest work of Guido Reni to ours might be the one in the Chiesa dei Girolamini in Napoli (Fig. 8), mentioned above. Stylistically, the painting shows also strong Neapolitan and Spanish influences. The painter probably worked in Rome or in the Kingdom of Naples, had knowledge of the Roman school of painting, combined with Neapolitan elements. He could also have been a Franciscan monk (since he did not sign himself) who may have seen numerous works illustrating this theme and created his own composition, inspired by Guido Reni, Caravaggio and Zurbaran. Regarding the date of the work, we noticed that most works that came the closest to our composition are from mid-17th century, therefore we propose this orientative dating. The attribution still remains anonymous, but instead of 'a copy after Guido Reni', whose paintings inspired only a part of this work, we may consider it as belonging to the Neapolitan school of painting, along with the other works that the Brukenthal Museum holds. These Neapolitan paintings were discussed in 2002 in an article by Maria Olimpia Tudoran Ciungan, text in which this painting rendering St Francis of Assisi is not mentioned (Tudoran 2002). Thus, we consider that it should be considered a Neapolitan work, along with the others mentioned in Tudoran's study, which were created by this famous Italian school of painting from the Baroque Period.

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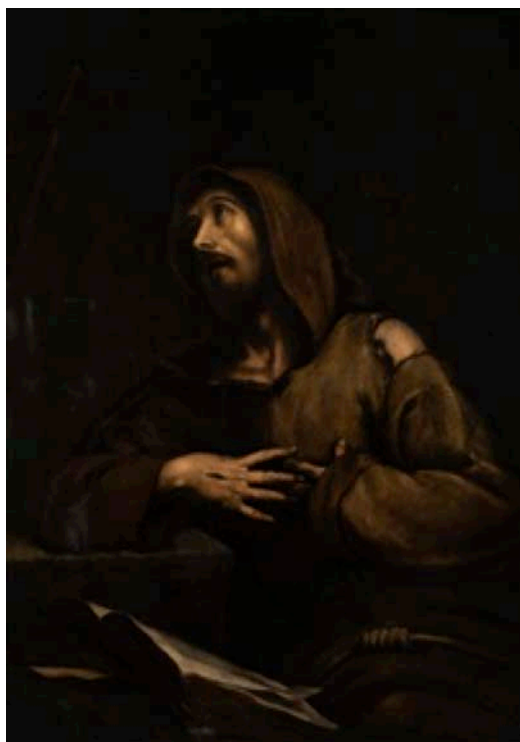

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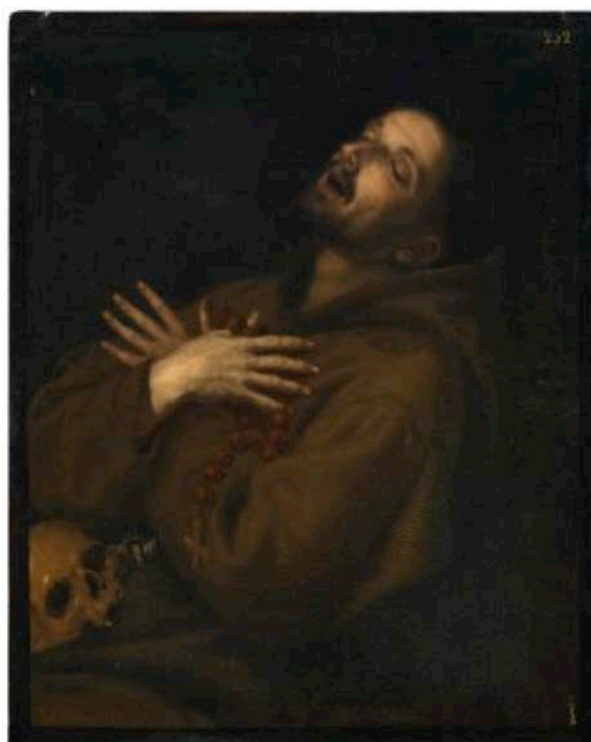

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ART AND DOCUMENT - WORKS FROM THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM REGARDING THE UPRISING IN 1784–1785

Iulia MESEA*

Rezumat: Calitatea artistică şi valoarea documentară a celor trei portrete în ulei care îi reprezintă pe Horea, Cloşca şi Crişan, conducătorii Răscoalei din 1784, din Transilvania, pictate la sfârşitul secolului al XVIII-lea atrag interesul istoricilor şi istoricilor de artă de la sfârşitul secolului al XIX-lea până în prezent. Aflate în prezent la Muzeul Naţional de Istorie a României, acestea provin din colecţia Muzeului Brukenthal. Nesemnate, lucrările au fost atribuite succesiv celor mai importanţi pictori activi în Transilvania în ultimele două decenii ale secolului al XVIII-lea: Johann Martin Stock (1742–1800), Anton Steinwald (cca. 1742–1786) şi Franz Neuhauser (1763–1836), a căror activitate s-a desfăşurat în preajma şi, deseori, în serviciul baronului Samuel von Brukenthal, guvernatorul Transilvaniei între 1777–1787. Studiul reface traseul prin istorie al acestor lucrări şi prezintă noi opinii în privinţa atribuirii lor. În partea a doua a studiului sunt prezentate lucrările de grafică din colecţia Muzeului Naţional Brukenthal cu portrete ale căpeteniilor răscoalei sau scene din timpul evenimentelor răscoalei.

Cuvinte cheie: Anton Steinwald, Franz Neuhauser, Johann Martin Stock, Răscoala lui Horea, Cloşca şi Crişan, Transilvania sec. XVIII, Samuel von Brukenthal, Jakob Adam, Johann Martin Will, Johann Hieronymus Löschenkohl

Abstract: The artistic quality and documentary value of the three oil portraits representing Horea, Cloşca and Crişan, the leaders of the 1784 Uprising from Transylvania, painted at the end of the 18th century, have attracted the interest of historians and art historians. Currently at the National History Museum of Romania, they come from the collection of the Brukenthal Museum. Unsigned, the works were successively attributed to the most important painters active in Transylvania in the last two decades of the 18th century: Johann Martin Stock (1742–1800), Anton Steinwald (ca. 1742–1786) and Franz Neuhauser (1763–1836), whose activity was carried out around and, often, in the service of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal, the governor of Transylvania between 1777 and 1787. The study retraces the history of these works and presents new opinions on their attribution. The second part of the study presents the graphic works from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum with portraits of the leaders of the uprising or scenes during the events of the uprising.

Keywords: Anton Steinwald, Franz Neuhauser, Johann Martin Stock, the Uprising led by Horea, Cloşca, Jakob Adam, Johann Martin Will, Johann Hieronymus Löschenkohl

Against the background of an effervescent period both at the level of ideas and social movements throughout Europe, the Uprising led by Horea, Cloşca and Crişan enjoyed an extraordinary international resonance. The causes of the uprising, its scale, the bloody defeat, the charismatic personality of Horea were in the concerns of those responsible for the destinies of society, the European courts, the ruling classes, the intellectuals, as well as the many, maintaining their attraction over time, fascinating even today both the specialists and the general public as well as the lovers of the sensational.

Although its social and national dimensions were sometimes downplayed, this essentially revolutionary movement was based on the most modern ideas of the time, later, during the most important revolutionary movement of the time, the French Revolution of 1789, put in formulas that became emblematic for the principles of freedom and social and national equality. Directly or tangentially, personalities of the socio-political hierarchy of the time, as well as resounding names of the intelligentsia – bearers of the avant-garde ideals of the

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epoch, many sympathizers or members of Freemasonry – were connected to the disturbing events. The relevance of the ideals of the Uprising to modern thinking was well known in these circles, as is evident from various documents, among which is the open letter addressed by Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville (1754–1793) – leader of the Girondins during the French Revolution of 1789, publicist and fervent supporter of revolutionary ideas – to Emperor Joseph II. In the text published in 1785, Brissot reproaches his majesty for the way in which he sealed the fate of Horea and the revolutionary ideas of emancipation of the Romanians in Transylvania: "You don't look like ordinary despots. How can you borrow the insidious language of tyrants, you, the friend of your subjects and the exponent of justice?... All those who wrote about the revolt of the Romanians seem to have conspired against this unfortunate people, to encourage you, prince, to punish the chiefs with terrible tortures, to subjugate the people even deeper ... If I were to condemn Horea as an assassin, I would make the enemies who, like him, dipped their hands in blood, climb the scaffold first, and it would not be difficult for me to prove that they were much more criminal. And, because none of them paid with their own heads for the atrocities committed, I am entitled to conclude, without going into details, that you were unjust by punishing Horea with death, as an assassin, while sparing the lives of the noble assassins... If the Romanians don't regain their liberty, means that all the monarchs of Europe must rise against the United States of America, proscribe the constitution of this new state, and condemn as infamous any alliance with it." (Chirea 2005)

Without intending to deepen the historical framework of the events, with this text we entered the atmosphere of the years 1784–1785, when the eyes of Europe watched with horror, but also with admiration, the extreme action of the Romanian peasants and were curiously waiting for the news accompanied by images from Transylvania, which circulated both in the press and in the form of flyers and brochures (Pascu 1943, 39). Most of these were made immediately after the capture of the leaders, during their detention – when

some artists were allowed to enter the prison in Alba Iulia to portray them – and after the execution. Others were modeled after literary portrayals that appeared in newspapers during the uprising.

The conditions for the spread of information in broad layers of society had been created in the second half of the 18th century in the imperial capital, where there was an art academy, an engraving academy, art dealers and an art market, and the Josephine measures regarding freedom of the press marked the framework necessary for a veritable boom in information through the printed word and image for a wide audience that became witness and consumer of a deluge of brochures and several other types of print. Illustrative materials were ordered and expected in all layers of society: at the imperial court, by the political circles of the Intra-Carpathian province, by the Transylvanian nobility, by the intelligentsia and by the common people. Recent research demonstrates that some pictorial reports from the second half of the 18th century, such as those of Hyeronimus Löschenkohl, not only represent unique historical sources, but even played a more important role in shaping opinions and the dissemination of information in the Age of Enlightenment than previously assumed (Hubmayer 2012, 8).

The news provided in the press, to the Transylvanians through the newspaper *Siebenbürger (Zeitung)*, refers to the unfolding of the uprising, but also to the large number of engravings in circulation on the Viennese market (Auner 1935, 31-38; SZ 1785, 14). With the first issue on January 2nd 1784, the paper had kept up quite well with the evolution of events, even if the news was censored (Popa s.a., 71, 88). So intense was the popularization of the revolt and the profile of its leaders, that interest in the course of events and the central figures of the revolt movement became a (sometimes sinister) fashion that was maintained throughout 1785, even later on. "In Vienna, women wear Horea's silhouette not only on their fans, but even on their hairstyles" states the newspaper *A' Magyar Hirmond* from June 8th, 1785 (Bartoş 1971, 268-269).

The approaches of the artists inspired by the uprising were very diverse, and longer or

shorter texts provided additional information to the images, revealing the thoughts and attitude of the authors towards the uprising and the rebels. Some of them, receptive to the Enlightenment spirit of the era, were open to the ideas and reasons of the revolt of the Romanian peasants. Among them was the engraver Martin Will from Augsburg, who attributed to Horea, at the time of his execution, the words: "I die for the Nation!" (Beu 1935, 269; Auner 1935, 32), or the Enlightenment writer and journalist Wilhelm Ludwig Weckherlin (1739–1792) in the newspaper *Das Graue Ungeheuer*. Most of the time, however, the movement of the Romanian peasants was condemned, the demands were ignored and the punishments applied, of an unacceptable cruelty, considered well-deserved (Richter 1786; Todesurtheil 1785).

In his capacity as head of the government of Transylvania, Samuel von Brukenthal was directly interested and involved in the dramatic moments of those years, which also resulted in the interest in documentary and visual materials about the uprising, which were preserved in the baron's collections. This interest was then continued over time by the curators of the museum, so that today the Brukenthal National Museum's collections (of books and documents, of graphics, painting and decorative art) contain an appreciable number of period and later works, relating to the 1784 Uprising.

My interest in the topic arose many years ago, during the museum's efforts to recover works from its heritage that had been removed from the collections during the years of the communist dictatorship and only partially returned. Then, the topic was covered in sub-chapters within the exhibitions *Sequences from 18th Century Transylvania* (2017) (Mesea 2017, 77-81, 108-109), and *Living the Enlightenment. Brukenthal 300* (2021), when part of the pieces was presented to the public and the importance of the theme in the history of Transylvania, the multitude and diversity of the preserved information (artwork – graphics and painting, written documents, etc.) were emphasized.

Images of this historical moment, most of them engravings, are known to specialists and even to the general public. They are featured more prominently in history materials and are approached primarily from the perspective of documentary/historical interest, with less concern for potential artistic value, for their authors, and often with attribution errors. Among the historians who have focused on the iconography of the Uprising, Nicolae Densuşianu, Michael Auner, Ioan Băncilă, Octavian Beu, Gheorghe Bartoş and Nicolae Sabău are to be mentioned.

The works are different in genre, in style and approach, from historical scenes/compositions, to prison scenes and portraits, from excessively admiring, noble representations of the characters, to ironic, even mocking approaches, from those that make the effort of rendering as close as possible to the truth/reality, to those that are purely fanciful or placed totally outside the "geography" of the events, from those with a high degree of objectivity to those that are biased. They reflect the artist's position towards the uprising and its leaders, his proximity to the unfolding of the events, as well as the destination of the portraits, possibly the commissioner.

With a first part published in Romanian language, this study aims at bringing together these representations, mostly from the collections of the Brukenthal National Museum, presenting their documentary importance and artistic value, and, where the research has brought the hoped-for results, making the necessary clarifications.

The existence of the oil portraits of Horea, Cloşca and Crişan in the collection of the museum in Sibiu was confirmed for the first time by Michael Csaki, the custodian of the Brukenthal Museum, by recording it in the catalog of the painting collection of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal, published in 1901 and reissued in a revised form in 1909 (Csaki 1901 and Csaki 1909).

Description of works:

Portrait of Horea, oil on canvas, 30×18.5 cm, unsigned, undated; inscription: "Nik: Ursz, alias Hora tumultus rusticani Valachorum in Transilvania A 1784 excitati author." (Csaki 1901, no. cat. 1096: Johann Martin Stock, *Nikolaus Ursz alias Hora*; Csaki 1909, no. cat. 1138; Georgescu 2016, 24: Anonymous artist (after Steinwald), *Nicolae Ursu (Horea)*, no. inv. NHMR 47.464.) (Fig. 1)

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Bust portrait of a middle-aged man, half-profile to right, looking towards viewer. He wears his hair like in the Western Carpathians (Ţara Moţilor County), partially shaved in the front, long at the back and braided into two pigtails that form a ring near the ear. He has a thin mustache and short beard. Over the shirt, he wears a fur vest and a brown cape, tied around his neck with a string.

In Csaki's catalog the technique of the painting is "oil on canvas". Csaki also noted that the restoration in 1897, included doubling of the canvas. In the catalog published by the History of Romania National Museum in 2016, the technique is: "oil on canvas glued to wood". In the Register of the transfer of works between the two museums, from Sibiu to Bucharest, the technique of the works is specified (oil on canvas pasted on wood for the portraits of Horea and Cloşca and oil on canvas pasted on cardboard, for the Portrait of Crişan). When transferred to the Bucharest collection they were mounted in passe-partout and framed, as preserved today.

Portrait of Cloşca, oil on canvas, 30×19 cm, unsigned, undated; inscription: "Varg Juon alias Kloska, Juon Horae primarius capitaneus." (Csaki 1901, no. cat. 1195; Csaki 1909, no. cat. 1137: Johann Martin Stock, *Varg Juon, alias Kloska*; Georgescu, *op. cit.*, cat. no. 10, p. 26: Anonim (după Steinwald), *Ion Oargă (Cloşca)*, no. inv. NHMR 47.4645.) (Fig. 2)

It is a bust portrait, on a neutral background, rendered in semi-profile to the left. The man has dark but bright eyes, a sultry gaze, a large aquiline nose. He wears long black hair, parted in the middle and braided to the side (like the other two leaders). He has a rich mustache and a short beard. He wears a shirt with a dark cord around his neck and a small cape on his left shoulder.

Portrait of Crisan, oil on canvas, 28×20 cm, unsigned, undated; inscription: "Kriss an Dsurds ex Kerpenyes tumultus in Transilv: in Ao 1784 excitati choriphaeus tertius." (Csaki 1909, Johann Martin Stock, no. cat. 1139, *Kriszan Dsurds*; Georgescu, *op. cit.*, cat. no. 11, p. 28: Anonim (după Steinwald), *Marcu Giurgiu (Crişan)*, NHMR no. inv. 47.466.) (Fig. 3)

Bust portrait, on a neutral background. The model is rendered almost frontally, facing very slightly to the right, has a severe figure, gray hair worn similar to the previous model, but also has a lock brought from behind, tied in a ponytail, allowed to fall towards her forehead; gray beard and mustache are richer. Over the shirt open at the neck, he wears a reddish-brown cape.

In the early years of the communist regime, the works, which became emblematic images of the three leaders, were transferred to the History National Museum in Bucharest (Accounting Note no. 301 / October 30, 1974 according to Decree 409/1955), being registered in the patrimonial fund of the Bucharest Museum.

When the paintings were removed from the collection, in order to preserve a landmark in the Sibiu Museum, the artists Trude Schullerus (1889–1980) and Silvia Porsche-Togan (1885–1980) were requested to make copies of these portraits, works that are now part of our collection. In their execution, the dimensions of the original portraits were also preserved, except for the difference of 1-2 millimeters between the three original works that was ignored (the contemporary ones are identical in size). The two requested artists were well-known painters in Sibiu, with academic studies in Munich and Budapest. Trude Schullerus worked as a freelancer, giving drawing and painting classes in her own studio, and Silvia Porsche taught art education at the Girls' High School. The museum paid the authors 1150 lei for each work. (RI, inv. nos. 2054-2056)

Silvia Porsche, *Horea* (copy), oil on wood, 30×18.8 cm, unsigned, undated; inscription: "Nik: Ursz, alias Hora tumultus rusticani Valachorum in Transilvania A 1784 excitati author" – purchased March 17th, 1960.

Trude Schullerus, *Cloşca* (copy), oil on wood, 30×18.8 cm, unsigned, undated; inscription: "Varg Juon alias Kloska, Juon Horae primarius capitaneus" – purchased March 17th 1960.

Trude Schullerus and Silvia Porsche, *Crişan* (copy), oil on wood, 30×18.8 cm, unsigned, undated – purchased March 17th, 1960.

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The 18th century portraits of the leaders of the rebels are unsigned and, from time to time in the attention of specialists, have been attributed to Transylvanian painters or active in Transylvania: Johann Martin Stock (Sibiu 1742–Sibiu 1800), Anton Steinwald (Wells, ca. 1742–1786, Sibiu) and Franz Neuhauser (Vienna, 1763–1836, Sibiu).

As I mentioned above, the paintings are reported to for the first time in the Brukenthal Museum collection in Michael Csaki's catalog from 1901 (inv. no. 1095-1096, 1097), then also in the one from 1909 (inv. 1137, 1138, 1139). They are not registered in the previous catalogue, printed in 1844 by the custodian Ludwig Neugeboren, which would mean that they entered the collection between 1844 and 1897, the second year representing the time when they were restored (as many other paintings of the Brukenthal collection) by the Austrian Eduard Gerisch (1853–1915, painter and restorer, custodian of the painting collection of the Vienna Academy of Arts) (Csaki 1901, 305-306). However, it is more likely that they had been in the Brukenthal collection, since the governor of Transylvania himself had requested them or, at least, received them right during the unfolding of the events (Sigerus 1936, 119). Being considered documents and not collection works, they were not included in the collection of the Pinacoteca, inventoried in the Manuscript Catalog of the end of the 18th century (Ältester Katalog) and the one in 1844 (Neugeboren 1844). We appreciate that, like several other paintings in the Brukenthal collection (family portraits or works that were intended to decorate certain rooms), they were purchased by Governor Brukenthal immediately after they were made and were not registered because they were not considered as belonging to the (European) painting collection, but had a role related to a certain utility, in this case of documenting an exceptional social event.

At the end of the 19th century, they were in storage, in a cabinet with a display case – one of the black ones in which part of the pieces from the treasury, Transylvanian goldsmithing from the 14th–18th centuries – was kept, along with other small works from the old collection (probably miniatures), and were first exhibited to the public, in one of the rooms of the Pinacoteca (room XX, right wall, according to

Michael Csaki's 1901 guide), in 1900 (Sigerus 1936, 119).

The artistic value of the paintings led curator Michael Csaki to attribute them to the most talented and famous Transylvanian portraitist of the second half of the 18th century, Johann Martin Stock (1742–1800), but it is possible that the opinions regarding Stock's paternity to be previous Csaki's registration. Their style would not eliminate the possibility that they are the works of the painter, known as a particularly gifted portraitist, and his proximity to Freemasonry circles would be an additional reason in obtaining this commission (Mesea 2023, 180). Indeed, although a large part of his works is painted in a manner related to the Austrian Baroque, in the spirit of which he had been trained at the Academy of Arts in Vienna, the artist is no stranger to the so-called "bourgeois portrait", influenced by Enlightenment values, characterized by a more sober, more objective style, which gives importance to the natural, and involves investigating the spiritual universe of the model.

However, an argument against this attribution would be the artist's biographical path of this period (Popescu 2000, 15-18). In 1763, after having been initiated into the secrets of painting under the guidance of his father, the painter Martin Stock (1693–1752), the young J.M. Stock was leaving his native Sibiu, enrolling at the Academy of Arts in Vienna. In January 1771, he enrolled at the Academy of Engraving, from 1772 he studied and worked in Leipzig, and from 1773 he settled in Bratislava, getting married in 1774. The period in Bratislava also brought him the protection of Archduke Albert von Sachsen-Teschen, Maria Theresa's son-in-law, connoisseur of art, founder of the Albertina collection. The first documentation of his connection with Governor Brukenthal (in whose service he remained until the end of his life) and his intention to return to Transylvania dates from June 27th, 1786, when, still in Bratislava, he received the sum of 300 florins from the baron, probably for purchasing some paintings, and returned to his homeland, settling in Sibiu, in September 1786 (Mesea 2023, 179-193). It is difficult to assume that Stock had previously been called from Bratislava and came, for a short time, in

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Transylvania to portray the leaders of the uprising imprisoned in Alba Iulia.

In 1936, the historian, ethnographer and collector Emil Sigerus (1854–1947), who closely researched the collections of the Brukenthal Museum, bringing important contributions to their knowledge, based on documents that we will also mention in this context, denies Stock's authorship, attributing the works to the painter Anton Steinwald. Contradicting the attribution of Csaki, Emil Sigerus believes that even from a stylistic point of view the works would not match Stock's manner, a risky statement, in our opinion, as we specified above, the portrayals being faithful, fully expressive and characterizing renderings of the models, characteristic features of the work of the Transylvanian painter, in the case of the so-called "bourgeois" portraits. The opinion of Emil Sigerus was taken up some years later, by Dr. Julius Bielz (1884–1958), custodian, then deputy director of the museum (1927–1958), in the text he dedicated to the painter Anton Steinwald (preserved in manuscript at Archive of the Museum of the Evangelical Church C.A. in Sibiu, and at the State Archives, Sibiu), also considering that the portraits were painted by the Austrian artist (Bielz mss. 157).

Research into the work and activity of this Austrian-born artist, although extended at the Vienna History Museum Library, the University of Vienna Library, the Vienna City Library and the Vienna City Museum, has yielded very little new information. Born in Wels, Austria (ca. 1742), Anton Steinwald is mentioned in 1775 as being active in Sibiu, in the service of Baron Brukenthal. The painter was one in the series of artists who were invited or came on their own initiative to Transylvania, filling the absence of local painters in decorating palaces, churches, in portraying the personalities of the era. In the period 1774–1776, the Austrian artist painted the choir of the Roman Catholic Church in Sibiu, a brilliant achievement for which he is considered one of the most important painters of the Transylvanian Baroque (Sabău 2003, 239). The ensemble in the sanctuary and the altar of the church of St. Mary (*Glorification of Mother of God*) combines elements of

parietal illusionist painting, with those of the architecture of the liturgical furniture. The fresco, a work in trompe l'oeil, is a large composition governed by the lavishness of baroque ornamentation, in which Virgin Mary sits on a throne made of decorative clouds, holding Baby Jesus. Their faces are of noble beauty, and their bright, lively gazes directed in different directions give a dynamic touch to the scene bathed in warm light. Moreover, the entire color palette in browns, ochres, golden yellows and reds is made in a warm register. In the upper register, God the Father appears supported by the Globe, accompanied by a procession of angels and cherubs, in a true "ode of joy" (Sabău 2003, 239). The entrustment of a work of such importance proves that the artist was quite well-known and appreciated for his achievements, and we can assume that he was invited to Sibiu precisely to carry out this demanding and laborious project. The fresco in the altar of the Roman Catholic Church, which can still be admired today, is one of the most important baroque paintings in our country. The success of this work for which he was paid 1600 guilders and which was followed by the gold leaf polishing of the altar tabernacle by the carpenter Johann Paul Hüttig (paid 45 guilders) brought Steinwald a commission for the mural painting of the church in Roşia, the latter being a resumption, on a smaller scale, of the work from Sibiu (Sabău 2003, 243). Both works prove the special qualities of Steinwald's painting, who mastered the science of composition, drawing and chromatic harmonies, as well as the pomp and spectacularity of the Baroque.

On July 14th, 1776, the painter was requested to start working on the painting of the main room of Baron Brukenthal's "garden house" (at Cisnădie Gate), where he executed the ceiling and side walls "with all his skill". The decoration works carried out by Steinwald at this "summer house", newly built by the baron on a site received within his wife Sophia's dowry (recorded by Alexandru Avram after a list of accounts of the baronial house) were of a low degree of difficulty (he painted, gilded and varnished doors, window frames and shutters, chairs, armchairs, tables, frames, wainscoting), compared to the scale of the project in the Jesuit church completed a short

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time before (Avram 1995, 158). More effort and artistic skill involved painting the ceiling of the three rooms from the front of the house (preserved today in a very poor condition), a baroque fresco in trompe l'oeil with allegorical scenes framed by friezes decorated with putti. Though the relatively small amount that was paid to him during this period determined the historian Al. Avram to consider that Steinwald is not the author of the freco, as it is so characteristic for the optical illusion of the Baroque, the manner in which Steinwald excelled and he had sumptuously used in the church in Piața Mare. In addition, it is hard to believe that two painters were employed simultaneously for various painting /polishing works of this house. Between September 1776 and the beginning of the following year, new information appears about a work commissioned by Baron Brukenthal and according to the House Register of Avrig / Hausarchiv Freck, he decorated some of the rooms of the palace in Avrig. He executed decorations on doors, windows, and furniture, and painted a large landscape for the great hall of the palace, as he also executed the landscapes of the main hall of the palace at Sâmbăta. At the end of the work, by late September, he received for his effort the sum of 132 Rhenish guilders. Between 1776 and 1784, the artist remained in the service of Baron Brukenthal, for whom he executed various works, including paintings and gilding in the old house in Sibiu ("the garden house"), in the new building of the Palace in Piața Mare and in the Palace of at Avrig. At the Great Palace, in Sibiu, he participated in the finishing works together with other craftsmen brought by the governor to Sibiu for this purpose, such as Ludwig Christian Hezel, the carpenter of the governor's court, who arrived from Vienna to Sibiu around 1777, the sculptor Simon Hoffmeyer, from Cluj, employed in 1779 (Avram 1998, 175) and Johann Bauernfeind (ca. 1745–1798), who (settled in Sibiu in 1777, though already a craftsman master) executed carpentry works at the Brukenthal Palace as craftsman Hezel's subordinate (Dâmboiu 2001, 326-327).

We believe that Steinwald is the author of the paintings on the first floor of the Great Square Palace, as Hezel's team had completed work on 11 frames and was beginning the execution of the large rosettes of the overdoors in the

Reception Halls as early as March 1780, according to a note from Hezel to Brukenthal, and Hoffmeyer, had drawn up the plan for the location of the stoves between the years approx. 1775–1786 (Avram 1998, 170-171). During this period of completion of the construction and interior decoration, the corners of the salons (some of which housed the stoves) were decorated with paintings inspired by the wallpaper in the Chinese Cabinets, continuing it visually. These works, executed at the same time or immediately after the ébéniste Bauernfeind had completed the wood decorations, we consider to be by Anton Steinwald, and we also agree that the fresco in Hercules Room, once also attributed to the Viennese painter, could not have been executed by him, belonging to a later stage of the palace decoration, when he no longer lived (after 1790) (Avram 1998, 171; Dâmboiu 2018, 257).

Another documented moment of the Steinwald's activity is the execution of the drawing for a *Castrum doloris* for the Empress Maria Theresa (who had passed away in 1780), a work that Johann Bauernfeind would then engrave in copper (Bielz 1938, 19). Klára Garas mentions in her work *Magyarországi festészet XVIII. században* from 1955 a *Portrait of M.J. János*,[1] executed by Steinwald and engraved by the same J. Bauernfeind (Sabău 2005, 373). Finally, in the collection of the Brukenthal Museum there are two landscapes characterized by a manner specific to the transition from Baroque to Neoclassicism, which are considered "possibly Anton Steinwald": *Rocky landscape with ruins*, no. inv. 1082 and *Landscape with rocks and ruins*, no. inv. 1083. Both entered the collection after Baron Brukenthal's death, were recorded in the 1844 Catalog as Anton Steinwald, with no. inv. 450 and 451, then, in the one of 1893, as "Unknown Artist" of the German school. Although they were restored by Gerisch in 1897, their present state of

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[1] This is the only known portrait by the painter (aside from those of the captains of the revolt). Arriving in Transylvania to serve Baron Brukenthal in the decoration of his palaces and requested for the large project of the Catholic Church fresco, the artist did not have time to diversify his work, because he passed away at only 44 years old.

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preservation is very poor, and their attribution to Steinwald is difficult since they are the only works known to belong to this genre from the Austrian painter's creation (Csaki 1909, nr. cat. 1082 și 1083).

The prestige that the artist obtained through his activity, the spectacular creations with which he beautifies one of the most important buildings of the city – especially the fresco of the Roman Catholic Church that brought him closer to prominent representatives of this religion – as well as other possible connections with the ruling classes of Transylvania, still undiscovered, determined Count Georg Banfy (the future governor of the Intra-Carpathian province, between 1787–1822, the successor of governor Brukenthal), the venerable master of the freemasonic lodge "St. Andreas zu den drei Seeblätern" from Sibiu, to propose him as a free member of the lodge, on February 13, 1779 (AVSL 12/1874, 471), in whose framework he will remain until the end of his life, to honor and serve its ideals, which stated that "… unquestionably, the main and primary purpose of our fraternal union is to promote the improvement, ennoblement and enlightenment of each individual member, as well as of all fraternal gatherings and even in the secular world." (Șindrilariu 2018, 41)

In 1786, Steinwald died at the age of 44, in Sibiu, leaving behind a valuable work, but of limited dimensions, and the conviction that a continuation of the activity could have substantially and brilliantly enriched the image of the artistic life of this region, at the turn of the centuries.

Another argument in favor of Steinwald's potential paternity is his presence in the Freemasonry circles in Transylvania, which had contacts with the Romanian peasant movement from the time of its preparation until its suppression. As close to these circles, then a Freemason member, it is very possible that he was the one assigned to carry out the mission of retaining for posterity the faces of some "brothers in thought". Moreover, other members of Freemasonry were co-opted in various ways in the events of 1784–1785, especially in efforts to change the unexpected direction the movement had taken. Ioan Molnar Piuariu, Romanian physician and philologist educated in Vienna, professor of

ophthalmology in Cluj, member of the Sibiu freemasonic lodge "St. Andreas zu den drei Seeblättern" (initiated in 1781 and passed to the dignity of master on October 13, 1784) was requested by the governor of Transylvania to mediate between the authorities and the revolted peasantry to quell the uprising. In fact, Molnar Piuariu's contributions were earlier, because the emperor had used his writings, which he also sent to Count Jankovics, in order to better understand the problems and grievances of the Romanians in Transylvania (Densușianu 1884, no. 135, 27). Then, when the situation became critical, involved in the capture of the leaders of the uprising was even vice-colonel Paul Kray de Krajova, also a Freemason, who in his memoirs describing the "revolt of Horea" speaks of (at least) an audience that the sovereign granted it to him, during which he assured him of his support (Beu 1944, 15, 22), meetings also recorded in the press contemporary to the events, including the periodical *Hamburgischen Correspon-denten* (Glük 1984–85, 75)

Regarding the connections of the captains of the uprising with freemasonry, some researchers go as far as to consider that the names of the three captains were pseudonyms given according to the secret-conspiratorial rules of the Masonic lodges, and the title of "Rex Daciae", which "Son Excellence Monseigneur Hora" (AVSL 26/1895, 229) had, was also a freemasonic emanation related to the ideals of the "Chapter from Cristian" (which belonged to German freemasonry) which wanted a restoration of the great Dacia (Dan 2016, 47-49).

The document that could indicate Steinwald as the author of the portraits of the martyrs – according Emil Sigerus – is a letter from Michael II von Brukenthal sent from Sebeș (where the Command of the Imperial Army was located during the uprising), to Sibiu, to governor of Transylvania, dated February 13th, 1785. In this letter, Samuel von Brukenthal's nephew, imperial commissioner during the uprising (who frequently sent the governor reports on the progress of events), spoke to "His Excellency" about a portrait connected to the events (when the leaders of the uprising were caught and imprisoned in Alba Iulia).

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The painting that was sent to the baron represented "Krisan Dsurds" and was the work of the painter Steinwald (in the letter: "Steinwall"). In his capacity as a government commissar to the headquarters of the imperial command, in charge of operations to suppress the rebellion, Michael Brukenthal had probably seen the captured mutineer personally, and opined that the picture was "very well done." ("Die Abbildung des Krisan Dsurds unterstehe ich mich, Euer Excellence gegenwärtig zu überschicken, sie ist von Steinwall und sehr gut getroffen. ... Mich. von Brukenthal m.p. Mühlenbach den 13 februarii 1785.") (AVSL 31/1903, 800)

Emil Sigerus, then Julius Bielz and other authors who take up the information, consider this to be one of the three portraits known today as pendants. If so, this is the last of the series made by the artist, because the other two had previously been painted (Horea and Cloşca had already been in prison for a month, while Crişan had only been caught on January 30th). The letter, however, leaves a shadow of doubt, as it leads us to infer that Brukenthal's nephew knew neither that the governor had commissioned these portraits himself, nor that two others, previously painted, were already in the baron's possession. However, if the governor did not yet have the other two portraits, he surely requested them later. In several documents of those days, there are mentioned portraits of the leaders of the uprising requested and sent to the potentates of the time, that is why some authors appreciate that Steinwald would have executed several versions.

Considering the actants on the artistic scene of southern Transylvania, the third possibility of paternity would be that of the artist Franz Neuhauser jr. in whose work we also find portraits of good quality. The artist of Viennese origin was in Sibiu from 1783, when, shortly after his arrival, he founded a private drawing school, to later take over, in 1785, the position of drawing teacher at the Evangelical School, left vacant at the death of his father, Professor Franz Neuhauser senior. Having been in Sibiu for a relatively short time, until the beginning of 1785, the Viennese painter had not yet made a name for himself.

The documents attest to his presence in the services of Baron Samuel von Brukenthal as restorer of the European painting collection only from around 1790. It is the period when Neuhauser made a series of copies after the works of great artists from the Flemish and Dutch school (Adrien van de Venne, Leonhard Bramer, Pieter van Bloemen, Pieter Breugel the Younger, or Gonzales Coque) (Csaki 1909, cat. 79, 103, 1205), so we can consider that he still practiced his hand, as a result of the fact that his academic studies were relatively short (only one year at the Vienna Academy of Arts) and he could probably still benefit from his father's guidance.

We assume, therefore, that the desire to portray the leaders of the uprising was determined by the general atmosphere of those days when the proximity of Sibiu to the place of detention facilitated his direct access to the prison. In *Siebenbürger Zeitung* no. 3 of January 9th, 1785, there is a note announcing the engraver's decision to leave for Alba Iulia: "Professor Neuhauser wants to give the public the joy of personally painting the portraits of Horea and Cloşca." There is no doubt that Johann von Hermann also alludes to Neuhauser in a letter dated January 11th, 1785, in which he says: "Yesterday a special draftsman went to Alba Iulia, to make the portraits of the two leaders and engrave them in copper". The result of this meeting is three copper engravings, works made, as the author states, "nach dem Leben" (Gross 1891, 487-488).

Franz Neuhauser, *Portrait of Horea*, engraving, signed, located and inscription on rock in foreground: "Nicol Ursu oder Hora Anführer den Rebellen von Neuhauser nach dem Leben gezeichnet zu Carlsburgim Gefängnis." (Fig. 5)

Franz Neuhauser, *Portrait of Cloşca*, engraving, signed and inscribed "Iuon Vargoy od Klosca Rebelle" and "Neuhauser ad viv (1)78(5)".

Franz Neuhauser, *Portrait of Crişan*, engraving, signed, dated, inscription: "Georg Krischan einer der Rebellenanführer Neuhuser 1785." (Fig. 6)

A comparison between the approaches of these portraits, works by Franz Neuhauser, with the oil ones discussed above, leads to the conclusion that they are not by the hand of the same artist who made the paintings. The

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physical resemblance is undeniable, an argument in favor of making these works, be they oils or engravings, "after nature", but in Neuhauser's interpretation, the heads have a more imposing allure, the busts silhouetted against the natural landscape in which they are placed and which it suggests the mountainous setting of the Apuseni, by extension, Transylvania

This approach was of course also influenced by some of the descriptions made by the writings of the time, in which Horea was often presented as having a rustic elegance, the energy of a "real man" and an outfit that reflected the high ideals for which the fight (Beu 1944, 18-19). In the painting works we are dealing with a simpler approach, with interest in achieving a physical likeness as correct as possible and concern for the psychological portrait of the models, which also includes the emotion of the artist confronted with the strength of personalities of such caliber, experience translated into artistic plan.

The fidelity of the portraits, more precisely the portrait of Horea, and by extension the other two, was confirmed almost a century later by a grandson of Horia named Ioan Nicula Doşita who, placed in front of many representations of the captain, indicated the portrait in Baron Brukenthal's collection as "the real one". This was another argument supporting the execution of the three portraits "after nature" (Bartoş, 270).

Therefore, based on period documents, the dynamics of artists in Transylvania at the time and some stylistic aspects, we believe that the oil portraits of the leaders of the 1784–1785 Rascoala, Horea, Cloşca and Crişan, can be attributed to the painter Anton Steinwald. Following information provided by Nicolae Densuşianu's laborious and highly scientific research and with the support of colleagues from the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, Dr. Serfőző Szabolcs and Dr. Boros Judit, we identified the oil portraits of Horea and Cloşca at the museum Budapest.[2] These

are, we believe, the paintings commissioned by Count Anton Jankowics, the Imperial Commissioner charged with leading the trial of the rebel leaders, and sent to the Emperor. In his memoirs, Johann Peter v. Heydendorff, Baron Brukenthal's nephew, speaks, in the already mentioned letter of January 11, 1785, about a portrait made of Horea and sent to Vienna, probably the same as the one commissioned by Jankowics – as Gheorghe Bartoş opines in the study of 1971 (Bartoş 1971, 271). "Found" in the museum storage and recorded accordingly, they were only inventoried in the 1920s, as mentioned in the *Magyar mủvelődéstörténet*. For this reason the work, a double portrait, does not have a previous inventory number or a topo position in the "Történeti Tár" (historical repository) and the attempt to determine its provenance has been unsuccessful (Domanovszky 1942, 667, photo 133). It is a plausible hypothesis that they arrived in Budapest from Vienna in 1867, on the occasion of the transfer of the archive of the commission led by the imperial commissioner Anton Jankowics (Bartoş 1971, 271). There are only two portraits, the one of Crisan is missing, because they were taken in prison immediately after the capture of the rebels and sent to Vienna before Crisan was also captured and taken into custody. The two portraits are mounted side by side, in a double frame, so that they appear as a single work, registered with the following characteristics:

Anonymous, *Horea and Cloşca, leaders of the 1784 Transylvanian Revolt*, oil on canvas, 30.2×40 cm, TK painting collection, no. inv. 53.232 (HNM). (Fig. 4)

The portraits impress with the extraordinary force of expression. Standing in front of the two stout and strong men, leaders of a revolutionary movement of surprising modernity, caught after a vile betrayal, before a trial that could not do them justice, the artist is strongly impressed and manages to transfer to his works the whole emotion that the moment awakens in him. Horea appears statuesque, upright and proud as his ideals were upright, marked by a deep sadness, but still with a pale hope of a possible salvation

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[2] I gratefully thank my colleagues at the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest, the art historian Serfőző Szabolcs Ph.D. and the art historian Boros Judit Ph.D. for the support, promptness and

collegiality with which they provided me with the requested information.

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that only the "good and righteous emperor" could provide him. Over the linen shirt open at the neck and fastened only in a buttonhole, he wears only a breastplate. In later versions the artist kept his dignified attitude, but placed a shadow of sadness on his face and restless eyes; he added details to the hairstyle, specifically drawing braided pigtails, and completed his clothing with a peasant suman (as it appeared in several depictions of the time). Cloşca's face is more freely done and at least equally impressive. Even this time the artist does not insist on the details, letting his brush capture the disturbing rebellion that the entire physiognomy and attitude of his model testify. And in this case, the details will be added in the next version, the rebellious hair calmed down and drawn in a correct form, something from the focus of the "forgotten" look. The background (as in the Portrait of Horea) becomes opaque and uniform, the overall color scheme is more conventional.

Documentary information and the manner in which the portraits are made lead us to believe that these are the first representations in a series of several reworkings of the subjects by Steinwald. We are left with the conclusion that the artist himself made several works, and the fact that they show small differences between them exactly confirms that the painter was around his models and kept in mind several elements of their appearance that he added or removed from one version to another. A copyist of the portraits would certainly have endeavored to keep the details accurate, and would not have taken the liberty of omitting or adding information which he did not possess. Therefore, the works from Baron Brukenthal's collection, now in the collection of the National History Museum of Romania, are later, a variant made quietly, in the workshop, finished in drawing and color, a little more conventional and without a particle of the original emotional breath. Probably the painting (made between January 30, the day of Crisan's capture and about February 11) that Michael von Brukenthal sent to the governor was the first in his possession, requesting the artist to make the other two portraits (as I already mentioned).

We also mention here the oil portraits once in the possession of George Bariţiu and the pastel ones of Sigismund Koréh, at that time a

student at the Reformed College of Aiud, the first lost, of Koréh's, the one of Horea is only partially preserved/ broken in the collection of the Romanian Academy Library. The presence of the young artist in the prison in Alba Iulia brought across the ages the information about several artists who "painted" the brave prisoners in the prison, through a letter written on February 3, 1785, by I. Gyöngyösi to his friend G. Gulácsi (Bartoş 1971, 271).

Graphic works in the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum

The cultural-historical dimension of works of art, space of communication with power to create reality, undoubtedly deserves more attention in the research activity. This is even more significant in graphic/engraving works than in paintings, the engravings being intended for a much larger number of consumers and, consequently, bearing evidence of the cultural, social and even political messages that were (and are) conveyed to the viewers /to the public. Recent research demonstrates that some photographic reports from the second half of the 18th century, such as those of Hyeronimus Löschenkohl, not only represent unique historical sources, but even played a more important role in shaping opinions and disseminating information in the Age of Enlightenment than previously assumed (Hubmayer 2012, 8). During the mentioned period, in the imperial capital there was an art academy, an engraving academy, dealers and an art market, and through the Josephine measures regarding the freedom of the press, the necessary conditions were created for a real information boom through the printed word and image intended for a wide audience. Under these conditions, the Uprising led by Horea, Cloşca and Crişan had a very wide popularity, being appreciated for its scale as an event of international importance.

One of the genres of art that proliferated was the portrait, which, in the second half of the 18th century, also experienced the influence of the ideas promoted by the writings of the Swiss Protestant pastor Johann Kaspar Lavater (Zürich, 1741–1801), the main promoter of physiognomy in the modern period. Starting from the convictions of the English physician-philosopher Sir Thomas Browne (1605–1682) and the Italian Giambattista Della Porta

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(1535–1615) regarding the possibility of identifying inner qualities from the outer appearance of the face, Lavater developed the principles of physiognomy, according to which temperament and predominant character of a person can be read/discovered by interpreting external appearance, especially facial features. Rooted in his religious beliefs, Lavater's studies and writings (*Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe*, 1775–1778 and *Essays on Physiognomy*, 1789–1798) argue for the existence of signs of the divine in human life, within a constant interaction of the mind and of the body which determines influences of the spirit on the features.

Thus, the portraits from the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the following one are often characterized by an emphasis on features that can convey messages about the personality of those represented. Made during the period in an impressively large number, edifying to the importance of Horea's uprising, the engravings, often used to accompany texts in which the event was presented to make it widely known, are rarely faithful portrayals, being marked by an accentuation of features or even their deformation, in order to fuel certain feelings towards the main figures of that dramatic moment.

The Engraving Collection of the Brukenthal National Museum contains a number of 23 works (metal engravings, etchings and chisels, color engravings, lithographs, ink silhouettes) generated by the Revolt of 1784–1785: full-length portraits, bust portraits, individual or group portraits, prison scenes and genre scenes.

Jacob Adam (1748–1811), one of the most famous artists of the Viennese school of engraving, is one of those who immortalized in graphics the leaders of the Revolt of 1784–85. He worked extensively in the publishing houses and printers of the imperial capital, but is best known for his numerous small-format portraits of personalities of his time. In the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum, the representations of Horea and Cloşca full-figure both works signed by Jacob Adam are kept in the old engraving collection; variants with the same characteristics, only a

very small difference in sink dimensions entered the graphics collection in 1984, through the donation of the collector Karl Engber.

Jakob Adam, *Horea,* Chisel, 20.5×14.7 cm / 21.4×15.7 cm, signed lower right: "J. Adam fe."; inscription below the work: "Orden des Hora / Hora. Anführer den Walachischen Rebellen welcher den 30ten X-ber 1784 in den Radaker Waldung gefangen genomen worden." Within the text is Horea's coat of arms, with the double cross united by the heart pierced by the sword. It is surrounded by two concentric circles; around the badge on the outside, the text: "Hora bibit & quiescit, provincia luget & solvit". In the exergue, the Romanian version of the text is written in Cyrillic letters: "Hora be şi hodineşte ţara plinje şi ple[te]şte." BNM no. inv. I/367; Source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 7)

Jakob Adam, *Horea*, chisel, 20.8×14.7 cm; 21.4×15.7 cm, signed lower right: "J. Adam fe."; inscription below the work: "Orden des Hora / Hora. Anführer den Walachischen Rebellen welcher den 30ten X-ber 1784 in den Radaker Waldung gefangen genomen worden"; MNB no. inv. XV/445; Source: 1984 Karl Engber donation.

Variants can also be found at the Library of the Romanian Academy and at the National Library of Vienna (Densuşianu 1880, 78-79; Băcilă 1922, 23-24; Beu 1935, 38-39; Sabău 2005, 375).

"Of outstanding technical and artistic quality" (Sabău 2005, 375) these representations of the leaders of the uprising of 1784 made by the Viennese engraver are among the best-preserved images of these historical characters, well executed from the point of view of portraiture, characterization both through physiognomy and the whole figure, from stature to clothing and attitude. Their quality is also found at the level of the engraving technique in which we notice the careful reproduction of details, the fineness of shadows and line accents. The appreciation they enjoyed at the time led to the large number of reproductions and, at the same time, they constituted the source of inspiration for other portrayals. This is also because, having

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this good rendering of the faces, they were considered to be made according to nature, during imprisonment, a hypothesis contradicted by other researchers (Auner 1935, 32; Bartoş 1971, 267-268; Beu 1935, 75; Stoicănescu 1937, 104).

Horea is depicted in a stately, dignified attitude, rendered in full, standing, in profile to the right. He has a stern face, a straight nose, firm features, bushy, frowning eyebrows, a focused look, wears a moustache; the hair over his ear sticks out from under his fur-trimmed cap on which his name is written: HORA. He holds his left hand on his hip, and in his right hand he has a long-tailed hatchet. Over the loose shirt, he has a sleeveless, hooded cowl tied at the neck with a string. He has tight peasant trousers ("cioareci") and peasant shoes ("opinci") on his feet. At his waist, on the right side, he has two pistols, and on the left side, a dagger and a sword. Around the neck, on a chain, is attached the "decoration of Horia", which also appears below the frame. The cross, cord, sword, heart, lily flower are used in Freemasonic symbolism and are intended to place Horea if not as a member of this fraternity, at least as sharing similar ideals. That tendency of freemasonry towards the fantastic is manifested here, which seems to override the principles of reason in Enlightenment thinking and which attributes to Horea the intention of unifying the territories of the former Dacia ("Horea Rex Daciae"). This accurate and detailed description of the decoration of the "order of Horea" is probably also related to the fact that the engraver Jacob Adam had links with Freemasonry, if not directly, at least through the models he portrayed. Among the works preserved from his creation is a *Portrait of the freemason naturalist Ignaz von Born* (of Transylvanian origin, one of those who are speculated to have brokered connections between Horea and Emperor Joseph II) (Ignaz von Born), *Portrait of diplomat Karl Josef Fürst von Ligne*, member of a Brussels lodge (Jakob Adam) and a *Diploma of a Prague Freemasonry Lodge.*

The connections of Horea and the ideals of the uprising with the principles spread by Freemasonry are not yet documented, being, moreover, very difficult to document a movement whose operation is based on the principle of silence and secrecy. They were, in

our opinion, real, but without being officialized as there would be too many coincidences, in a Europe that, just a few years later, would know the Great French Revolution, also instrumentalized by the "gray figures" of the Freemasons and their bright ideas. Historian Ioan Chindriş considers Ignaz von Born, "Maître en chair" of the French orientation lodge "La vrai Concorde" ("Zur Wahren Eintracht") in Vienna, the liaison between Horea and Emperor Joseph II and attributes to Horea a reverential text in support of the emperor. A very special figure of the era, von Born, the emperor's mining and mountaineering advisor, born in the Western Carpathians, who hosted in his house in Vienna a cenacle of masons or philo-mason artists and scholars, of which the engraver Jakob Adam was also a part, is the most plausible connection between Transylvania and its people and the Viennese court (Chindriş 2018, 62).

Jakob Adam, *Cloşca*, Etching, chisel, 20.5×15 cm; 21.5×15.7 cm, signed lower right: "J. Adam fe."; inscription: "Gloska / Ein Gehülfe des Rebellen Hora welcher mit ihm gefangen worden"; MNB no. inv. I/368; BNM no. inv. I/367; Source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 7)

Jakob Adam, *Cloşca*, Etching, chisel, 20.2×14.5 cm; 21.5×15.7 cm, signed lower right: "J. Adam fe."; inscription: "Gloska / Ein Gehülfe des Rebellen Hora welcher mit ihm gefangen worden"; MNB no. inv. XV/444; BNM no. inv. XV/445; Source: 1984 Karl Engber donation (Densuşianu 1880, 78-79; Băcilă 1922, 32; Beu 1935, 47; Sabău 2005, 375). (Fig. 8)

Cloşca is depicted standing, facing slightly to the left, in half profile to the left. The face is stern, the whole attitude is grim. He has a handsome face, with lively eyes, an aquiline nose, well-marked eyebrows, a short moustache. He holds his left hand on his hip, while his right is raised, gesturing slightly. He wears a straight hat, from under which his locks come out, falling on his shoulders. His clothing is similar to that in which Horea is portrayed: over the wide shirt, fastened at the waist with a belt, he wears a wide furry sheepskin coat, tied around the neck; he wears tight peasant trousers ("cioareci") and peasant shoes ("opinci") on his feet. He is armed with

a shotgun carried on his back, two pistols at his waist, and a sheathed sword.

With a pronounced spirit of observation, interested in the defining moments and phenomena of the society of the time, **Johann Martin Will** (1727–1806), active as an engraver, publicist and art dealer in Augsburg, captured in his works the image of the world in which he lived. He made portraits, but mostly genre scenes, allegories, battle scenes, and caricatures. His editorial work focused on aspects related to cultural history (traditional costumes and children's games), commercial graphics, portrait engravings, caricatures and historical and even cartographic representations. Connected to the renewals in the thinking of the age, the artist showed a special interest in special, sensational aspects or events, as was the Uprising of 1784–1785. His works are notable for their "pictoriality", achieved through the mezzotint technique, characterized by the gray tones.

Johann Martin Will (Augsburg, 1727–1806), *Horea and Cloşca in prison*, metal engraving /etching/, 18×24.5 cm, signed and located lower right: "Joh. Martin Will executor. AV", inscription: "Kloska und Hora im Gefängenss. Beyde Rebellen in dem Grossfürstenthum Siebenbürchen den 30. December. A: 1784. In der Radeker Waldung gefangen genomen worden", BNM Inv. I/370; Source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 9)

The two leaders of the uprising are shown in prison, in two cells next to each other, with thick walls, pointed vaults, low doors of massive planks reinforced with ironwork and fences. They both sit and are chained at both hands and feet. They have the clothing known from the engravings of Adam, with tall hats, loose shirts, sheepskin furry coats, tight peasant trousers ("cioareci") and peasant shoes ("opinci"). They still have daring figures, especially Horea, whose gaze is directed upward, at the latticed window in the background wall.

Johann Martin Will (Augsburg, 1727–1806), *Horea and Cloşca*, metal engraving with chisel, 10.5×14.5 cm, signed lower right below each portrait, "FM Will exe: A.V", BNM inv. 371; Source: Baron Brukenthal old collection

(German school). Inscription below the medallion on the right: "Horja Anführer de Wallachischen Rebellen welcher d. 30 Dec. 1784 in der Radaker Waldung gefangen genomen worde; Inscription below the medallion on the left: "Glocska Anführer de Wallachischen Rebellen welcher d. 30 Dec. 1784 in der Radaker Waldung gefangen genomen worde." (Fig. 11)

The two figures are shown bust, in profile, in double-encircled medallions. Horea to the right, and Cloşca to the left. Horea wears a fur hat, his companion is uncovered and long hair covers the nape of his neck. Both have accentuated features, with prominent foreheads, exaggerated arches, large, ridged noses, thick lower lips, moustaches, thick necks. In the background, above the medallions, are drawn chains with shackles at the ends. Signed under each of the portraits, we assume they also circulated separately

Anonymous (after Johann Martin Will), *Horea and Closka in Prison*, colored metal engraving (etching), 22.2×23.7 cm, inscription: "Kloska und Hora im Gefängisss", unsigned, undated, BNM inv. I/369; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). Engraving inspired by the composition of J.M. Will. (Fig. 10)

A typical representative of Josephine Vienna, a cultural and social world that decisively shaped him as an artist, **Johann Hieronymus Löschenkohl** (Elberfeld, 1753–1807, Vienna) was an engraver, painter, bookseller, graphic artist, publisher, antiquarian and assiduous reporter of his time. Under the influence of the modern ideas of the Enlightenment, he renounces the baroque status of a court artist, adapting to the new type of artist, who earns his income primarily by selling his works to a wide audience. His artistic program seems to have been the accomplishment of a complex image of the contemporary world shaped by the Enlightenment ideas and its encyclopedic thinking. Stylistically, many aspects of Löschenkohl's graphics correspond to the aesthetic program of classicism, such as a fundamental return to this world and a growing interest in the human shape, whose precise facial features are depicted as traits of character and personality (Hubmayer 2012, 178). He was one of the most prolific

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exponents of the "silhouettes" in ink. In the *Wiener Zeitung* of June 3, 1780, the artist stated: "I draw whole people in shadow, individually or together, in all positions, with everything that surrounds them, at most with every characteristic of their occupation which I can describe …" (Hubmayer 2012, 19)

The complexity and echoes of the 1784 uprising brought to his attention some of its moments and its representative figures. It perfectly matched the main interest of his work, as the artist was concerned with different "juridic files" of the time. The cruel punishment applied to the commanders of the uprising, despite previous laws that abolished torture and the death penalty (torture had been abolished in 1776, and the death penalty, by the decree of Joseph II of March 9, 1781), made his engraving depicting the scene of the "Execution of Hora and Kloska" of February 28, 1785, the best-known image of this type. The collection of the Brukenthal National Museum contains works signed by Löschenkohl as well as some based on his engravings or silhouettes.

Hieronymus Löschenkohl (in RI: Anonymous), ***Horea and Cloşca***, metal engraving with chisel, 21×28 cm, signed lower right: "… Loeschenkohl im Wien", inscription below the two portraits: „Hora Gloska/ Beide Anführer der Wallachische Rebellen Gezeichnet nach dem Leben den 3. Jan. 1785.", BNM inv. I/373; Source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 12)

Profile portraits, the two characters are rendered face to face, very close, looking into each other's eyes. The physiognomic features are meant to accentuate their firmness. The content of the inscription and the precision of the dating are meant to convince us that the author had the opportunity to see the two characters in prison.

After Hieronymus Loeschenkohl (in RI: Anonymous), ***Horea and Cloşca***, metal engraving, with chisel, 22×28 cm; inscription: "Hora / Gloska / Beide Anführer der Wallachischen Rebellengezeichnet nach dem Lebenden 3 Jan. 1785"; BNM inv. I/372; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 13)

The models for rendering the figures were Loeschenkohl's engravings, but the features are exaggerated, and the color, especially of the lips, brings accents in the suggestion of violence, to achieve a frightening effect. Cloşca wears a cap like that of the soldiers of the Border Regiments (Beu 1935, 53).

Anonymous, ***Horea and Cloşca***, metal engraving with chisel, 21×28.5 cm; inscription below left profile: "Hora Duc Valaques Revoltes en Transilvanie 1784 / Hora furst von der Rebelion der Wallachsenin Siebenbürgen"; inscription below right profile: "Klocska Premier Capitain des Revoltes 1784 / Kloschka erster Hauptman des Rebellirten", BNM inv. I/378; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 14)

Double portrait of the captains of the uprising, Horea and Cloşca, rendered in profile, sitting face to face. Horea wears a hat and a peasant coat. He has long, shoulder-length hair. He wears the same clothing, but his head is uncovered.

The artist locates the events, drawing from his imagination, in the background, what should be a typical image for a Transylvanian fortress: a Gothic church and a crenellated fortress wall, set in a hilly landscape. In the upper part, between the two portraits: two coats of arms; to the left a cross with a pierced heart in a circle along where, inside, appears the text: "Hora Rex Dazie"; on the right a cap like a papal tiara, in a circle along which, inside, appears the text: "Nos pro Cesare". The entire composition is inscribed in an ornamental baroque frame. The artist is an amateur. The portrayals are clumsy, conventional, and the background landscape simplistic. However, his intention is to contextualize the events as comprehensively as possible, and in the text below the image that brings additional information, he also specifies the year 1784.

Fragments from *The devastation of a manorial court with various scenes from the uprising*:

a. A**nonymous**, ***Horea***, metal engraving with chisel, 11.6×8.2 cm, inscription under the medallion: "Horia / Wallach: Rebelle.", unsigned, undated, BNM inv. I/374a; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 15)

The portrait is rendered bust, profile to the right, framed in a circular medallion that has a wall in the background on which a chain with handcuffs is attached (Bacilă, 19).

b. **Anonymous**, *Cloșca*, metal engraving with chisel, 11.8×8.2 cm, inscription under the medallion: "Gloska / Wallach: Rebelle", unsigned, undated, BNM inv. I/374b; Source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 16)

The portrait is rendered bust, profile to the left, framed in a circular medallion that has a wall in the background on which a chain with handcuffs is attached.

c. **Anonymous**, *Coat of Arms (Badges of Horea)*, metal engraving with chisel, 12.8×7.7 cm, unsigned, undated, BNM inv. I/374c; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 17)

In the center of a star with eight large and eight smaller angles, marked by a double circle, is a heart pierced by a sword, the symbol of the supreme sacrifice of Horea, surrounded by the initials "H.F.R.D.", and below the inscription that explains the significance of the letters: "Die obern 2 Buchstaben H.F. bedeuten Horia floreat, die 2 untern R.D. Reso Dacio" (Rex Daciae/ King of Dacia).

The three engravings are parts of a larger composition which, in the upper part, included a scene with "The devastation of a noble court with various scenes from the uprising"

Anonymous, *Horea*, metal engraving with chisel, 11.7×8.3 cm, inscription: "Horia / Wallach: Rebelle", unsigned, undated, BNM inv. I/375; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). Identical to I/374a, but not in color.

Silhouettes in ink

Silhouette making is considered the earliest process of light-assisted portraiture – an early precursor to photomechanical reproduction. Very similar because of the way they are made, they differ more according to the text that accompanies them. This type of portrait, the so-called "shadow paintings", which results from the interaction of light and shadow, was already known in antiquity, but it

enjoyed success again only at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the next, starting from England, from where the fashion reached France, where the concept of "silhouette" was born. The term comes from Etienne de Silhouette, Louis XV's finance minister, who undertook the task of reorganizing the state's finances through economy after the death of king Louis XIV. As an alternative to the expensive colored miniatures, which were mainly exchanged between lovers, he promoted black silhouettes, which soon became very popular, being easy to make even by amateurs (Hubmayer 2012, 14).

The growing importance of the art of portraiture in the Age of Enlightenment led to a revival of this simple technique that allowed portraits to be made quickly and cheaply. Specific to the spirit of the times, the representation of personality traits corresponded to citizens' growing need for self-confidence and the expression of their individuality. Johann Caspar Lavater (1741–1801), the famous physiognomist, believed that the silhouette, although the least detailed form of portraiture, is the most truthful and revealing of character. Lavater used about 150 silhouettes among the illustrations in his monumental work Physionomische Fragmente (Zürich, 1775–76). Lavater's work created enormous interest in both physiognomy (a field of study by which one could judge character by facial features) and silhouette (drawing), and for a time there was widespread success in these portraits which required no knowledge of drawing. Anyone could make silhouettes by shadow tracing, and people would collect and exchange them with friends, just as they would with photos. The effect of the silhouette on the viewer results from the tension between the precise outline and the black inner surface. The inside was blackened with ink. Often, a special device called a pantograph was used to reduce the model and make miniatures, offered as souvenirs or on business cards. The silhouette thus became a very cheap form of portraiture that opened up access to various types of information and knowledge for large parts of society.

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Black silhouettes on paper were another variant in which the images of the leaders of the uprising spread in Transylvania and throughout Europe. This way, it seems that the images of the leaders of the uprising reached Tsarina Catherine II, who would have received the silhouettes through the Austrian ambassador in Petrograd; to the King of Sardinia through his ambassador in Vienna; and to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Leopold – who had shown himself interested and at the same time intrigued by Horea's personality, the one who had gained so much confidence in the ranks of the "Wallachian nation" claiming to act "in the name of the Emperor" – to whom Emperor Joseph II himself sent them, on January 13, 1785, also announcing the suppression of the uprising (Beu 1944, 31-32, 117; Bartoş 1971, 269).

Hieronymus Löschenkohl (?), ***Horea and Cloşca,*** Copper engraving, 16×12.8 cm; inscriptions in medals, top and bottom: "Nos Pro Caesare and Horja Rex Daciae 1784"; left, below profile: "Horja Oberhaupt der Rebellen in Siebenbürgen"; right, under profile: "Klotska Freund und Ratgeberder Horja", MNB no. inv. I/376; conservation; the paper support has the lower corners cut; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 18)

Hieronymus Löschenkohl (?), ***Horea and Cloşca,*** Copper engraving, 16×12.8 cm; inscriptions in medals, top and bottom: "Nos Pro Caesare and Horja Rex Daciae 1784"; left, below profile: "Horja Oberhaupt der Rebellen in Siebenbürgen"; right, under profile: "Klotska Freund und Ratgeberder Horja", MNB no. inv. XV/447; source: 1984 Karl Engber donation; variant of the engraving with inv. no. I/376.

Busts of Horia and Cloşca, silhouettes in black. Horia is to the right, wearing a hat, his hair falling down his back, his nose large and his lips slightly open. Below the bust is written „Horja | Oberhaupt der Rebellen | in Siebenbürgen". Cloşca is to the left, bare-headed, the hair falling slightly on the forehead and rising up at the nape of the neck. Big nose and slightly open lips. Below the bust is written "Klotska | Freund und | Ratgeber des Horja". Above the silhouettes is Horea's medal, with the inscription: "NOS PRO CESARE" and in the middle it has a crown

with a cross. On the reverse there are three concentric circles, in the middle a triple cross, above and below, in the middle of the cross a heart pierced by a sword, around it the inscription: "Horia Rex Daciae"; aside and on the other side of the lower cross "17 84".

Hieronymus Löschenkohl (?), ***Crisan,*** Copper engraving, 15.6×9 cm; inscription under profile: "Krischan Gyorg", BNM no. inv. XV/448; source: 1984 Karl Engber donation. (Fig. 19)

These engravings are also present in the booklet: *Horia und Klotska Oberhaupt und Rathgeber der Aufrüher in Siebenbürgen. Eine physiognomische Skize, historisch und characteristisch behandelt; nebst der Geschichte dieses Aufruhrs; Ein Beitrag zur Menschenkunde und Geschichte der Unmenschheit im 18ten Jahrhundert,* Karlsburg und Hermannstadt 1785, by **Adam Friedrich Geisler** (1757–ca. 1800). German writer and editor, educated in Leipzig, Geisler had a prolific writing career and is known as a draftsman most notably for the Leipzig City Views series. A sympathizer of Enlightenment ideas of freedom, Geissler paints an idealized portrait of Horea: "Horia seemed to be a born leader, proving, during the time he played this role, that he was doing well. Disgust at the iniquities of the nobles, as well as the search for freedom and welfare for his offended countrymen and co-religionists, seem to have been the springs of his actions, which must have acted on him with even greater effectiveness, taking into account the fact that he has a well-trained head, that he not only speaks the language fluently, but even reads classic German authors".

In the booklet there are two plates with effigy representations of the portraits of the three leaders of the uprising whose author is considered unknown. They may be the works of the same Geissler, the author of the pamphlet, made after engravings by Hieronymus Löschenkohl or Johann Martin Will.

Antonius Aloisus Hoehnle (1784–1811), ***Horea, Cloşca, Crişan,*** Engraving, 14.8×23 cm, undated, inscription with signature and location: "Horja, s. Nicola Ursz Krischan Györg. Kloszka Ivan // In Wien zu haben bey Antonius Aloysius Hoehnle, Kupferst.", BNM

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no. inv. XI/670 /2; source: Baron Brukenthal old collection (German school). (Fig. 20)

Imaginary scene with the three leaders of the rebellion. On the left, leaning against a tree, leg over leg and rifle on his knee, stands Horea. in front of him is Crişan dressed as a Hungarian hussar, with a hat with a feather and two cords, with tassels at the back, with a sword at his waist. Behind Crişan, bent towards a dog he is playing with, Cloşca is dressed almost the same as Crişan, and he also has a sword.

Technically well done, this genre scene is devoid of the data of reality, appearing rather like a hunting scene.

Among the valuable artistic works of the uprising there is the scene of the *Capture of Horea and Cloşca*, signed by Johann Caspar Weinrauch (1765–1836), draftsman and engraver of the German school, who was born in Bamberg and studied and worked in Vienna. Among the little information that is preserved about his activity is that related to the creation of book illustrations, allegories, historical scenes, decorations and portraits, including those of the English writer Laurence Sterne and Prince Eugene of Savoy, Montesquieu, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, John Claudius Loudon etc. (Lohmeyer 1896, 513–514).

Johann Caspar Weinrauch (1765–1836), ***The Capture of Horea***, Aquaforte, 15×8,5 cm, signed lower right: "Weinrauch fec. Vienne", dated: 1794; inscription: "Die Rebellen Horja und Kloschka werden von ihrer eigenen Rotte verrathen gefangen, und den Soldaten ausgeliefert, und dann den 28-ten Febr. 1787 hingerichtet", BNM no. inv. XV/446; source: 1984 Karl Engber donation. (Fig. 21)

Johann Caspar Weinrauch (1765–1836), ***The Capture of Horea***, Chisel, signed lower left: "Weinrauch fec."; inscription: "Die Rebellen Horja und Kloschka werden von ihrer eigenen Rotte verrathen gefangen, und den Soldaten ausgeliefert, und dann den 28-ten Febr. 1787 hingerichtet", BNM no. inv. XV/446; source: 1984 Karl Engber donation.

In a composition with baroque characteristics, the artist groups three centers of interest, in different plans, managing, through skillfully

directed compositional lines, to lead our gaze from one to the other, to encompass the entire scene and create a tense atmosphere, required by the moment represented. Scene that relies on the tense, dramatic atmosphere of the moment of the capture of the leaders of the uprising created by the suggestions of movement and the rendering of faces with menacing expressions. The figures are rendered in motion, in three distinct groups, in a composition similar to Johann Caspar Weinrauch's engraving, but with fewer figures and a landscape in which the vegetation on the right of the work is replaced by rocks.

To the left of the foreground, Cloşca is knocked to the ground and held by a peasant, while another ties his hands behind his back. Towards the background, on the right of the composition, of equal importance with the other scene is the capture of Horea trying to take the sword out of its sheath, being immobilized by two peasants, another being put on the ground. From behind the tree that marks the left flank, soldiers armed with rifles arrive and their leader brings a rope ready to tie the prisoners. The scene is set in a mountainous setting with reference to the Apuseni Mountains, with a high, rocky slope to the right of the composition. The figure of Horea brings little with the portrayal of Jakob Adam.

One of the scenes dedicated to the uprising from a slightly later period is made by **Franz Xaver Stöber** (1795–1855), one of the most famous Vienna engravers of the first half of the 19th century. Like many artists of the time, Stöber learned the secrets of the trade with his father, Joseph Stöber, who was also an engraver, then attended the Academy of Arts in Vienna. In 1815 he attracted public attention with his engravings of mythological scenes. In 1829 he received a privilege for steel engraving, which allowed significantly larger editions than copper engraving. In 1835 he became a member of the Vienna Academy, and from 1844 a professor of copper engraving at the Academy. He was particularly prolific, he was a good portraitist, but he also produced numerous vignettes, title engravings and almanac images.

Anonymous (after Franz Xaver Stöber), *The Capture of Horea*, lithograph, 20×12.5

cm (27.3×21.3 cm), BNM no. inv. XI/670-1 (Fig. 22)

The moment of the capture of the rebel leaders is compositionally similar to Weinrauch's work, but treated differently stylistically. The natural setting in which the action takes place is described in more detail. The scene of Horea's capture, to the right of the composition, is outlined on a mountain slope that rises to the top, closing the composition. Horia is held by three peasants, one holds him by the back, two by the hands and the fourth with a pistol in his hand takes his sword. To the left of the composition, Cloşca is immobilized on the ground by two armed peasants. Their weapons are lying on the ground in the foreground. From the left of the last plane, a group of soldiers with bayonet weapons and ropes advances. The figures of the characters are frowning, angry, the artist gives the scene dynamics, specific to the moment.

Around the middle of the 19th century, the interest of Romanian intellectuals in the ideals and the development of the 1784 Uprising is increasingly accentuated. In this context, one of the first Romanian artists to create scenes or portraits of the nation's heroes is Ioan Costande (1814–1880). He studied in Vienna, being mentioned in the Catalog of the Academy of Arts in Vienna in 1832, as a student. Professor Kuperwieser remembers him as studying at the Academy in 1835, 1836, 1837 and, at a summer course, in 1838 (Bielz 1970, 53). After his studies, he settled in Sibiu in 1841, dedicating his teaching career and working as a lithographer, sculptor and draftsman, being mentioned several times in the press of the time. Undoubtedly, he reached a solid status in the Sibiu city, because on April 26, 1847, he received the citizenship of the city. In the beginning of his activity, he was supported, to some extent, by the priest Georg Michael Conrad from Apoldul de Sus and by Samuel Bergleiter, forester in Sebeş. Unfortunately, little of his creation, which seems to have been very diverse, has been preserved. The painter Ion Negulici was mentioned, in 1845, in the Romanian Courier,

as a painter and sculptor. He also made copies after the masters of European art, probably during his studies in Vienna and executed lithographs after Romanian historical personalities: Iosif Sterca Şuluţiu, Avram Iancu, George Bariţiu, Nicolae Bălcescu, Horea, Crişan as well as with religious themes, at the Lithographic Institute of Robert Krabs and in Vienna. His works signed as "Academic Painter", "Drawing Professor" or "Professor", are made within the limits of academic convention. Though much of his activity and work remain, at least for now, unknown, Costande is one of the first Romanian academic artists (Irimie-Fota 1978).

Ioan Costande, *Crişan*, lithography, 29×22,8 / 39×30,8 cm, bottom left: "Proprietatea lui Joanu Costande pictoru academicu", inscription bottom middle: Giorgio Crişanu 1784, BNM no. inv. IX/39.

Through the contribution of these artists, the faces of those who led the great revolt of the Romanian peasants from 1784 are preserved not only in the memory and pages of history, but also in the images of works of art preserved over the centuries, which have transported to us, today's viewers, the traits of these heroes who strongly believed in their truth and the emotion of those who saw them or lived those hot months of hope and drama. As the "good emperor" intuited and wrote to Governor Brukenthal on December 13, 1784, this historical moment "is of the greatest importance for the whole monarchy, and still more for the future than for the present" (Lupaş 1935, 20-21, apud Din 2003, 208), and the sacrifice of the leaders and the defeat of the uprising would become, over time, "a great success for posterity" (in the words of historian Adolf Schuller).

NB. The first part of this study is to be published in Romanian language, in the volume dedicated to Academician Marius Porumb at his 80th Anniversary, Cluj-Napoca, 2023, with the title: *Artă şi document – consideraţii asupra atribuirii portretelor conducătorilor Răscoalei din 1784: Horea, Cloşca şi Crişan.*

**ART AND DOCUMENT - WORKS FROM THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM
REGARDING THE UPRISING IN 1784–1785**

ABBREVIATIONS

BNM: Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu

HNM: Hungarian National Museum, Budapest

MNB: Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal, Sibiu

MNM: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapesta

MNIR: Muzeul Naţional de Istorie al României, Bucureşti

NHMR: National History Museum of Romania, Bucharest

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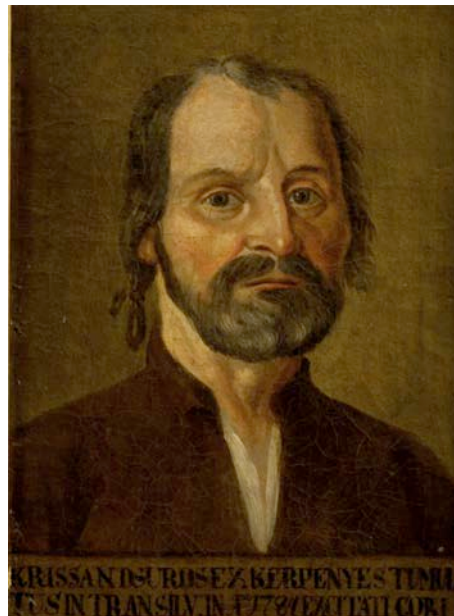© National History Museum of Romania, Bucharest

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DEPICTIONS OF "CHILDHOOD GAMES AND PLEASURES"
ON AN EARLY 18th CENTURY ITALIAN NEOCLASSICAL BEDROOM SET FROM THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM

Daniela DÂMBOIU*

Abstract: *A spectacular early 18th-century Italian Neoclassical bedroom set, donated to the Brukenthal National Museum by a private owner, displays an exquisite ornamental composition executed with great artistic skill in walnut veneer and ivory inlays. The decorative scenes (some of which are taken from identified engravings) have been arranged to emphasize the important moral principles necessary required in the education of a youth (faith, enlightenment through arts, sciences and sports).*

Key words: *Neoclasical Italian inlaid furniture, Putti, games, pleasure, pedagogy, Jacques Stella's drawings, Claudine Bouzonnet Stella's engravings*

Rezumat: *Un spectaculos dormitor italian de la începutul secolului al 18-lea, în stil Neoclasic, donat Muzeului Național Brukenthal de către un deținător privat, prezintă o compoziție ornamentală sofisticată, executată cu multă măiestrie artistică, prin intarsii de furnir de nuc și incrustații de fildeș. Scenele decorative (unele dintre ele preluate din gravuri identificate) au fost aranjate pentru a scoate în evidență câteva principii morale importante în formarea unui adolescent (credință, educație prin artă, științe și sport).*

Cuvinte cheie: *Mobilier Neoclasic italian încrustat, Putti, jocuri, plăcere, pedagogie, desenele lui Jacques Stella, gravurile Claudinei Bouzonnet Stella*

An outstanding donation received by the Brukenthal National Museum in 1981 from a private owner (D. Teodorescu from Bucharest, without prior provenance specified) is a 6-piece bedroom furniture set, executed in a Northern Italian workshop of the early 18th century, in Neoclassical style (Figs. 1.1-1.2). The present study focuses on a brief analysis of their particular artistic value.

The bedroom furniture set with walnut veneer marquetry and ivory inlays disposed in a highly refined artistic composition is in good condition and consists of the following pieces:

− a wardrobe (with a mirror on each of the two doors), 128 x 204 x 50 cm, inv. no. AD[1] 143/1;
− a bed, 215 x 187 x 160 cm, inv. no. AD 143/2;

− a bedside table, 47 x 82 x 36 cm, inv. no. AD 143/3;
− a rectangular table, 116 x 73 x 71 cm, inv. no. AD 143/4;
− two chairs, 122 x 48 x 42 cm, inv. no. AD 143/5-6.

The centerpiece of the bedroom set is the bed, which might suggest some clues as to whom it was commisioned for. It is a four-poster bed of the "letto a colonne tortili" type (with twisted columns), whose relatively small dimensions indicate that it was intended for a young man from a noble family in Italy. The compositional embellishment of the bed, carried out with great artistic mastery, as well as of the other parts of the bedroom set, supports this idea. The high headboard (Fig. 2.1) is decorated with a large central medallion inlaid with the *Virgin Mary and Child with the Young Saint John the Baptist* (Fig. 2.2), in a wonderful depiction of the figures inspired by the Italian Renaissance paintings, in the manner of Filippino Lippi. The faces and visible parts of the three biblical characters'

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[1] The abbreviation "AD" represents the Collection of Applied Arts (in Romanian: Artă Decorativă).

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bodies are inlaid with ivory, while their clothing and scenery with walnut veneer of various tones; the hatches, pyro-engraved with the mastery of a talented artist, highlight the physiognomies, folds and details of the landscape. In the lower right part of the central medallion, the cabinetmaker's signature is inscribed, accompanied by a noble coat of arms − probably that of the client; the specialized literature in this field, which we lack for this study, could provide an opportunity to identify the cabinetmaker's workshop (Fig. 2.3).

The central medallion is flanked laterally by two slightly smaller medallions, depicting *Jesus with his Sacred Heart* on the left (Fig. 2.4) and the *Virgin of Sorrows* on the right (Fig. 2.5), whose heart is pierced by a dagger. The three medallions are surrounded by inlays of scrolls and twisted acanthus leaves, interspersed with busts of cherubs. In the center of the carved black wood lunette above, supported by two swirling cherubs, is another medallion with the inlaid figures of *Saint Christopher and the Infant Jesus* – Saint Christopher "Christ bearer" is undoubtedly seen here as the protector of children on their journey through life (Fig. 2.6). The images depicted in these medaillons deserve further study for the identifification of the inspirational patterns. The side panels of the bed are decorated with grotesque motifs: pairs of doves, monkeys, boar or rabbit hunting scenes and satyrs playing the flutes, the rendering of which through the white of the inlaid ivory contrasts beautifully with the different tones of the walnut veneer in the frieze of twisted acanthus stems and leaves; a world of fantastic stories is represented there (Figs. 2.7-2.10 detalii).

If the symbolism of the bed decoration expresses the desire for divine protection of the child/teenager for whom the bed was intended, continuing our analysis we find that the ornamentation of the other pieces of the bedroom set represent real lessons of formation and education of a young person in life.

The "Seggiolone" type of the two high-backed chairs, and their stylistic elements, with two rectangular crossbeams each − made with

exquisite marquetry of walnut and ivory inlays, surrounded by a border of carved volutes − and a similar one joining the front legs (Figs. 3.1-3.3 and 4.1-4.3)[2], indicate their Lombard-Venetian workmanship from around 1700.[3]

Passing to the next piece, we note a medium-size table from the late "Louis XIV" period, rectangular in shape, and a four-legged balustrade base, joined at the bottom by two long flat braces, arched, crossing within a flat sphere, on which is raised a carved urn (Figs. 1.2 and 5). In the last decades of the 17th century and the beginning of the following century, marquetry dominated the production of Italian and French cabinetmakers, whose lavish decoration turned utilitarian pieces into true works of art.[4] The 18th century came to be defined as the Golden Age of Marquetry.

The artistry and significance of the putti scenes inserted into the ornamental composition of the bedroom pieces are of extraordinary sophistication. The respective scenes are arranged on the fronts of the chairs (Figs. 3.1-3.3 and 4.1-4.3), in a border on the tabletop or in the form of a frieze on the side panels, in a sequence of cartridges interspersed with rhomboidal geometric shapes (Fig. 5). Some of the scenes are repeated both on the chairs and on the table. The most interesting scenes are those representing the Allegories of Arts and Sciences. The *Allegory of Painting* can be found on three scenes on the table (Figs. 8.1-8.3) and on the seat of a chair (Fig. 8.4); the *Allegory of Sculpture* on the bottom

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[2]

http://mercatinodellusatocaltanissetta.weebly.com/pieno-rinascimento.html
[3] Seggiolone, manifattura lombardo-veneta – Opere e oggetti d'arte – Lombardia Beni Culturali (www-lombardiabeniculturali-it.translate.goog);
https://www.1stdibs.com/furniture/seating/chairs/17th-century-pair-of-lombardian-italian-swiss-carved-chairs/id-f_9310191/;
https://www.cheffins.co.uk/fine-art/lot-view,a-pair-17th-century-italian-walnut-hall-chairs-with-carved-decoration-to-th_43424.htm
[4] Louis XIV period table inlaid late 17th century:
https://www.anticstore.art/77979P;
https://www.meubliz.com/meuble_petite_table_de_salon_louis_xiv_carree_a_entrejambe_en_croisillon/; https://www.ebay.ca/itm/274884903975

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right side of the tabletop and on a crossbar between the legs of a chair, (Figs. 8.7, 8.8); regarding the *Allegory of Sciences*, we find it as a detail in the upper left corner of the tabletop and on crossbeam of a high-backed chair (Figs. 8.5, 8.6). The central scene of the tabletop with *Bacchus in his Triumphal Chariot* and several other scenes represented on the table or chairs depict the joy of life and work etc., their interpretation being much broader.

A striking visual display is provided by the ornamental composition of the cabinet (a two-doors wardrobe, Fig. 6), through the richness and complexity of the decorative motifs and the artistic and technical execution: pairs of putti or birds or dolphins- and dogs heads, busts of putti or caryatids, and musical putti, inlaid with ivory and interspersed by symmetrical meanders of walnut veneer marquetry. In the upper and lower part of each of the two mirrored doors, there is a rectangular cartridge reflecting a scene of childhood games and pleasures (Figs. 9.1-9.4), all four cartridges being executed according to models from Jacques Stella's book, *Les Jeux et Plaisris [sic] de l'Enfance* [The Games and Pleasures of Childhood] (Stella 1957).

In the very year of the death of the painter Jacques Stella, 1657, his niece Claudine Bouzonnet Stella (1636−1697), the heiress of his workshop even though she was only 21 years old, published a suite of fifty-two drawings, which she beautifully engraved after her uncle's designs, representing childhood games.

Jacques Stella (1596−1657), a French artist and a major art collector of Flemish origin, trained in Lyon, worked for the Court of Cosimo II de Medici in Florence, for the Pope Urban VIII in Rome, and from 1634 in Paris, as the painter of the King Louis XIII − period in which he received an apartment and workshop in Louvre; he was influenced by the art of his good friend Nicolas Poussin. His work was often engraved, allowing his art to reach a wide audience, especially after his death under the impetus of his niece Claudine Bouzonnet Stella.

Art historian Alain Mérot wrote that: "In a less formal vein, Stella painted a number of pastoral genre scenes (untraced) known through the engravings of his niece Claudine Bouzonnet Stella, daughter of his sister Madeleine. They have a simplicity and freshness far removed from the caricatural realism of similar works by his Netherlandish contemporaries. His paintings of the Jeux d'enfents (untraced, engraved) were admired by contemporaries for their light bonhomie ..." (Mulherron 2008, 398) David Landau and other researchers have argued that the engravings from 'Jeux d'enfence' were produced from drawings conceived specifically for this purpose − after the so-called '*dessins pour graver*' − rather than reproduction paintings (Mulherron 2008, 399).

The engravings in Stella's book depict putti playing various childhood games or sports, some of which are still familiar today, such as tennis, darts, and "blind man's buff," but also some less common ones. In the order of the representations of the four cartridges on the cabinet, we identify the four model engravings from Stella's book (with the related verses) as follows:

− print nr. 47 (Fig. 10):"*Le Balon* [The Ball]. *Ce Globe tout enflé de vent va, court, vient & revient souvent faisant en l'air mille voyages; / Bref il n'est point de postillon qui fasse si dru ses messages qu'ilz en font faire à ce Balon.*" [This Ball, all swollen with wind, goes, runs, comes and often returns, making a thousand journeys in the air; / In short, there is no courier who can deliver his messages as fast as this balloon is able to.];

− print nr. 12 (Fig. 11): "*Le Colin Maillard* [Blindman's bluff / The blind man's game / The blind maillard]. *Ie plains fort ce Colin Maillard en aroyant cet autre gaillard qui ne frappe pas de main mort; / Mais peut ester il luy revaudra; et S'il heurte tant à la porte quelque portier luy repondra.*" [I feel deeply sorry for this Colin Maillard seeing the other guy who doesn't hit with a soft hand; / But maybe he will pay him back; and if he knocks hard enough on a door, a porter will answer.];

− print nr. 27 (Fig. 12): "*La Paume* [The Palm (ancestor of tennis)]. *Ainsy nuds legers et dispos ces Enfants, des qu'ilz ont campos vont s'escrimer de la raquette, / Ou la Balle tousjours en l'air parmy cette troupe inquiette trouve sans doute à qui parler.*" [Thus naked, lightweight and in good mood, these Children,

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as soon as they have camped, are going to fight using the racket. Where the ball is still in the air among this restless troop, undoubtedly finds someone to talk to.];

− print nr. 36 (Fig. 13): "*Le Court Baston* [The Short Stick] *Ainsy Serrez à croupeton ils espreuvent au Court Baston à qui s'enlevera de terre; / Mais garde que, dans cet effort, il ne vienne quelque tonerre plustost du Ponant, que Nort*."[Crouched like this, they try to rise from the ground by holding on to the short stick; / But take care that, in this effort, some thunder does not come from the West rather than from the North.]

The scenes representing the tennis game ("*La Paume*") and the one with the Short Stick ("*Le Court Baston*") can also be found on the bedside table (Figs. 12, 13 and Fig. 7).

"The nudity of children echoes a tradition dating back to Antiquity. It was during the Hellenistic period that this semantics of putti developed, which can be found in painting, sculpted decorations, collections of emblems and ornaments, in particular those of Otto Venius and Christoph Jamnitzer... This suite was a real success with potters from Marseille, decorative painters, and even great masters like Goya and more recently Andy Warhol."[5]

Jacques Stella's book is not really a book of emblems, but a collection of engraved representations of childhood games, accompanied by a few verses, intended to offer some reflections or moral lessons derived from reading both image and text together. Unaccompanied by the text, the representations on the cabinet in the collection of the museum in Sibiu can be subject to personal interpretations of the commissioner (something similar to personal devices, called "impresse" in Italy and "devise" in France).

By analyzing the compositions and decorative scenes of the bedroom set, we find that the clear intention of the commissioner was to point out some essential moral devices in the formation of a young person, namely: faith in divine protection, knowledge and education, and the joy of living through games and playing sport.

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[5] https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-6189849

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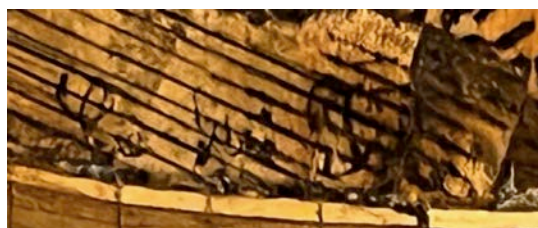
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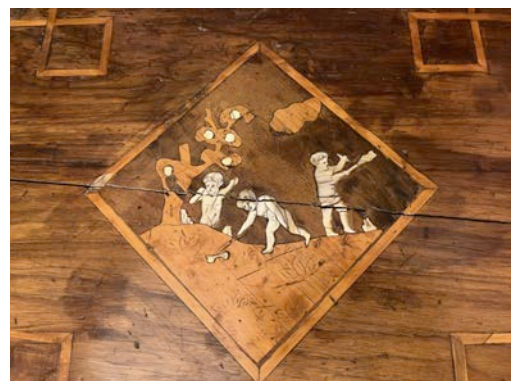
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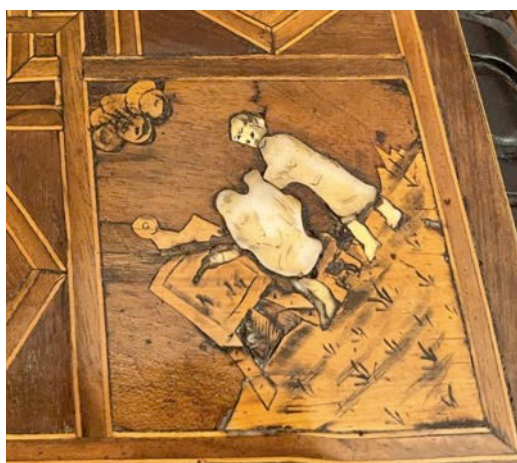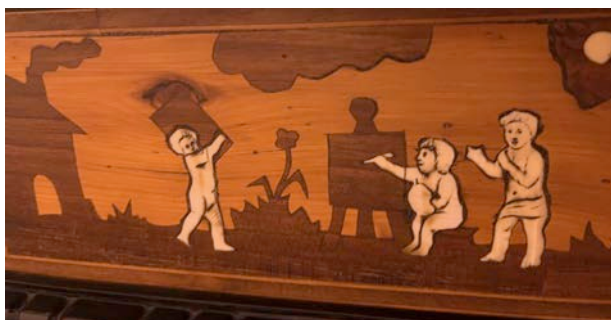
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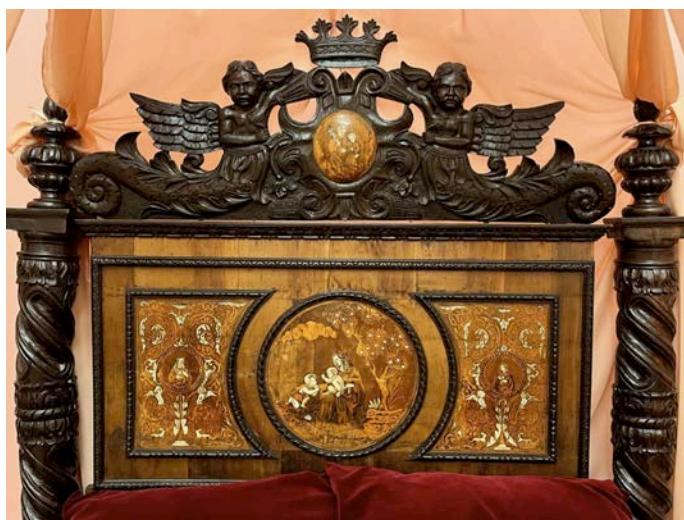
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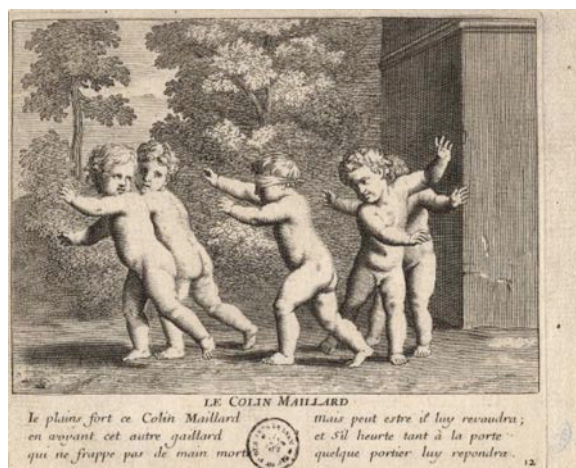
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DEL PEDRO FRANCESCO:
ROMAN RUINS IN THE BRUKENTHAL'S ART COLLECTION

Alexandra POSTELNICU*

Abstract: *The rich engraving collection of the Italian school in the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu (Romania), formed between 1759 and 1774, counts a total of 175 prints. Consisting mainly of works performed on the basis of interpretations, it leaves the right space for unique and original works; however, the term "reproduction" is not synonymous with negligent work, carried out by artists of limited talent, and some certainly deserve to be rediscovered and analyzed from an artistic point of view. Proof of this are the four prints attributed to the artist Francesco Del Pedro from Udine (Udine, 1740–Venice, 1803), with which he fully demonstrates his talent, reproducing on paper the oils of Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich (Weimar, 1712–Dresden, 1774). In this way, an imaginary journey is undertaken by the onlooker, in order to discover the ancient Roman ruins, submerged by an imperturbable bucolic atmosphere. This contribution will deal with a systematic analysis of these creations, at an artistic, architectural and archaeological level, rediscovering an artist who did not always receive the right merits in the past.*

Furthermore, the particular attention paid by the artist to the architectural details offers us the opportunity to propose new interpretations, to identify the depicted structures and to position them topographically on the territory of the Eternal City.

Keywords: *Brukenthal, Francesco Del Pedro, Dietrich, engravings, Settebassi, Quintili, porta chiusa.*

Rezumat: *Bogata colecție de Gravură Italiană a Muzeului Național Brukenthal din Sibiu (România), formată între 1759 și 1774, numără în total 175 de stampe. Alcătuită în principal din lucrări executate pe bază de interpretări, lasă spațiul potrivit pentru lucrări unice și originale; cu toate acestea, termenul "reproducere" nu este sinonim cu munca neglijentă, realizată de artiști cu talent limitat, iar unii merită cu siguranță redescoperiți și analizați din punct de vedere artistic. Dovadă în acest sens sunt cele patru gravuri atribuite artistului Francesco Del Pedro din Udine (Udine, 1740–Veneția, 1803), care își demonstrează din plin talentul, reproducând pe hârtie uleiurile lui Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich (Weimar, 1712–Dresden, 1774). În acest fel, privitorul întreprinde o călătorie imaginară pentru a descoperi ruinele antice romane, cufundate într-o imperturbabilă atmosferă bucolică. Această contribuție se va ocupa de o analiză sistematică a acestor creații, la nivel artistic, arhitectural și arheologic, redescoperind un artist care nu a primit întotdeauna meritele potrivite în trecut.*

În plus, atenția deosebită acordată de artist detaliilor arhitecturale ne oferă posibilitatea de a propune noi interpretări, de a identifica structurile reprezentate și de a le poziționa topografic pe teritoriul Orașului Etern.

Cuvinte cheie: *Brukenthal, Francesco Del Pedro, Dietrich, gravuri, Settebassi, Quintili, porta chiusa.*

Introduction

The Cabinet of Prints and Drawings of the Brukenthal National Museum houses a total of 175 prints of the Italian School.

Among these there are four engravings by Francesco del Pedro from Udine, as part of a single cycle of prints, entitled *Rovine di Roma*,

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datable to the second half of the seventeenth century.

The artist, mentioned without much notice in most sources, was not one of the caliber of his compatriot Luca Carlevarijs (Succi, Toppani 1983, pp. 112-129), but nevertheless deserves credit for his creative and interpretative ability, followed by an intense artistic activity (Nagler 1835, p. 188).

Of Francesco's father, Antonio del Pedro (Succi, Toppani 1983, pp. 264-265; Scalon, Greggio, Rozzo, Bergamini 2009), we know that he is Venetian by birth, typographer, printer, carver and occasional engraver. He arrived in the Friulian city of Udine around the second half of the eighteenth century, initially carrying out the profession of carpenter, or even better, of the *marangon*[1], being a member of the *Fraglia*[2] of Saints Fabian and Sebastian of Udine. In 1757 he began to devote himself to typography, reviving the typographic center of Giovanni Battista Fongarino (Valentinelli 1861). Between 1758 and 1759 he printed a selection of Ciceronian epistles and an almanac entitled *L'antiquario d'Udine, Diario sopra l'anno 1759*. The Venetian power over *Patria del Friuli* made difficult Antonio del Pedro's stay in Udine (Bianco, Amaseo 1995); in fact, in 1765, he was forced to desist from the use of the city coat of arms, delivering to the municipal chancellery the chalcography used for its printing. However, in a remarkable turn of events, the Archbishop of Udine, Gian Girolamo Gradenigo, extended an invitation to him the following year. This invitation came at the opportune moment, coinciding with the inception of the *Seminary Typography*, an ambitious venture aimed at the promotion and widespread circulation of scholastic, catechetical, and theological texts (Nazzi 2007; Comelli 1980, pp. 116-118; Cistellini 1964; Paschini 1936, III, pp. 294 s; Della Stua 1885). The collaboration had, unfortunately, a short life and ended in 1781, due to the lack of success and to the repetitiveness and poor quality offered to the public.

Antonio del Pedro's career blossomed further as he delved into a vast array of creative endeavors, producing pamphlets in volgare, theatrical texts, classical texts for school use, compositions of various kinds and collections of verses; among the latter, we remember in particular *Dei giuochi militari che hanno avuto corso in Friuli ragionamento* by Domenico Ongaro and contains the poetic compositions recited in the Academy of Udine, on February 5 of the year 1762, on the occasion of the joust. There is also the 1771 printing of the *Grammatica della lingua latina*, by the latinist and theologian Ferdinando Porretti. Other noteworthy works include: *Vita della beata Elena da Udine* by Fra Simone da Roma, *Vita di S. Oswaldo re di Nortumberland e martire col storia del suo culto (1769), venerato a Sauris,* by GiamPietro Della Stua*, Libret di diviers quesitz e rispuestis sore lis materiis plui necessariis della dottrine cristiane* by Leonardo De Rivo*, La bilancia del chericato ovvero Meditazioni sopra lo stato chericale di cui si pondera il pregio, il peso, ed il pericolo* by Gian Girolamo Gradenigo (Scalon, Greggio, Rozzo, Bergamini 2009).

Subsequently, back in Venice, he will devote himself to the art of engraving, reproducing in copper the image of Saints John and Paul, from the drawing of Giovanni Carlo Bevilacqua[3] and the Holy Virgin Mary in San Gallo Abbate, from the drawing of Forenza (Rossitti 1981). Finally, we mention the images engraved in mixed technique of burin and aquaforte of Canova's bas-reliefs (Pavanello 1976).[4]

Antonio's son, Francesco (Scalon, Griggio, Rozzo, Bergamini 2009; Benezit 1999; p. 682, tome 10; Succi, Toppani 1983, pp. 266-283; Bellini 1998; Bryan 1899, Vol II, p. 265), will inherit the passion for art and especially for engraving. Born in 1740 in Udine, he moved at a young age to Venice, where he was

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[1] *Marangon*, *Marangone*: Venetian and Friulian term used to indicate the activity of a carpenter.
[2] *Fraglia, Frataglia*: Venetian and Friulian term used to indicate *brotherhood*.

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[3] Drawing exhibited in Venice in the Cabinet of Drawings and Prints of the Correr Museum.
[4] The bas-reliefs, being much appreciated, were also engraved by Tommaso Piroli, Antonio Banzo and Pietro Fontana. The nine plaster bas-reliefs made by Canova between 1787 and 1792, illustrate some episodes taken from the Odyssey, the *Iliad*, the *Phaedo* and the *Aeneid*.

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followed by artists of a certain caliber, such as Gianbattista Piazzetta (De Vesme 1906), Giovanni Volpato (Maniago 1823, p. 147) and Giuseppe Angeli (Moschini 1924, pp. 140). The need to return to his father's homeland is undoubtedly due to the difficult and pre-existing social situation in Friuli; likewise, although Venice was able to maintain hegemony in publishing activities throughout the turbulent and restless seventeenth century (Thiriet 1956; Valiero 1679; Casoni 1830), the eighteenth century offers a respite; it is a rebirth for the art of engraving, characterized by a veil of freshness and vigor, in favor of the production of original prints and invention. Del Pedro etched for the workshop of Wagner and for the one of Nicolò Cavalli (Chiot 2012, p. 37), demonstrating his talent in the technique of aquaforte and burin, often using the two techniques in combination. His first production is characterized by prints of genre subjects by Francesco Maggiotto (Tessier 1882) and some views of Udine[5], realizing them between 1769 and 1771 with the collaboration of Ulderico Moro, who took care of the drawings. The latter also made the design for *the Holy Crucifix that is venerated in the Oratory of the confraternity erected in Udine*, or the *Fraglia* of Saints Fabian and Sebastian of Udine, for the engraving of Francesco. The main works of Del Pedro are the *Fasti veneti o Collezione de' più illustri fatti della Repubblica veneziana* up to Bajamonte Tiepolo, where Francesco Del Pedro undertook the direction and engraving of a remarkable collection of panels. Executed between 1796 and 1797, these remarkable artworks vividly depicted pivotal moments of the history of Venice. The panels, conceived by a group of esteemed artists including Galimberti, Guarana, Maggiotto, Novelli, Orlandini, Sabatelli, and Tiepolo, collectively captured the essence of the city's development from the tenth to the fourteenth century. This was followed by a *Serie di stampe in rame* at the behest of the painter Antonio Zanotti Fabris, in collaboration with Cavalli, extracted from the paintings of Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto, Bassano and others, thus reproducing the paintings that adorned the halls of the Ducal Palace and the Marciana Library. The operation was interrupted in 1794, after the first realizations did not achieve the desired success. Continuing with *Serie dei papi,* there will be portraits made in part between 1799 and 1802 after the drawings of Costantino Reina. For the edition of the *Icones anatomicae*, made between 1801 and 1814, Pedro took care of a part of the illustrations commissioned by the Paduan doctors Leopoldo Marcantonio and Floriano Caldani (Scalon, Griggio, Rozzo, Bergamini 2009). The final known works of his career were a series of six engravings that depicted the heroic deeds of Sultan Tippoo Sahib, created from paintings by Ker Porter, Singleton, and Brown.

It is assumed that in his last years he has started his own business, since some works were marked with *Apud Franciscus del Pedro* (Succi, Toppani 1983, pp. 281–282).[6]

Francesco del Pedro died in Venice in 1806.

The prints

While the bibliography falls short in portraying the artist's life comprehensively, the study furnishes unparalleled insights and information. A useful piece to add, in order to complete the path of this artist, must be sought in the analysis of the four prints kept at the Brukenthal National Museum. The prints (III/061a, III/061b, III/061c, III/061d)-(Le Blanc 1857, Tome III, p. 156) were made in the second half of the eighteenth century, and come from the Brukenthal collection. The theme depicted in the four prints was highly sought-after and valued during Baron Samuel von Brukenthal's time in Vienna, leading to the presumption that he obtained them from the same place.

All four works were carried out according to the aquaforte technique and have the following basic characteristics:

- DEL PEDRO, FRANCESCO (Mid eighteenth century), *Rovine di Roma* [Ruins of Rome]
Inscriptions: *Ipsa etiam veniens consumet saxa vetustas.*

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[5] Square Contarena, Archbishop's Palace, the Loggia of the public palace, Square Mercatonuovoincise.

[6] His last engravings, of John Bunyan's Piligrim's Progress, are derived from images by Thomas Stothard.

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eleg. I. Corn. Galli.
F. Pedro sculp. Ap. Cavalli Venetys.
Dietricy pinx.
Dimensions: 33,5 x 42,3 cm.
Inv. III/061a (Fig. 1)

- DEL PEDRO, FRANCESCO (Mid eighteenth century), *Rovine di Roma* [Ruins of Rome]

Inscriptions: *Et redit ad nihilum, quod fuit ante nihil.*
eleg. I. Corn. Galli.
F. Pedro sculp. ap. Cavalli Venetys.
Dietricy pinx.
Dimensions: 33,5 x 42,3 cm
Inv. III061b (Fig. 2)

- DEL PEDRO, FRANCESCO (Mid eighteenth century), *Rovine di Roma* [Ruins of Rome]

Inscriptions: *Cuncta trahit secum vertitque volubile tempus.*
eleg. I. Corn. Galli.
F. Pedro sculp. ap. Cavalli Venetys.
Dietricy pinx.
Dimensions: 33,5 x 42,3 cm.
Inv. III/061c (Fig. 3)

- DEL PEDRO, FRANCESCO (Mid eighteenth century), *Rovine di Roma* [Ruins of Rome]

Inscriptions: *Et nullum est, quod non tempore cedat opus.*
eleg. I. Corn. Galli.
F. Pedro sculp. ap. Cavalli Venetys.
Dietricy pinx.
Dimensions: 33,6 x 42,3 cm.
Inv. III/061d (Fig. 4)

In the upper corners of each print, respectively on the right and left, the following inscriptions are added: *F. Pedro sculp.[sit]. / Ap.[ud] Cavalli Venetys*, and *Dietricy pinx.[it]*; the first indicates that Francesco Del Pedro was the draftsman and engraver, while the Venetian Nicolò Cavalli was the publisher[7]; the third inscription indicates that Francesco del Pedro, in the making of the prints, relied on the original paintings by Christian Wilhelm

Ernst Dietrich (Nagler 1835, pp. 544-549; Benezit 1999, pp. 576-577).[8]

Finally, in a central position they present the titles, namely, phrases in Latin taken from the first Elegy of *Cornelius Gallus*[9] (Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 66; Manzoni 1995, pp. 3-55), poet of great fame and contemporary of Virgil. The information of the Latin author is suggested by the small note nearby *eleg.[ia] I Corn.[elii] Galli.*

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The first print (Fig. 1 – III/061a) is introduced by the title *Rovine di Roma* [Ruins of Rome], followed by the phrase *Ipsa etiam veniens consumet saxa vetustas* [Even the stones consume the long passage of time that advances] (Maximianus I, 274). The bucolic scene highlights the everyday life of the Roman countryside, finished in a romanticized way with the presence of ancient ruins. The foreground features a peasant enjoying a moment of rest, appearing drowsy from the

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[7] The workshop opened by Cavalli was located in Venice (*Venetys*) and this confirms the presence, at that time, of Del Pedro in the city.

[8] The Brukenthal National Museum keeps an original painting by Dietrich, entitled *Ruin with a Peasant Pub* and depicts the Baths of Diocletian at noon.
Inventory number: PGA 316; Technique: Oil on canvas; Dimensions: 54 x 72,5; Provenance: Samuel von Brukenthal's collection. (Csaki 1901, p. 83; Csaki 1909, p. 95.)
The painting was recently restored on the occasion of the exhibition entitled *Magia restaurării* held on August 3, 2022 inside the Cartography Cabinet of the Brukenthal Palace.
The pencil drawing of the painting is kept in the Archive of Rodolfo Lanciani and from this we know that Dietrich copied the original by Pieter van Laer, modifying it to his liking, adding the characters in the foreground and background.
Dietrich's print is housed at the National Gallery of Art Washington DC and entitled *The Muleteer's Inn*.
Dimensions: 21.9 x 29.5 cm.
Technique: Pencil drawing; Dimensions: 290 x 214 mm; Date: 1800-1825; Catalogue number: Roma XI.22.V.45.

[9] The verses, erroneously attributed to Cornelius Gallus, turn out to be, in reality, by the Etruscan poet Maximianus.
For further information on the problem of attribution see D'Amanti 2018; D'Amanti 2019.
It is possible to consult the following prints of the text: Gryphius 1537; Amar-Durivier 1821.

copious amounts of wine consumed, leaning with his back to one of the pillars of the ancient structure. A cloth hat shields his head from the intense sunlight, his shirt falls lightly, covering his torso and his arms, while his legs are protected by shorts, long socks and dark shoes. The character inserts his left hand inside the shirt, as if he would be in the act of having to scratch his chest; with his right hand, at the same time, he pulls upwards the sock of the right leg, now lowered together with the left one. The second character, a cattleman riding a donkey, is busy coordinating cattle with a long stick. Nearby a second donkey on the left, one can catch a glimpse of a little goat, which was initially mistaken for a little dog due to its appearance. The verdant area is studded with bushes and stones, while on the blue sky with some clouds, enveloping the scene, birds are flying.

The real subject of the print, as its title suggests, turns out to be the ancient ruin on the right. The masonry technique used is partially exposed by the overgrown shrubs. The pylons, in square work, probably of limestone, support the elevation in *opus testaceum* (Adam 2006, pp. 157-163*).* [10] The details of the wedge-shaped bricks can be peered into the front rings, typical of the imperial age (Giuliani 2018, p. 106-107). The succession of internal arches offers a clue to a possible identification of the structure; in this way, a connecting structure is depicted, namely a porticoed area of a much larger complex. At the top, on the second floor, you can see a fragmentary wall

with a small niche characterized by a mezzanine window for the passage of light.

Francesco del Pedro made the print based on an original painting by Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich. It is an oil on canvas, entitled *Capriccio with cattle and figures*, measuring 32 x 40 cm (Fig. 5-1). The painting was found on the online auction site *Tennants Auctioneers* at *Lot 1076*.[11] No description of the work is offered, and no date is indicated. Looking at Fig. 5-2, the reverse of the painting presents labels: two belong to *Christie's*, another has the code *2SXN* and the last is not identifiable. It is clear that most likely the painting has been auctioned other times in the past.[12] Comparing and analyzing the print and the painting, a series of differences can be noticed. When making the engraving, Del Pedro did not follow the model exactly, but intervened with his own interpretation. It is extraordinary to observe how the artist has highlighted the details of each decorative element. The differences can be seen mainly in the shrubs, which were made denser by Del Pedro, but also in the figures that have much more realistic traits; finally, a greater number of birds flying in the blue sky are inserted.

The ancient structure has not been intercepted topographically.

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The title of the second print by Francesco Del Pedro (inv. III/061b, Fig. 2) is:

Et redit ad nihilum quod fuit ante nihil [And what was previously nothing returns to nothingness] (Maximianus I, 222). Once again, the main subject of the print is the Roman ruin. At first glance, the structure, could be misleading, suggests that these are the remains of a possible aqueduct. In fact, the depicted structure does not show the opening

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[10] The combined use of block and cement masonry is not uncommon, particularly when blocks are utilized in the lower section or the facade of a structure. However, it may signify either the repurposing of a pre-existing structure, the utilization of blocks previously relocated to the site from another, or the simultaneous application of the two masonry techniques on a structure intentionally designed in this manner. In the *tabernae* situated along the streets, it's common to find blocks utilized in the façade while the rest of the masonry is comprised of cement and embellished with various coatings, providing both aesthetic and structural benefits.
I would like to sincerely express my gratitude to Dr. Sara Bossi (Sapienza University of Rome) for generously providing in-depth information and enriching our discussion about this topic.

[11] https://auctions.tennants.co.uk/auction/lot/1076-attributed-to-christian-wilhelm-ernst-dietrich-1712-1774-german--capriccio-with-cattle-and/?lot=2339041&sd=1
[12] Dietrich, undertaking the journey to Rome and returning fascinated by the Latin landscapes, created the painting. Subsequently, the work will be seen by Del Pedro. Of the latter we have no news of his trip to Rome and for this reason it is appropriate to think that he saw the painting in Venice.

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for the *specus* intended for the passage of water; it is, therefore, a gate, which can be identified with the *Porta Chiusa (Clausa)* (Cozzi 1968; Coarelli 2007, p. 247), near the *Castra Praetoria*[13] (Lanciani, FUR 11 2007; Grande-Scagnetti 1993), which opened into the Aurelian walls and from which the *Via Tiburtina Vetus* passed (Castagnoli 1978, pp. 43-47; Coarelli 2007, pp. 11-28). The gate, made of square blocks of travertine, with a single fornix and surmounted by a maneuvering chamber with six openings, whose battlements nowadays are no longer present. The landscape features maritime pines[14], widely prevalent in the Lazio region, bushes, shrubs and buildings far away. The five rendered characters are respectively a woman and four men, accompanied by donkeys, leaving the city to head towards the Roman countryside; they probably return to their homes after a long day at the markets. In Antiquity, the route, started from the *Porta Clausa*, reached the *Porta Viminalis*, went down to the *Vicus Patricius*[15] (Lanciani *FUR* 17 2007; Grande-Scagnetti 1993; Coarelli 2014) and the *Argiletum* and finally reached the heart of the city.[16] In the eighteenth century you could certainly follow a similar path that partially traced the ancient Roman roads. The *Porta Chiusa* is also depicted in other prints, such as that of Giuseppe Vasi inserted in the *Monumenti sagri e profani delle quattro età di Roma*, dated to 1750 (Fig. 6) (Vasi-Veronese 1747, pp. 15-16 (XV-XVI)).

The gate is depicted in excellent condition, with the five openings already buffered.

Porta Chiusa was often confused in the past with the so-called *Porta Querquetulana*.[17]

In a print[18] of 1800 by Agapito Franzetti (Fig. 7) (Franzetti 1820, Nr. 34), the structure shows the signs of time with shrubs covering the squared blocks.

Porta Chiusa from the front is shown in an 1869 engraving by Antonio Nibby (Fig. 8) (Nibby 1820, Tab. XI). Very much attention was paid to its depiction, respecting its real appearance with the openings in the maneuvering chamber, which are six instead of five[19] and with the ground level raised above the threshold of the gate. The case of Francesco Pedro's print is unique, as it shows the gate in a poor state of conservation, without infills, which in reality must have already existed, and with the road passing below the fornix. We do not know if it was Dietrich himself who changed the real appearance of the gate[20], making use of his personal taste and artistic instinct. Del Pedro's print may have been made at the same time as Vasi's and the current appearance of the structure, despite numerous subsequent alterations, does not present an exaggeratedly deteriorated appearance, as Del Pedro wants to show.

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[13] Near *Porta Principalis Dextra.*

[14] *Pīnŭs pīnea.*

[15] It runs along the current Via D'Azeglio and follows Via Urbana for a short distance.

[16] Looking at the cartography of the 18th century it is possible to see how the topography of Rome has changed over the centuries. In *Pianta di Roma nel 1736-1744. Quadro di unione* by Giovanni Battista Nolli, the stretch between the *Porta Clausa* and the *Porta Viminalis (Vicus Collis Viminalis)* is modified, while following the path that follows the *Vicus Patricius*. In *Pianta di Roma 1770-1777* by Giuseppe Vasi the main entrance is Porta Pia, in Antiquity *Porta Nomentana.*
The oldest and most important market born during the Middle Ages and that remained active until 1885 was the fish market at the *Porticus Octaviae in Campus Flaminius.*
Suetonius, *Divus Augustus.* 29; Castagnoli 1978, pp. 89-90; Lanciani, FUR 21 2007.

[17] For etymology see: Plinius, *Naturalis Historia* XVI.37; Festus, 260, 261.
The *Porta Querquetulana* is inserted in the walls of Servius Tullius in the N-W section.
Analyzing the historical cartography of the city of Rome it is possible to see in the plan of Mario Cartaro drawn and engraved in copper, dated to 1579, how the *Porta Clausa* is called and confused with the *Porta Querquetulana*. If we look at *La pianta di Roma al tempo di Servio Tullio* made by Calvo and Egnazio, dated to 1527, where it shows only the walls of Servius Tullius, the *Porta Querquetulana* is correctly placed on the Celio but without taking into account the real shape of the city and the position of the main monuments; the *Porta Querquetulana* could not have had the *Castra Praetoria* nearby and this indicates a clear confusion.
Frutaz 1962,II, XXIII, 52; ibidem II, VIII, 17.

[18] Dimensions: 95 x 68 mm.

[19] In Del Pedro's print there are only three openings.

[20] Dietrich's original painting has not been found.

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The title of the third print of Francesco del Pedro (inv. III/061c, Fig. 3) is:

Cuncta trahit secum vertitque volubile tempus [Everything drags with it and destroys the vortex of time] (Maximianus I, 109) and depicts, once again, an ancient structure immersed in the roman countryside. In the foreground, on a ground elevation, two peasants rest, while waiting until their goats have eaten enough. The woman, while spinning wool, watches over the man who has dozed off at the same time. Nearby, on the left, there is a *labrum* with a chipped edge and on the right undefined architectural remains. In the central register we see another peasant holding a stick, accompanied by a donkey and a small dog. The ancient structure, in a central position, is large and with a cylindrical central body, deteriorated and covered by vegetation. The outer walls are adorned by a series of niches with brick rings and central windows. Close to the ancient structure, on the right, you can see the elevation of an invasive structure of a later period. In the last register, in the distance, in addition to two other peasants, it is possible to glimpse a tower and a nearby small rectangular structure. There is not enough information to firmly identify the structure, yet an interpretation could be given on the basis of some clues. Taking into consideration that the structure is located, without any doubt, outside the walls of Rome, and given the presence of the *labrum*[21], Dietrich wanted to represent a suburban villa with an adjoining thermal complex. Archaeologically there are two examples that could be compatible with the structure depicted in the print: the first is the *Villa dei Quintili* and the second is the *Villa dei Settebassi*, both located in the Roman countryside. *The Villa dei Quintili*[22], built in the second century BC, is one of the most fascinating suburban villas and second in size to the beautiful villa built by Emperor Hadrian near Tivoli (Villa Adriana). The inscriptions found during the excavations show the names of the two *Quintilii* brothers (EDR168989; CIL 14, 02662; CIL 15, 07847c; EphEp, 09, p. 413; EDR168984; CIL 14, 02609; Andermahr 1998, pp. 408-409), owners of the grandiose housing complex. The residential area was so vast that in the past it was thought that the territory had been occupied by another city.[23] It is composed of the residential sector with representative rooms, private environments, service areas, the thermal complex, the garden-hippodrome, the maritime theater and the great *nymphaeum* (Paris 2002, pp. 29-56). The *Villa dei Quintili* can also be admired in a print by Luigi Rossini (Fig. 9)[24] (Rossini 1839) entitled *Interno di Roma Vecchia,* dated to the nineteenth century and contained in the illustrated work *Viaggio pittoresco da Roma a Napoli,* preserved at the Accademia dei Lincei. The *Villa dei Settebassi*[25], built in the mid-second century BC, provides three main bodies erected in three different phases. The complex, most likely, takes its name from the Emperor Caracalla, born as *Lucius Septimius Bassianus*, because once he took possession of the two villas (Quintili and Settebassi), he united them into a single fund of imperial property. The three residential sectors open onto a large porticoed garden-hippodrome; the first building dates back to 135 AD and is enriched by a peristyle with a square plan; the second building, with a rectangular plan, dates back to 140 AD and is characterized by a large partially uncovered hemicycle, while the third building, from the end of the reign of *Antoninus Pius*, has richly decorated rooms and *thermae*. Water is supplied by the *Anio Novus,* through a system of cisterns, and the north-east area was intended for productive activities (*Pars Rustica*). In addition, it is possible to admire the *Villa dei Settebassi* in a

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[21] It indicates the presence of a *calidarium*.

[22] The last excavations of the villa were carried out by the University Tor Vergata of Rome and later by the Archaeological Superintendence of Rome.
For more information regarding the *Villa dei Quintili:* Ricci 1998; Amici, Ten 2022; De Franceschini 2005, pp. 222–236.

[23] The area was called Old Rome in 1600–1700.

[24] Dimensions: 222 x 297 mm. Technique: Etching. Inventory number: S-FC101144.

[25] The villa intercepted already in 1500, has been a source of interest for numerous scholars, including Nicolae Lupu who took care of creating the first model of the residence on the occasion of the *Mostra Augustea della Romanità* (1937-1938). Lupu 1937.
For more information regarding the *Villa dei Settebassi:* Quilici 2016; De Francescini 2005, pp. 209–213.

print by Giovanni Battista Piranesi[26], where the artist depicts the monumental entrance of the residential complex. The print[27] (Fig. 10), dated to 1757 is included in the work *Vedute Di Roma Disegnate Ed Incise Da Giambattista Piranesi Architetto Veneziano* (Piranesi 1747-1766). The element that helps to give an interpretation to the ruin of Del Pedro's print and to identify it with one of the two Roman villas previously described, is the farmhouse with tower that can be seen in the distance. In fact, in the area near the *Villa dei Quintili*, once called *Fossae Cluiliae,* there is the *Casale di Santa Maria Nova,* which belonged, from the fourteenth century until the end of the 800, to the Olivetan monks of *Santa Maria Nova*[28]; later the building will be purchased by the noble family of Sanguigni, in 1393. Since 1909 the farmhouse has been owned by Count Niccolò Marcello and remained as such until, in 2006, the area became property of the Italian Archaeological Superintendence. The structure, built in the late Roman era in complete brickwork, is set on a Roman *castellum aquae* of the second century BC and served as a watchtower during the Greek-Gothic wars (535–553 AD). Widely used even in the early Middle Ages, it became a production complex and subsequent alterations gave it the appearance it presents today (Paris 2019). Near the *Villa dei Settebassi* is the Tower of Mezzavia. The latter is located exactly after the junction with Via Anagnina and on the corner with the Anagnina Shopping Center. The construction of the defensive tower, in a control area on a main road[29], is due to the Mardoni family in the thirteenth century. It is set on a pre-existing Roman suburban villa of the first and second century BC, whose most impressive remains are those of a cistern, reused in Medieval times as a dwelling.

Therefore, the villa depicted in the print could be either the *Villa dei Quintili* or the *Villa dei Settebassi* and the detail provided, allows to give a rather rational attribution.

Dietrich, during his trip to Rome, visited the most impressive monuments, moving also outside the city of Rome, as shown by the numerous depictions of the temple of Vesta in Tivoli[30]; therefore, it is most likely that the artist has also seen the most prestigious villas of the Roman countryside.

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The last print attributed to Francesco Del Pedro (inv. III/061d, Fig. 4), presents the Latin phrase *Et nullum est, quod non tempore cedat opus* [And there is no work that does not succumb with time] (Maximianus I, 275).

The structure, with monumental dimensions, could be located both inside and outside the walls of Rome. The pastoral theme is repeated with the presence in the foreground of goats and characters engaged in different actions; a man is lying on the grass on his side, probably drunk and is noticed by a woman, who gives him a surprised look, while pointing by her index finger to the ancient ruin. Behind her, there is a man rendered in motion, holding a stick in his arms, which recommends him as the shepherd. The ruin, in decay, is covered by shrubs and is composed of massive pylons in square work, with visible imposts and brick rings. The barrel vaults denote the presence of passages and therefore of a connecting structure which may belong, once again, to a possible residential complex. In the distance you can distinguish other details of the ruin, leaving us to imagine what the imposing dimensions of the structure were. On the right side, a niche is visible, presumably for housing a decorative statue. Again, on the upper floor

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[26] The Brukenthal National Museum can boast of having Piranesi's original prints, depicting Trajan's column.
Avram 1976 p. 13.
[27] Dimensions: 425 x 605mm. Technique: Etching. Inventory number: 15/6517.
[28] The church of Santa Maria Nova, also known as Santa Francesca Romana, is located close to the Roman Forum.
[29] Between Rome and Frascati.

[30] The print is entitled *Paesaggio con la cascata di Tivoli* and dates back to 1745. Dimensions: 227 x 150 mm. Inventory number: ОГ-409593. Date of acquisition: Joined the Hermitage in 1993; bought by a private person.
The painting is entitled *The Tivoli Falls* and dates back to 1755. Dimensions: 105 x 83.8 cm. Technique: Oil on canvas. Inventory number: ГЭ-5778. Date of acquisition: Entered the Hermitage in 1922; transferred from the Academy of Fine Arts Museum.

is depicted the square structure with niches and mezzanines, already encountered in the previous print (III/061a). The sky, partly cloudy, leaves free passage to the sun's rays, creating, in this way, interesting plays of shadows.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to identify topographically this structure.

Conclusions

The prints immediately show a sensitive and pleasant artistic taste, whose author, with firm and distinct control of the hand, returns the thin lines. The clear handwriting allows not only to obtain a landscape close to reality, but also to involve different planes in succession, recreating an effect of depth with visions in the distance. Francesco Del Pedro is committed to restoring good chiaroscuro effects, with plays of light, which rays hit the ancient structures, wrapping them in a pleasant glow. The desired and obtained effects let us imagine the prints as if they had been made in color; all you have to do is to observe the skies. You can note, the richness of details in rendering the characters, in depicting the vegetation and ancient structures. The shrubs, thick and full, alternate in some places, with dry branches; in this way, a harmony is maintained in the landscape, which is neither opulent nor poor. The contrast between sky and earth is obvious. The figures, alive and moving, suggest their social condition and their deepest feelings; the little hinted smiles hide the monotony of life in the countryside. The landscapes are calm, almost silent; you can slightly hear the bleating and bellowing of the animals, the rustling of the foliage, which interrupt, at times, the persistent peace.

The prints are well preserved and were printed on high quality paper; obviously, this is also affected by the measures that are taken for the conservation and preservation of individual works. The good quality of the print is due to the plates used, undoubtedly new and without signs of deterioration.

The Italian General Catalogue of Cultural Heritage (Catalogo Generale dei Beni Culturali), mentions two other original copies of Del Pedro's prints of the *Rovine di Roma* series in the National Museum of San Martino

in Naples.[31] Unfortunately, even in this case, the prints' technical sheets do not provide details and thorough information about the works.[32] The first print, equivalent to Fig. 1, was inventoried in the year 1945, whose sheet was completed in 1995, with the last revision dating back to 2006. The state of conservation is quite good with few stains on the paper, while the dimensions are 337 x 432 mm. The second print, equivalent to Fig. 3, inventoried and revised in the same years as the previous one, is filed in 1994 and is in a mediocre state of conservation, with stains and yellowed paper. The dimensions of the latter are 377 x 457 mm.

A. Avram, the author of a catalogue on the collection of Italian prints in the Brukenthal National Museum, informs us that the first register dates back to 1783 (Inv. 1783), and that it is organized in alphabetical order of the surnames of the engraving artists, to which is added at a later date, a second register, organized by schools and artists (Inv. II). Likewise, is the catalogue printed by M. Csaki (Csaki 1909) and comparing the previous registers with the latter, we can notice interesting peculiarities concerning the artist of our interest. In the catalogue of prints of the Italian school in the Brukenthal National Museum by A. Avram, Del Pedro's four works are mentioned summarily without further elaboration. In the introduction on the artist, it is specified that Del Pedro was active in Venice and Rome, but no other Italian source provides information about his stay in Rome. Also, the reading of the inscription concerning the editing is inaccurate, with: *F. Pedro sculp. ap. Canalii Venetiis*, instead of *F. Pedro sculp. ap. Cavalli Venetys*. Finally, the bibliography provided by the author is deficient.

Analyzing the register of 1783, we will notice that Francesco Del Pedro is not mentioned at all and that the information provided by A.

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[31] No other prints by Del Pedro belonging to the series have been intercepted inside Italian museums, which most likely, if any, are part of private collections.

[32] Inventory number of the prints: 16854- 16636.

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Avram has nothing to do with the artist of our interest, indicating, instead, a print by Dietrich. Undoubtedly, the German artist, is in connection with Del Pedro's prints, but the work indicated by A. Avram presents a completely different subject; we are talking, in fact, of *Ein Ovidsches Stück von Dytricy selbst radiert. Dietricy* (Fig. 14)[33], an engraving of Brukenthal's National Museum entitled *Landscape with herd and nymphs*.[34]

It is necessary, in this case, to understand why A. Avram included this print made by Dietrich in the description of Francesco Del Pedro, probably for lack of a datum in the register of 1783. Why this last register does not present the name of Francesco del Pedro and his engravings is, presumably, due to the fact that the prints were purchased after the drafting of the register.

The research, in conclusion, allows exposing further useful reflections.

There is no doubt that Dietrich saw the Roman ruins he represented. However, it must also be considered that the artist's point of view, at the moment of creation, is essential for the final interpretation by the scholar; this could easily be misleading into thinking that the structure never existed.

Likewise, it cannot be excluded that the original painting of the print Fig, 1 was entitled *Capriccio with cattle and figures* due to a sheer lack of data by the online auction site *Tennants Auctioneers*. Nevertheless, from the observation of other works by Dietrich, we will notice details that will further accentuate the doubts on the subject. Roman ruins vaguely reminiscent of the one depicted in Del Pedro's first print, with a rectangular plan with niches and mezzanines, is represented in the print *Die Herde bei der Statue der Flora* (Fig.

11)[35], dated to 1744 and in the paintings *Bukolische Landschaft mit Ruinen* (Fig. 12)[36] and *Shepherdesses and their flocks in a classical landscape* (Fig. 13)[37]. From this, there is the hypothesis that Dietrich, known as an excellent imitator, *pasticheur*, a real popularizer of different genres, may have taken an architectural model that really existed and decontextualize it in order to create classic landscapes according to his tastes. Not being in possession of precise dates for both Del Pedro's prints and Dietrich's works used as examples, it is appropriate to take the conjectures as such and not as clear interpretative certainties. However, the use of pillars in *opus quadratum* and the elevation in *opus testaceum* is a choice that is often adopted by Dietrich in the restitution of ancient structures, even if it's common to see the combination of the two masonry work, as it is shown in the painting *Bathing nymphs before the Grotto of Egeria* (Fig. 15)[38]; it is clear that Dietrich, in this case, slightly modifies the structures for his own pleasure and this can be confirmed since the *Nymphaeum of Egeria*[39] (Quilici 1968) is not made in *opus quadratum* but only in *opus mixtum*.

Likewise, it is appropriate to clarify that this does not mean that Dietrich did not also make architectural *capricci*, as an example of this is the painting *A grotto with nymphes resting*

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[33] Translated into *An Ovidian specimen of Dietricy, engraved in aquaforte by himself.*
Inv. 1783, page 67, line X.
I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Alexandru Sonoc (Brukenthal National Museum) for generously providing the information.
[34] Dietrich, Christian Wilhelm Ernst, *Landscape with herd and nymphs*; aquaforte; 18,6 x 26,5 cm; Dietricy Sc. Ao. 1740 (Dietricy sculpsit. Anno 1740); Brukenthal Collection.

[35] Date: 1744. Technique: etching. Dimensions: 6 x 7 1/2 in. Collection: Metropolitan Museum. Accession Number: 34.18.1.
https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/368159
[36] Date: 18th century. Technique: oil on canvas. Dimensions: 61,4 x 49 cm.
Displayed: Bayreuth State Gallery.
[37] Date: 18th century. Technique: oil on canvas. Dimensions: 41,3 x 33,3 cm.
Provenance: Arnold Trowell; Sotheby's, London, 7 June 1967, lot 166, as 'Jacob Sibrandi Mancadan' (to Waddingham). With Malcolm R. Waddingham, London, 1967.
[38] Date: 1745. Technique: oil on canvas. Dimensions: 54 x 72.9cm. Collection: Staatliches Museum Schwerin. Inventory number: G 277.
[39] Known as *Triopium Herodis Attici*.

near classical columns (Fig. 16)[40] exhibited on the online auction site *Sotheby's.*[41]

Many other contemporary artists followed Dietrich as model, engraving the subjects of his paintings. Among those mentioned by G. Nagler in 1835 (Nagler 1835, p 545) are: Le Bas, Benazech, De Launay, Daudet, Daulle, Flipart, Guttenberg, Masquelier, Prestel, Le Vasseur, Weirotter, Wille, Zingg and Darnstedt.

As we can see French and German origin artists are listed, while Italian artists are not mentioned, not even Francesco Del Pedro.

Taking as an example the engravings of the French artists Nicolas De Launay and Robert Daudet, in comparison with those made by Del Pedro, and analyzing their *Ruine Romaine*, we notice small differences, but not significant, in recreating the shrubs.

Moreover, the same structure depicted in the print Fig. 1 is found in the interpretation of another Italian artist: Pietro Giacomo Palmieri (Bologna, 1737–Turin, 1804), draftsman and engraver contemporary to Del Pedro. The drawing was intercepted on the online auction site *MasterArt.*[42]

Entitled *A peasant family and their animals among classical ruins* (Fig. 17)[43], it presents the inscription *Palmieri. In. fe cc.* engraved on a stone. Despite the distance between the observer and the subject, the structure is depicted with exaggerated, almost coarse dimensions; new characters, engaged in different actions are added to the scene, and they give the idea of the distinct proportional difference. The oxen are replaced by donkeys and sheep, while in front of the structure an access ramp is added to overcome the level variance. The nature that fills the scene is mostly observed, making slight changes. The

imitation can only be based on Dietrich's original painting, although the German artist is not mentioned. It is, therefore, a print that did not receive the necessary authorization to copy an original work and for this reason the depicted scene was completely modified.

In conclusion, thanks to the research carried out, it was possible to further understand the working method used by Del Pedro, his artistic vision, his strong collaborative relationship with Nicolò Cavalli and the reason why he chose Dietrich's paintings as a model. Moreover, it is extremely important to understand the path taken by Dietrich's original paintings, stopping, even if only momentarily, to be admired, studied and reinterpreted by the artists active in Venice and then to travel in the rest of Europe, arriving, at the end, in the hands of French and German artists; this information allows us to recreate a story, draw a timeline characterized by moments, moments defining the real objective of what art is, not only as a symbol of the maximum expression of beauty, but also as a means to tell stories of places and people. The identification of the two ancient structures depicted by Dietrich allows us, in conclusion, to shed light on his trip to Rome. The artists visit monuments defined as apparently secondary, as they are less documented and less depicted by artists of non-Italian origins. Those who undertake the *Grand Tour* are aware that the beauties of Rome are not limited solely to the area between the hills Velia, Palatine and Capitoline, but they understand and wish to visit also the Roman countryside, going beyond the city walls.

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[40] The painting vaguely resembles the cave in Sperlonga (LT) of the Emperor Tiberius but no clear clues useful for interpretation are represented.

[41] https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/ 2002/old-master-paintings-am0845/lot.115.html

[42] https://www.masterart.com/artworks/5565/pietro-giacomo-palmieri-a-peasant-family-and-their-animals

[43] Dimensions: 362 x 546 mm.

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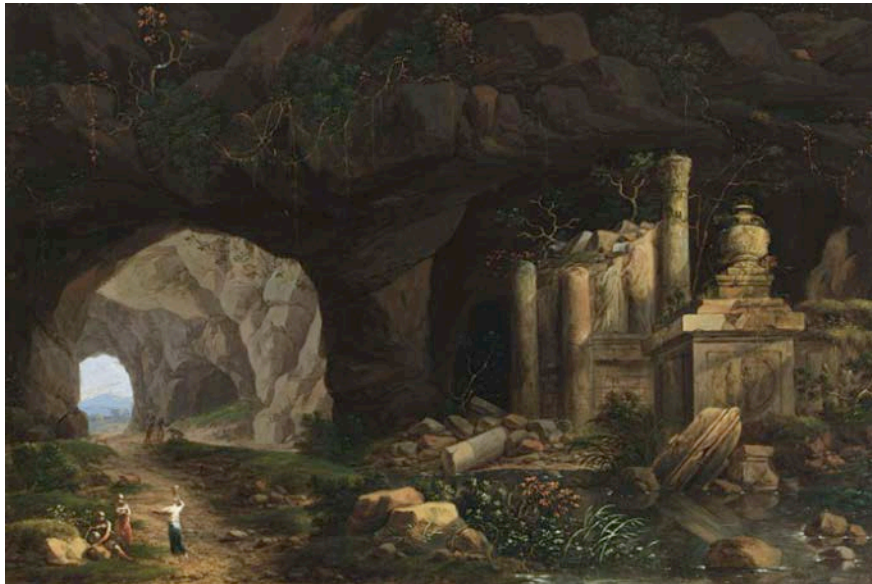*Bathing nymphs before the Grotto of Egeria*

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A peasant family and their animals among classical ruins

IDENTITY AND PATRONAGE IN THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF OBSERVANT DOMINICAN WOMEN

Carmen FLOREA*

Abstract: The study examines the relationship between identity and patronage in the case of Observant Dominican women. Using a comparative approach, the analysis contextualizes the formation and functioning of the Observant Dominican nunnery in Sibiu in order to highlight the modalities in which Mary Magdalene was appropriated by these devout women as a saintly protector. While the Mendicant Orders were instrumental in the spectacular development of the cult of the apostola apostolorum in the late Middle Ages, it was within the walls of the Observant Dominican houses that the ideal of penance and contemplative life gained wide currency. The religious life of enclosed nuns, as evidenced by textual and pictorial sources from Transylvania and other European regions, found many points of contact and similarities with the devotional model represented by Mary Magdalene.

Key words: Observant movement; Order of the Friars Preachers; religious women; enclosure; repentant saint

Rezumat: Analiza de faţă se focalizează asupra relaţiei stabilite între identitate şi patronaj în cadrul experienţei religioase a călugăriţelor integrate în familia Observanţei dominicane. Cu ajutorul investigaţiei comparative s-a urmărit contextualizarea modalităţilor în care s-a format şi a funcţionat comunitatea mănăstirii călugăriţelor dominicane din Sibiu, investigaţie care a permis clarificarea rolului de sfânt protector pe care Maria Magdalena − căreia i-a fost dedicată biserica călugăriţelor − l-a jucat în cotidianul devoţional al acestor femei pioase. Ordinele mendicante au contribuit major la propagarea cultului Magdalenei, identificată drept apostola apostolorum în evul mediu târziu. Analiza a demonstrat că în interiorul mănăstirilor dominicane care au adoptat Observanţa, idealul penitenţial şi contemplativ a definit major viaţa călugăriţelor. Explorarea şi interpretarea surselor textuale şi vizuale produse în Transilvania, dar şi în alte regiuni europene, a identificat numeroase similitudini între cotidianul religios al acestor femei pioase şi modelul de sanctitate întruchipat de Maria Magdalena.

Cuvinte cheie: mişcarea Observantă; Ordinul Fraţilor Predicatori; călugăriţe; clausură; sfânt penitent

The Friars Preachers of the Hungarian Province held their Provincial Chapter in Székesfehérvár/Alba Regia in 1474, where a very important decision was made for the functioning of the Transylvanian friary of Sibiu. The agreement reached between the Order's officials and the governing body of Sibiu was not only the result of the mediation of King Mathias (1458−1490), but also a compromise reached after more than three decades of discussions, negotiations and even tensions regarding the relocation of the Holy Cross friary within the city walls. Considered to be the first house founded by the Friars Preachers in Transylvania at the beginning of the 13th century, the convent was located outside the urban fortifications, a situation that became increasingly dangerous for its functioning, especially due to the frequent and devastating Ottoman attacks in the region from the first half of the 15th century onwards (Lupescuné Makó 2004, 377).

Negotiations for its relocation began as early as the 1440s, negotiations that revealed the support not only of the Holy See, but also of the municipal government and the people of the city. Several papal and municipal charters

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from the middle of the 15th century show with great accuracy that, despite the strong support for their cause from both the papacy and the city council, the friars were unable to overcome the opposition of the parish priest to the transfer of their convent. In these circumstances, the decision taken by the provincial chapter in 1474 can be seen as an important achievement which finally allowed the friars to start building their church within the city walls. To be sure, this outcome depended on the fulfilment of other obligations that the friars had agreed to: all the donations and bequests in the last wills had to be approved by the city council, the buildings of their former convent outside the city walls became the property of the city of Sibiu, and the majority of the friars, including the prior of the newly founded monastery, had to be of German origin (Gündisch *et. al.* 1991, 29-30).

A close study of the difficulties that marked the project of the Friars Preachers to rebuild their house in the fortified area of Sibiu has shown that the adoption of the Observant way of life was a key element in this undertaking (Lupescu Makó 2012, 262-263). Attempts at reforming religious life were at the forefront not only of the papal policy concerning Transylvania, but also that of the Mendicant Orders more generally. Initiatives of reform-minded popes such as Martin V (1417–1431), Eugene IV (1431−1447) and Nicholas V (1447–1455), the decisions made in order to restore, improve and strictly follow the exigencies of Christian religion and doctrines taken by the Councils of Pisa (1409), Konstanz (1414–1418) and Basel (1431−1437) have reverberated in this region as revealed by the ecclesiastical visitations, the renewal of regulations for the chapter of the clergy in Țara Bârsei, and the local synods organized in order to redress both the functioning of the ecclesiastical institutions and the way of life of ordinary believers (Mixson, Roest 2015, 5-10; Florea 2020, 41-42).

It is in this wider context of reform that the bull *Propicientes ex apice*, issued by Eugene IV on 7 April 1444, should be understood. While deploring the terrible state of religious life in Transylvania, not least because of the constant Ottoman threat, the Pope urged lay

and ecclesiastical authorities, representatives of the city government and the simple folk to support the mission of Jacob Richer in this region, the main objective of which was defined with great specificity: *observantiam regularem in illis domibus, et monasteriis plantare et a Regula et institutionibus dicti ordinis devia reformare* (Fabritius 1875b, 54). According to this papal charter, Jacob Richer, professor of theology and a friar of the reformed, influential centre of the Dominican Observance in Basel, was appointed vicar of the Friars Preachers in Transylvania. Together with several like-minded friars, Richer's mission was to reform the convents of the region, benefiting from a series of renewed papal privileges such as preaching and administering the sacraments of burial and confession. The laity was also encouraged to consider supporting the work of the Observance through donations, help in the construction and/or reconstruction of Dominican churches, and exemption from taxes on the local routes along which the friars travelled with their possessions, of which books were considered particularly important (Fabritius 1875b, 55; Harsányi 1938, 35-36).

The adoption of the Observant way of life under the guidance and supervision of Jacob Richer, who most likely spent three years in Transylvania between 1444 and 1447, thus received strong impulses from the papacy. Equally important, however, is the fact that this mission was part of a centralized reform effort undertaken by the Order of the Friars Preachers, beginning with the generalate of Bartholomew Texier (1426−1449), when the reform movement was supported by decisions taken by the Master General and the general chapters (Lupescu Makó 2012, 264-266). Johannes Nider's reforming activity is of particular importance in this regard. He introduced the Observance in the friary of Basel in 1429, while two years later, at the request of Master General Texier, he wrote *De reformatione religiosorum*, which gave practical guidelines on how the reform was to be implemented and continuously observed by the friars, and which was conveniently completed just as the deliberations of the Council of Basel were beginning (1431) (Huijbers 2018, 185-199).

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As it has been observed, the success of the Observance hardly depended only on these central policies devised either by the papacy or the officials of the Mendicant Orders. It was the local support of territorial lords and civic authorities that contributed to this success, albeit to varying degrees at the local level (Erdélyi 2013, 35-40). The idea that not only religious but also society as a whole should be reformed was one that Johannes Nider never ceased to advocate. Such a tendency was evident in the zealous activity of his companions in Basel (a congregation to which Jacob Richer also belonged) and gained currency in the Observant mission throughout Europe through a strong emphasis on correct religious behavior and social discipline (Huijbers 2018, 179-180). It is precisely this interplay between the general agenda of the Holy See and the friars on the one hand, and the local, regional circumstances on the other, that has strongly influenced the Observance, transforming it into a multifaceted phenomenon (Lodone 2018, 267-273).

For the town of Sibiu, one of the specific traits of this multifarious reform was given by the involvement of the urban authority. At the end of 1445, the municipal government approached the Holy See, complaining that parish priest Anthony forcefully opposed to the relocation of the Holy Cross friary within the city's walls. The councillors requested from the pope that, given the authority His Holiness enjoyed, Anthony being obliged to agree with this plan, something which Eugene IV promptly endorsed (Gündisch *et. al.* 1975, 138). Despite the high expectations of the urban authorities and the inhabitants of Sibiu with regard to the Friars Preachers' apostolate within the walls of the town, nothing happened at the time. Two years later, Nicholas V approached the dean of the Sibiu chapter on the same subject and provided us with an important piece of information: the friars had adopted the Observance and the relocation of their friary within the city walls would allow them to carry out their missionary work among the city's population more effectively and successfully (Theiner 1860, 238).

The reformation of Sibiu friary was thus the result of the mission undertaken by Jacob Richer and benefited from the support of the

municipal government. It was a civic project that would bear its fruits only three decades later with the agreement concluded in 1474. The city council's interest in promoting the Observance is not only shown by the inclusion of clauses of economic interest to the town, such as the prior approval of any donation made to the friary. The councillors were also attentive to the way in which the evangelical work of the friars would be carried out *intra muros*, requiring that interaction with the townspeople be conducted in the vernacular, since the friars, or at least most of them, would have been of German origin.

As I have tried to argue elsewhere, the municipal government developed ways of controlling religious life in Sibiu, particularly with regard to the functioning of the parish church. The mono-parochial profile of the town and the right of the city council to elect the parish priest led, especially from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, to an ever-increasing involvement of the urban authorities in the direction and supervision of parish-based religious life (Florea 2020, 46). This is best reflected not only in its involvement in the administration of the donations received by the parish, but also in the agreements concluded with the parish priest in 1432 and 1457 respectively, regarding the series of liturgical services to be celebrated in the churches of Sibiu and at the altars of the parish church (Gündisch 1941, 28-37). With the efforts made by the Friars Preachers to relocate their friary *intra muros* and through their adoption of the reformed way of life, the city council proved once more that it was well-versed in extending its involvement on the functioning of the Mendicant Orders themselves.

The site provided to the friars by the city council was placed on the eastern part of Sibiu, in the proximity of the urban fortifications, where their church was constructed at the intersection of *Reispergasse* and *Sporergasse*, two streets stretching from the *Grosser Ring* (Băldescu 2012, Map 151, 153; Salontai 2022, 211). With a high degree of certainty, it can be argued that this site was deliberately chosen by the councillors, and that the choice was neither accidental nor coincidental. On the contrary, it can be seen as

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the result of a well-considered choice on the part of the municipal authorities. The Friars Preachers began to build their church and friary in the Upper Town, an important nucleus of settlement that experienced economic and demographic growth after the middle of the 14th century and whose fortifications were built in the course of the following one (Lupescu 2010, 358). The Dominican friary was placed in the proximity of the Franciscan convent, within an area of intense social mobility, partitioning thus with both the Friars Minor and the parish the space where their apostolate could be pursued (Florea 2020, 48). That indeed this was the case is even more accurately revealed by the location of the Dominican nunnery very close to the friars' house, southward from the Holy Cross convent, on the s-o called *Nonnengasse* (later also known as *Franziskanergasse*) (Salontai 2022, 216).

These names bear witness to the fate of the nunnery. It is very likely that the increasing urbanization of this part of Sibiu and the formation of the house of the religious women went hand in hand. There is no doubt that the street was named after those who lived in what was probably the most important building in the street: the nuns' church (Fig. 1). With the spread of evangelical ideas and the adoption of the Lutheran confession in the 1540s, the religious orders were expelled from Sibiu, and the church and convent of the Dominican nuns, like those of the friars and Poor Clares, were converted to other uses. In 1716, through the intervention of the Habsburg authorities and despite the opposition of the Dominicans, the cloister of the nuns and their church of Mary Magdalene were given to the Observant Franciscans. And thus in early modern times the street gained a new name, being identified with the Franciscans (Salontai 2022, 216-217).

Based on architectural evidence, it has been suggested that the nuns' church was probably built in the early fifteenth century (Entz 1996, 87-88). However, concrete and more detailed written evidence about the nuns *ad sanctam Maria Magdalenam* only comes from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Municipal subsidies were granted for the maintenance of the *monialibus nigris* in 1497

and *sanctimonialibus sancti Dominici Cibiniensibus* in 1507 (Rechnungen 1880, 241, 473). The language of the Sibiu city administration leaves no doubt that the religious women living on *Nonnengasse* were professed nuns who had taken the veil. Although the context of the foundation of this community remains unclear, it cannot be completely excluded that it originated from a community of tertiaries, whose patron saint, Mary Magdalene, is *par excellence* the perfect embodiment of the penitential way of life (Salontai 2022, 216).

With the advance of the Observance, many communities of penitents were reformed, as was the case with the Sisters of Mary Magdalene of Freiburg im Bresgau, who adopted the Observance in 1465, a similar tendency characterizing the fate of other groups of penitent women from the Iberian Peninsula (Taylor Jones 2022, 30; Cardoso 2022, 4-5). Whatever may have been the case in Sibiu, in the course of the fifteenth century and under the influence of the Observance, the Order's officials decreed that the tertiaries had to adopt the communal way of life, and their communities underwent a process of institutionalization and monasticization, largely based on strict enclosure, very similar to that followed by the nuns placed under the spiritual care of the Friars Preachers (Duval 2022, 25-28).

Since the end of the 13th century, the cult of Mary Magdalene has enjoyed increasing popularity, thanks to the (re)discovery of her relics in the church of St Maximine in Provence and the joint patronage of the Angevine dynasty and the Dominican Order. The preaching activity of the Mendicants made Magdalene the exemplary model for women associated with monastic life, who were eager to transcend the sinful nature of their beings through profound penance (Jansen 2001, 44-227). The Friars Preachers were actively involved in promoting the cult of Mary Magdalene. Not only were they the guardians of the church and Magdalene's relics at St Maximine, but they also supported the devotion to the *Apostola Apostolorum* within their Order, by means of several and constantly updated decisions of the general

chapters. Thus, in 1297 it was decided to raise the feast of Mary Magdalene to the rank of *totum duplex*, while in 1525 an octave was added to the celebration (Frühwirth, Reichert 1900, 283; Frühwirth, Reichert 1901, 198).

Another noteworthy feature of the history of the cult of Mary Magdalene is that a clear and unambiguous link was established between the great virtues of love and penance which she represented, and monastic life (Gross-Diaz 2019, 156-157). Very soon after the foundation of their Order, the Friars Preachers were eager to appropriate her and transform her into the patroness of the women religious living under their supervision, as shown by the houses of the Second Order from the diocese of Spoleto, which in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries privileged Mary Magdalene in patronal dedications. Not to mention that in Germany the Order of the Penitents of Mary Magdalene, consisting of more than forty houses, was placed under the authority of the Dominicans (Hinnebusch 1966, 378).

Although the liturgical cult of Mary Magdalene is attested in medieval Hungary very soon after the institutionalization of Christianity in the region, textual and visual evidence suggests that devotion to the penitent saint developed particularly in the late Middle Ages (Bálint 1977, 80-82). Rather absent from parochial *patrocinia*, Mary Magdalene is encountered in a Dominican milieu in Sighişoara, where an altar was dedicated to her in the church of the Friars Preachers (Salontai 2022, 243). She also patronized confraternities in Cluj and Bistriţa, which were probably organized within a parochial milieu (Gross 2004, 254-255). Since the Dominicans were very active in these towns, it cannot be excluded that the adoption of the Magdalene cult by the local population was the result of the preaching of the friars. Significantly, it should be added that these examples come not only from cities where the friars were very active in the Middle Ages, but it was precisely the Observant friars who had a strong influence on the religious life that developed within the walls of these urban centers.

Such a development is fully revealed by our *Magdalenes* from Sibiu. The dedications of the

friary and nunnery integrated within the Order of the Friars Preachers and the fact that they were located at a very short distance from each other in the Upper Town can be considered as emblems of Dominican identity (Florea 2022, 166). The Holy Cross and Mary Magdalene were visible manifestations of the basic tenets the friars and nuns were to follow according to the Rule and the Constitutions of their Order. In as much as their *forma vitae* was articulated according to active ministering (in the case of the First Order), emphasize on Christocentric devotion, enclosure and penitence in the case of the female religious, the Holy Cross and Mary Magdalene constituted a more than eloquent pairing of holiness that became of increased relevance within the context of the Observance.

The formation (or reformation) of the nunnery in Sibiu coincided with the advance of the Observance in Transylvania more generally and with that of the emergence of female religious communities under the supervision of the Observant Dominicans more specifically. It is surely not only due to the vagaries in the survival of documentary evidence that the Dominican nunneries were increasingly referred to in the written sources starting from mid fifteenth-century onwards. Apart from Sibiu, their functioning was also attested in Cluj (1450), Braşov (1474), Bistriţa (1485), and Sighişoara (1497) (Salontai 2022, 160, 126, 99, 244-245). One cannot escape the very strong impression that evidence about these nunneries coincided with the reformation of the friaries from every and each of these towns, precisely starting with 1440s when Jacob Richer embarked on its Transylvanian mission.

Of at least equal significance in the implementation of the Observance was the mission of Leonard Huntpichler who came to this region in mid-1450s from another important center of reform, Vienna (Lupescu 2012, 270-271). He arrived in Košice/Kassa in 1454 at the request of the city council with the purpose of reforming the friary, a project he pursued until 1455. Afterwards, other Viennese friars took up this work, of which an integral part was the increase in the number of books belonging to this friary. Among them were the rules the friars and nuns should obey,

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devotional texts and the legends of Vincent of Ferrer and Catherine of Siena, the two very recently canonized saints of the Order for whose elevation to the honor of the altar the Observants played a key role (Konrád 2017, 355-356).

The reformation to the Observance of the friary in Košice was thus the result of the initiatives of urban authorities and the work of theologians active at the University of Vienna where Huntpichler was professor of theology and where Johannes Nider also taught. Several scholars belonging to the "Vienna School" proved to be instrumental in the advance of the Observance by making available to rulers and ordinary believers alike translations of devotional literature and treatises regulating pious conduct, a strategy that secured political and social support and ultimately allowed the reform movement to take firm root (Taylor Jones 2019, 8-9).

Such a Viennese connection in the spread of Observant ideals and their local adoption with the support of the civic authorities is also suggested by the reform of the friaries in Braşov and Sighişoara in the mid-1450s, a development that complements the Observance's appeal to secular rulers (Salontai 2022, 114-116, 233-234). It is likely that these civic initiatives were also the result of the education received at the University of Vienna by many Transylvanian students from the major urban centers of the region. Some of them went on to successful careers in the church, others became involved in city government, as was the case with Thomas Altemberger (Tonk 1979, 335). One of the most influential political leaders in Sibiu, where he held the office of *magister civium* for twenty years, between 1470 and 1491 (Flóra 2019, 196), Altemberger was also involved in the negotiations with the officials of the Dominican province of Hungary, which ended in 1474 with the relocation of the Holy Cross convent within the city walls of Sibiu. Certainly, reform was in the air in Transylvania, as in other European regions, and not only friars and secular rulers, but also women and saints played a key role in its successful implementation and progress.

The second half of the fifteenth-century represented indeed the time when female religious were captured by ideals of the Observance and actively contributed to the flourishing of this reform movement in their communities. The Observance originated in southern Germany, where Raymond of Capua, then Master General of the Order of the Friars Preachers, had already initiated an extensive reform program at the end of the fourteenth century. This was put into practice by Conrad of Prussia with the introduction of the Observance in the Colmar friary, but in the course of the following century not only the convents of the region were reformed, but also the nunneries and the houses of the tertiaries. As it has been observed, in the Dominican province of Teutonia, the number of reformed women's communities significantly outnumbered those of friaries, with the most important centre of reform being the convent of St Catherine in Nuremberg (Taylor Jones 2019, 11-12). This (hi)story repeats itself in Portugal, where, similarly to the province of Teutonia, the number of women's convents where the Observance was enthusiastically adopted rose from three to thirteen in just a few decades from the middle of the fifteenth century, in most cases with the support of the local nobility and urban authorities (Cardoso 2022, 3-4).

When browsing the entries in the catalogue comprising the monastic foundations in the medieval kingdom of Hungary, one is able to compile the list of the Dominican nunneries as follows: Veszprém (1240), Buda-Nyúlsziget (*Insula Leporum*) (around 1253), Székesfehérvár (1276), Beregszász (1303-1368), Lábatlan (after 1489?), and Satu-Mare (at the end of the Middle Ages) (Romhányi 2000, 107, 16, 87, 10, 55, 64). When comparing this list to that of the Transylvanian Dominican nunneries which surface in existing documentation from mid fifteenth-century onwards, it can accurately be supposed that their emergence was the result of the propagation of the Observant ideal, something that seems to have been specific to this region. The Transylvanian Dominican nunneries do not only stand out from the Hungarian Dominican Province as having been founded in the aftermath of the Observance. What is

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perhaps even more striking is the fact that there were five women's convents in Transylvanian towns, compared to the six nunneries attested in the rest of the Province, which is further proof of the progress made by the Observance among the Dominicans of this region.

The timing of their foundation, the support given by the papacy and the Order's officials to the reform of the Transylvanian friaries and, last but not least, the favorable attitude of the municipal government towards this reform movement, each of these factors helps us to better understand the success of the Observance among the Transylvanian female religious. That it was a lasting success is also shown by a certain enthusiasm that seems to have animated those who wished to become nuns and who lived under the care of the Observant Friars Preachers. According to evidence dated to 1524 *Stephanus* was the confessor for the nuns in Braşov, *Anthonius* of those from Bistriţa, in Cluj Michael *de Brosz* was *confessor virginem et magister noviciorum*, Johannes Mansuetis was the confessor of the nuns in Sighişoara, whereas Gaspar *de Rupe* is mentioned as *confessor monialium* in Sibiu (Harsányi 1938, 110-111).

One particular Transylvanian friar seems to have been instrumental in the advance of the Observance in the Province of Hungary in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. Johannes Episcopi was educated at the *studium generale* in Cologne in the early 1460s. According to the decisions of the general chapters, Johannes was admitted *ad legendum sentencias pro gradu et forma magisterii* in 1461 and for two years he was a *magister studentium* at the same *studium generale* (Frühwirth, Reichert 1900, 284; Tonk 1979, 258). *Magister* Johannes was a friar from Cluj who, after completing his studies, became Prior Provincial, an office he held between 1474 and 1477, then we meet him as prior in Cluj and Vicar of the Transylvanian Friars Preachers. In 1495 the sources mention him again as Prior Provincial, a position he held at least until 1498, when the Master General, probably in recognition and appreciation of the work that Johannes Episcopi had done for the Order over many decades, granted him the right to resign

from his office whenever he deemed it appropriate (Harsányi 1938, 244-245).

It was during his first term as Prior Provincial that another key figure of the Observant Dominicans in the kingdom, Paul of Vác, translated the Rule of St Augustine and the Constitutions of the Order into Hungarian in 1474, a translation which has survived, albeit in fragmented form, in the so-called Birk Codex. The translation is of great importance in several respects. On the one hand, it is part of the more general agenda of reforming the women's communities by providing them in the vernacular with both normative texts according to which the pious women would live within the walls of their convents and works useful for their spiritual edification, such as prayers or legends of the saints (Madas 2014, 367-374; Lázs 2016, 40-59). It is generally considered that the development of the vernacular in the late Middle Ages was essentially the result of the work of the friars, but also of the nuns, who translated, transcribed, compiled and even decorated the books that were to serve the purposes of the Observant reform (Hamburger 2010, 130).

Friar Paul translated into the vernacular the rules for the nuns of the Virgin Mary convent on *Insula Leporum*/Margaret Island, a religious community which became Observant in 1468, not without opposition from its prioress. Nevertheless, by the decision of the general chapter and with the involvement of the Prior Provincial, the nuns were finally reformed, with the *cura monialium* being provided by the Friars Preachers (Frühwirth, Reichert 1900, 308-311; Lázs 2016, 44-45). Paul of Vác, educated at the universities of Vienna and Heidelberg, where he became *magister artium*, was the confessor of the nuns on the Danube Island, a diligent and dedicated confessor, as we can see from his commitment to *cura monialium* (Madas 2014, 368-370).

In 1468 the General Chapter reaffirmed the authority of the prior provincials over the women religious living according to the Rule of St Augustine under the supervision of the Friars Preachers, together with a renewed emphasis on the cloistered way of life that these pious women were to adopt in their convents (Frühwirth, Reichert 1900, 308).

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Shortly afterwards, in the Dominican province of Hungary, highly educated friars such as Johannes Episcopi and Paul of Vác devised ways of promoting the Observance in women's convents. According to the entries in the archives of the Order kept in the convent of *Santa Maria sopra Minerva*, it was in 1474 that the prior, together with one of his brothers from the Dominican convent in Braşov, received permission from the Master General to receive ten women *ad habitum Ordinis...cum scapulari*. As was the norm, the nuns, like the other *sorores*, were to be placed under the authority of the prior provincial, while their instruction in the profession was to be given by the aforementioned friars from Braşov (Iványi 1939, 43).

The year 1474 seems to have been indeed a decisive one for the progress of the Observance under the supervision, probably also the guidance and participation of the Prior Provincial Johannes Episcopi. The nuns of the convent of the Virgin Mary on Margaret Island benefited from the translation into the vernacular of the Rule and Constitutions they had to follow and observe, the nunnery in Braşov was established and the Sibiu convent finally received permission to move within the city walls. It is all the more probable that this year marked a new beginning not only for the life of the Friars Preachers, but also for that of the nuns of Mary Magdalene.

Strict preservation of enclosure, communal life, obedience and contemplation constituted the fundamentals of female communities that have adhered to Observant exigencies. Johannes Meyer was an ardent supporter of the Observance, joining the reformed convent of Basel in 1442, and subsequently becoming deeply involved in the reform of several women's communities in Switzerland, Alsace and southern Germany, acting as their confessor, writing and translating several works to help them in their spiritual edification and daily conduct (Huijbers 2018, 132). According to one of his records of the nuns' enclosure ceremony in Wibij-Duurstede, this was a public event in which those who wished to become nuns were given the Dominican habit and then the cloister was locked 'in the name of God, the Holy Trinity, the Virgin

Mary, St Dominic and Mary Magdalene, the patron saint of the convent' (Taylor Jones 2019, 137).

Since 1298 with the issuing of the bull *Periculoso*, the nuns of all religious orders were to live under strict enclosure, which was both passive (the nuns were not permitted to receive lay visitors in their houses) and active (the female religious were not to exit their nunneries). As the return to a pristine ideal of monastic life laid at the core of the Observant movement, renewed emphasize was put on the cloistered way of life that the nuns had to follow, the only way that could lead to spiritual perfection (Hamburger, Marx, Marti 2008, 42-45). Screened windows, secured by grills, locked doors, usually with two, sometimes even three keys, maintained the perpetual cloistering of the nuns, the necessary condition in Johannes Meyer's view, but also that of the Observant Dominicans more generally, for the female religious to be able to fully commit themselves to their vocation (Uffmann 2001, 101-104).

Enclosure and reform were thus synonymous for these pious women which gives us an idea of the role played by saintly models within the walls of the nunneries. As already mentioned, the cloistering of the nuns, during public and civic ceremonies, not only separated them from the world, but also individualized them as a specific community living according to certain rules, whose identity was shaped according to the divine protection granted to them by the founder of the Order of the Friars Preachers and the local patron saint.

According to the Rule and the Constitutions of the Order, the Divine Office was central to the spiritual life of Dominican nuns. It was compulsory to them to engage in liturgical performance of the canonical hours, singing an established sequence of psalms and hymns (Muschiol 2008, 192). As it has been observed, this was to be done correctly and attentively, not passively but actively, knowing by heart when to bow, incline or kneel, so as to promote meditation on the liturgical text being sung and spoken (Taylor Jones 2018, 70-72). In addition to the obligatory participation in canonical hours, the

nuns must also diligently observe the celebration of the feast days of the saints of the order, the patron saint of their house and the local popular saints. A breviary dating from around 1494, possibly belonging to the nuns of Mary Magdalene in Freiburg im Bresgau is a highly relevant example of this. Not only were the saints of the order, such as Dominic himself, Thomas Aquinas and Vincent of Ferrer, celebrated with a *totum duplex*, but in the litanies Mary Magdalene, the patron saint of these nuns, was revered with a double entry (Breviary).

Mary Magdalene has indeed become of particular appeal to women religious who lead a cloistered life. Her importance in the Dominican liturgy, which, as we have seen, was at the heart of the spirituality of the Observant Dominican women, not to mention Magdalene's perfect embodiment of the contemplative and penitential way of life, were the main catalysts in the development of the devotion of the nuns to the Apostle of the Apostles. Catherine of Siena, the saint of monastic reform at the end of the Middle Ages, held Mary Magdalene in high esteem, the one whose profound love for Christ the *mantellata* wished to imitate (Mews 2012, 239-240). In the convent of San Domenico in Pisa, founded by Chiara Gambacorta at the end of the fourteenth century and being considered afterwards the motherhouse for the reform of Dominican women's communities in Italy, the cult of Mary Magdalene developed strongly, not least in relation to one of her relics that was in the possession of the nuns (Roberts 2016, 146).

For the Observant Dominican nuns in the kingdom of Hungary, Mary Magdalene acquired a similar prestige. Codex of Érsekújvár produced between 1529 and 1531 in the *scriptorium* of the Virgin Mary convent on *Insula Leporum*, one of the finest examples of the vernacular literature that highly characterized the religious culture of the Observant Dominican nuns, deals extensively with the legends of the saints (Madas – Haader 2012, 6-8). As has been persuasively argued, the hagiographic material used and produced by the nuns was intended to enforce the Observant way of life followed by the women religious, a trait that is accurately revealed by the way the legend of Catherine of Siena contained in this codex emphasizes the importance of the virtues of obedience and submission to God's will for the enclosed communities of pious women (Korondi 2016, 190-191).

Although codex of Érsekújvár was the result of the work of several copyists, as has been convincingly demonstrated, it was sister Márta Sövényházi who not only copied most of it and even decorated it with painted initials, but also decided on its content (Madas 2011, 92; Wehli 2009, 165-168). The decision was made in view of the growing Ottoman threat after 1526, when the nuns had no choice but to leave their convent on the Danube Island. This finally happened in 1541, but not before the nun Márta had compiled a work of miscellaneous type − in the more than eloquent phrasing of Edit Madas − a portable library for fleeing nuns (Madas 2011, 93). That this was indeed the case is demonstrated by the inclusion of works needed for spiritual edification (legends of the saints, *exempla*, prayers), but also texts that would help the nuns fulfil their daily duties. Intended for both communal reading and private devotion, the codex is truly observant in its nature, and the legend of Mary Magdalene is used for the same purpose, that of instilling in the nuns the ideals of this reform movement.

The image of Magdalene in the Codex of Érsekújvár is built around her love for and intimacy with Christ. Magdalene comforted and anointed him during the Passion, remained at the tomb of the Holy Victim to mourn, unlike the apostles who left the tomb, and her steadfastness in faith was rewarded with the appearance of Christ himself, the repentant sinner being the first to whom the Resurrection was revealed (Madas 2011, 25). The nuns were further instructed in pious behavior by the legend of Mary Magdalene, a translation of the one written by Jacobus de Voragine. The penitence she kept while living in a deserted place for thirty years may have provided a living example for women religious. It is certainly no coincidence that the first and longest example to follow the legend is the so-called Miracle of the Hours. Every day, at each of the seven canonical hours, the body of Magdalene was taken to heaven by angels. In

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this way she would hear with her bodily ears the glorious songs of the heavenly hosts, rendering material nourishment useless (Volf 1888, 145).

To the nuns who were reading or being read aloud this miracle when the feast day of Mary Magdalene was most solemnly celebrated as the Dominican liturgy required, exemplary penitence and heavenly rewards were easily connected to their tasks to be performed in the choir at every canonical hour, every day of the week. As the content of Codex of Érsekújvár has been tailored to specific identity and needs of fleeing Observant Dominican nuns, the recollection of the ways Magdalene's canonical hours were translated into celestial nourishment may have been of particular importance.

Diligence in profession and commitment to a penitential way of life made Mary Magdalene worthy of veneration in the eyes of Dominican women. It was precisely because of these merits that she could become a powerful intercessor for her followers. The Observant Dominican nuns of Sibiu, placed under the heavenly protection of Mary Magdalene, engaged in cultic manifestations for their patroness in an interesting way. Their visual environment can be reconstructed thanks to the discovery and restoration of several wall paintings that decorated the choir of their church, frescoes that have recently become the focus of art historical research (Jenei 2017-2018, 31-48; Kónya 2020, 44-47, 127-130, 395-408).

Mary Magdalene accompanied the nuns of Sibiu, extending her patronage over them at key moments of their lives: during enclosing ceremonies, when they took the veil or gathered in the choir to praise her in the hymns and litanies when Magdalene's feast day was solemnly celebrated with a *totum duplex* and an octave. When the frescoes of the *Magdalenes*' church were uncovered during the 2016 campaign, the scene of the Crucifixion was also restored. It is an unpopulated, sober scene: the Crucified Christ is accompanied by his mourning Mother, who is praying, and by St John, who, with his gesture, draws the attention to the Sacrificed

Body of Christ (Fig. 2). There is also a kneeling donor in prayer, introduced by a saint whose garments are the same color as those of the Virgin Mary: green and white. Although the saint's face has been destroyed, making it difficult to identify it with certainty, there is one detail that could help. Anna Kónya has noted that there is "a light brown patch of color along her left shoulders, probably her wavy blonde hair falling down", thus suggesting that it is a female saint (Kónya 2020, 45 and Fig. 1.63).

With the famous paintings of Giotto in the Scrovegni chapel in Padua, the free-flowing hair of Magdalene has become the symbol of the repentant saint, as it was with her hair that Magdalene tended Christ on the cross (Fig. 3). It has been further and convincingly argued that, according to de Voragine's legend, the saint's long hair, falling down and covering her, was also the visible embodiment of Magdalene's ascetic experience in the desert, where she refused to wear any garments, explicitly renouncing her former life of luxury and ending up covered only by her hair (Bohde 2019, 29-30).

It is not only the already observed detail of long locks falling down the saint's shoulders that may prove that the female saint in the Crucifixion scene in the nuns' church of Sibiu was Mary Magdalene (Fig. 4). Her depiction is of a larger size than the rest of the saintly figures represented in the scene (Kónya 2020, 45). The prominent position she detains is further revealed by the gestures she makes, that of introducing a kneeling, praying donor, in a direct and unambiguous act of intercession that usually the patron saint of the church performs. Art historians dealing with the survived frescoes in the church the Observant Dominican women used do not agree whether the represented donor is a female or a male individual (Jenei 2017-2018, 38; Kónya 2020, 399). Be as it may be, it is certain that the donor of these mural paintings was a well-to-do individual who paid for the decoration of the chancel and succeeded in being memorialized in this sacred place. There are precisely these initiatives which could be held to account for the representation of the donor as being introduced within the scene of the

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Crucifixion by Mary Magdalene, the intimate of Christ and the protector of the nuns.

Previous research has highlighted that albeit being cut-off from the world because of their profession, the nuns had to devise ways of remaining integrated into the local society (Signori 2008, 270-271). Due to their enclosure, the Observant Dominican women needed means of subsistence which could be procured only by maintaining contacts with the outside world which generally took the form of donations and testamentary bequests that were made on behalf of their houses. At the core of such contacts lay the commemorative prayers which the nuns performed for their benefactors, a pious act that made them relevant not only from a religious, but also from a social point of view (Röckelein 2008, 211-215). The nuns of San Domenico in Pisa devoted much of their time to praying for those who supported them, and this spiritual support was given primarily to the members of their families. The importance of such arrangements, which were largely determined at local level, was also recognized by the Order's officials by the inclusion in the Dominican Constitutions of the requirement that the third day after the Feast of Purification be dedicated to *anniversarium patrum et matrum* (Roberts 2016, 218, 232).

The nuns of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu, as we have seen, received municipal funds at the end of the fifteenth century and again at the beginning of the following century. This was in line with the more general support and interest shown by the magistrate of the city in the Observant movement, an interest which concerned not only the religious of the First Order, but also the Observant Dominican women. Thus, the depiction of the kneeling, praying donor in the Crucifixion scene, placed as the first scene in the lower register of the southern wall of the choir, was a constant reminder to the nuns that they had to pray for their benefactor (Fig. 5). Moreover, this individual may have been a relative of one of the Dominican nuns, an influential and certainly wealthy donor. Even if his or her identity has not yet been revealed to us, the prominent position that the figure of the donor occupies within the visual environment of the church of St Mary Magdalene alludes to the

vitality of the contacts that the nuns maintained with the world outside the walls of their house. At the same time, it also points to the profile of these women religious who, similar to other better documented cases, may have belonged to the urban elite (Roberts 2016, 231-214; Kiss 2018, 182).

Devout and wealthy women such as Ursula *Meister Paulin* and Claire Pemfflinger made generous donations to the Dominican nuns in Sibiu, the former in 1512, the latter in 1523 (Salontai 2022, 216). Both belonged to the most influential families in Bistriţa and Sibiu respectively. Ursula was the daughter of George II Eiben, judge and juror of Bistriţa in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, married to Hans Koler and Paul Sutor, her second husband, who also held the office of juror in the municipal government of this city (Gross 2014, 12). Claire was born into a powerful local noble family, that of Thabiassy, and was also married twice, to John Lulay, who held important positions in the government of Sibiu as royal judge in 1507 and *magister civium* between 1513 and 1514, and to Markus Pemfflinger, who also acquired a highly influential, leading position in Sibiu (Fabritius 1875, 13-14; Gross 2004, 157).

The nuns' commitment to the performance of commemorative prayers, the widespread belief that their performance was of the utmost importance in the eyes of God, given the excellence of their pious lives, may have motivated Ursula and Claire in making their last wills. Other motivations can also be read into their actions. It seems that those who entered the Dominican nunneries in Transylvania were not only recruited locally, most likely from important families, either patrician or strongly connected to urban society, but also young, unmarried women (Florea 2015, 215-216). As the embodiment of spiritual perfection, the Observant Dominican nuns were thus considered, for more than one reason, as worthy companions on the path to salvation.

When retracing the interconnectedness between identity and devotion framed by the Observant movement some interesting observations emerge. A specific way of life, which the Rules and the Constitutions of the

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order designed and imposed on religious women, was subsequently reflected in the modalities within which their devotional life was shaped. In this process at least an equally important role was played by the local religious culture to which the houses of female religious belonged. The cult of the Holy Cross was of outmost importance in the life of the town as revealed by the processions organized yearly to the two crucifixes placed on the urban territory, which were fervently and with great devotion visited by the townspeople on the feasts of the Invention of the Cross and the Exaltation of the Cross respectively (Soterius 2008, 38). Furthermore, there was a strong parish-based cult of the Holy Cross, developed along the weekly celebrated Masses in the town's most important church, that of the Virgin Mary, where it is most likely that an impressive altarpiece dedicated to the Passion of Christ has also been placed (Firea 2008, 47-74; Firea 2012, 231). The presence of the coat of arms of John Lulay on its predella lends further weight to the idea that devotion to the Holy Cross benefited from the support of the city's elite. It is more likely that this support was also prompted by the apostolate of the friars of the Holy Cross in the city, an apostolate which, as has been discussed, intensified after the adoption of the Observance and was supported by the city government. It is certain, however, that this support came not only from the city's powerful political leaders, but also from their wives. Or at least from one of them, as our sources disclosed. Claire, whose first husband was John Lulay, has also lavishly endowed, as we have seen, the Observant friars and nuns of Sibiu.

As I have already tried to argue, the dedications of the friary and nunnery of Sibiu, seen as a pair, can be perceived as emblems of Observant Dominican identity. The Holy Cross, a cult strongly supported by the Dominicans, became more visible in the life of the city with the relocation of the convent within the city walls. A kind of mutual reinforcement can be deciphered in the way the cults of the Holy Cross and of Mary Magdalene developed in Sibiu at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries. The topographical proximity of the monastery and the nunnery, the fact that the nuns were under the care of the friars and the constant presence of the image of Mary Magdalene in the scene of the Crucifixion define the logic of this sacred pairing. The cloistered nuns, who prayed and sang, meditated and reflected on the exemplary faith represented by their patron saint, who at the same time offered them a model to follow and imitate, were similar in their acts of devotion to many other Observant Dominican women throughout Europe. The nuns of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu also continued and enriched the local devotion to the penitent saint. Celebrated daily with a mass and legend in the city's single parish church, Mary Magdalene may have been familiar to the girls and young women who became her novices and then her nuns. Once enclosed, they could continue to look up to and be inspired by Magdalene, the apostle of the apostles, the one who comforted Christ during his Passion, the one who remained at his side, the first to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection. As the patron saint of the Observant Dominican women in Sibiu, Mary Magdalene became visible and distinct within the walls of their church, the true embodiment of faith.

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Fig. 1 The Church of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu. (Photo credit: Thalgott Erich Michael, *Hermannstadt. Die baugeschichtliche Entwicklung einer siebenbürgische Stadt*, Hermannstadt, 1933, p. 38, fig. 95.)

Fig. 2 Fresco: *The scene of the Crucifixion* in the Church of Mary Magdalene. (Photo credit: Raluca-Georgiana Cobuz)

Fig. 3 Fresco: Giotto di Bondone *The scene of the Crucifixion*, Capella Scrovegni (Arena Chapel) Padua. (Photo credit: https://www.wga.hu/html/g/giotto/padova/3christ/chris19.html)

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IDENTITY AND PATRONAGE IN THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF OBSERVANT DOMINICAN WOMEN

Fig. 1. The Church of Mary Magdalene in Sibiu

Fig. 2. Fresco:
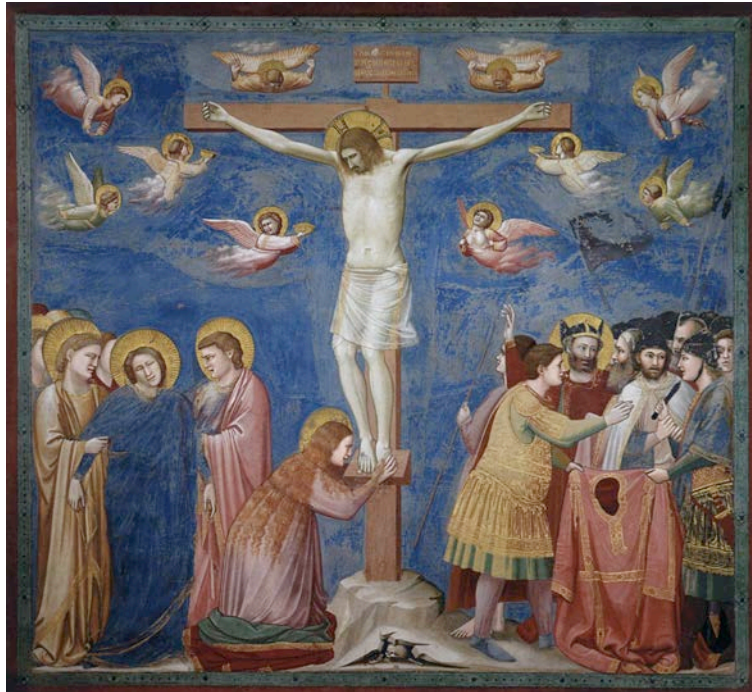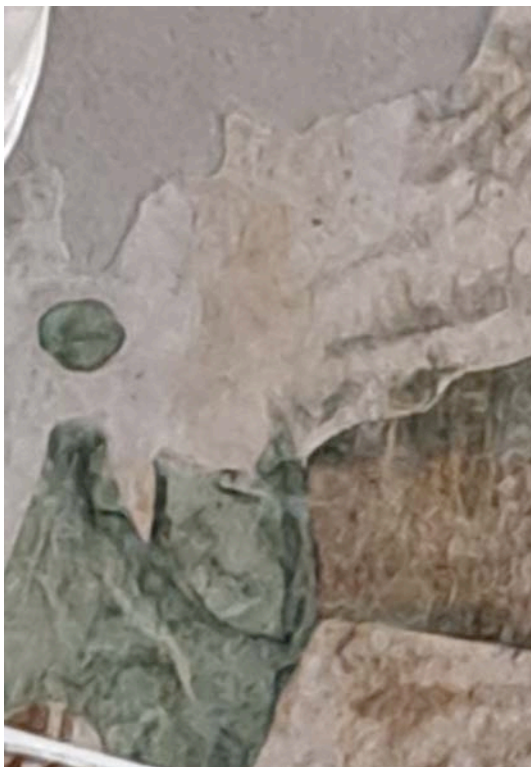*The scene of the Crucifixion*
in the Church of Mary Magdalene

Fig. 3 Fresco: Giotto di Bondone *The scene of the Crucifixion*,
Capella Scrovegni , Padova

Fig. 4 Fresco: *The female saint represented in the scene of*
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Fig. 5 Fresco: *The kneeling donor in the scene of*
the Crucifixion in the church of Mary Magdalene

THE TRAGEDY OF THE FEMALE FIGURE:
OPHELIA IN THE VISION OF 19TH-20TH CENTURY ARTISTS

Timea-Andrada TOTH*

Abstract: *Ophelia has become one of the most famous names in the category of female protagonists of world literature. In spite of being a minor character with a relatively small number of lines and a tragic destiny revolving around two male characters, namely Polonius, her father, and Hamlet, her forbidden love, Ophelia has managed to break out of the stereotypes imposed on her by playwright William Shakespeare and has become even more relevant than the protagonist of the play to which she belongs. This work brings to the fore the image of Ophelia on the artist's canvas. Here we will discuss the earliest pictorial representations of the heroine and the conventions used by painters to depict her: what is her most common pose - sitting on a branch, weaving flowers, already in the water, or even dead; what is her physical appearance - hair colour, clothing, and mood. The focus will also be on how various artists interpreted Ophelia, what changes they made to her iconography, what they focused on in their works.*

Keywords: *19th century art, 20th century art, literature, symbolism, William Shakespeare, female tragedy.*

Rezumat: *Ofelia a ajuns, în zilele noastre, unul dintre cele mai cunoscute nume din categoria protagonistelor literaturii universale. Deşi un personaj secundar, cu un număr relativ mic de replici şi cu un destin tragic ce se învârte în jurul a două personaje masculine, anume Polonius, tatăl acesteia, şi Hamlet, iubirea ei interzisă, Ofelia a reuşit să iasă din tiparele care i-au fost impuse de către dramaturgul William Shakespeare şi a ajuns chiar mai relevantă decât protagonistul piesei de teatru de care aceasta aparţine. Această lucrare pune în prim-plan imaginea Ofeliei de pe pânză. Aici vor fi discutate primele reprezentări în pictură ale eroinei şi care sunt convenţiile utilizate de către artişti pentru redarea acesteia: care este ipostaza cea mai des întâlnită – aşezată pe o creangă, împletind flori, deja în apă, sau chiar moartă; care este aspectul ei fizic – culoarea părului, îmbrăcămintea, precum şi starea de spirit. Accentul va mai fi pus asupra felului în care au preluat-o diverşi artişti pe Ofelia, ce modificari au adus iconografiei acesteia, pe ce s-au concentrat în operele lor.*

Cuvinte cheie*: artă de secol 19, artă de secol 20, literatură, simbolism, William Shakespeare, tragedie feminină.*

The collaboration between art and literature has become more and more common over the centuries, but it has not been limited to the transposition of text onto canvas (or any other material), but also to the infusion of the narrative work with new elements and symbols shaped by the artists' imagination, as well as various interpretations offered by them. The works of William Shakespeare began to be one of the great sources of inspiration for artists – for a time, exclusively English ones – in the 18th century. According to professor and author Leonée Ormond, two important events brought the English playwright back to the great stage of literature: the first was the Stradford-upon-Avon Jubilee in 1769, celebrating the bicentenary of William Shakespeare's birth, and the second was the opening of the Shakespeare Gallery in London by publicist John Boydell (Ormond 2003, 531). From then on, painters from various artistic movements, such as Neoclassicism, Romanticism and Academism,

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were guided by Shakespeare's plays and brought his characters to life.

This explains the resurgence of Shakespeare's works in art, yet another phenomenon that must be explained is the abundance of paintings depicting Ophelia, a character with little presence in the writer's work. A young woman dependent on the male figures in her life, harshly criticised by the protagonist of the tragedy, with a small number of lines and a death that is not even directly portrayed - what is it that draws painters so heavily to such a character? After all, Ophelia is, to this day, the most frequently painted heroine of all those created by the English author (Ronk 1994, 21) and the pose in which she is often depicted provides a relevant clue to this dilemma.

Kaara Peterson, a professor at the University of Miami, refers in her article, *Framing Ophelia: Representation and the Pictorial Tradition*, to a famous but morbid quote by the writer Edgar Allan Poe: "The death of a beautiful woman is undoubtedly the most poetic subject in the world." (Peterson 1998, 1) So we see the juxtaposition of two seemingly contradictory elements, beauty and death - the same contradiction can be seen in the play itself, where we have the aestheticized description of Ophelia's death, followed shortly afterwards by Hamlet's discussion with the two gravediggers about the dishevelled appearance of a body that has died by drowning. It is not only this aspect, however, that interests the painters, but also the category of "fallen" women, which, according to author Linda Nochlin, describes any kind of sexual activity by a woman outside of marriage (Nochlin 1978, 139).

Another important aspect to better understand the perpetuation of Ophelia's death scene in painting is the temporal context in which this specific iconography first develops – the Victorian era (1837–1901). The Victorians' curiosity about all things regarding death is already more than well known: a murder in that period was a real spectacle and a focus of interest, with people practising what was called "murder-sightseeing". By this term we understand the fact that, as there were as yet no laws to stop them, people went straight to the scene of the crime, "examined" the bodies and analysed each room individually (Flanders 2011, 13). That said, it is not surprising that

the promiscuity of women, married or not, was another major interest of the period, nor is it surprising that both themes were conceived and proliferated in art by the most iconic grouping in 19th century England – the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (Nochlin 1978, 139).

This paper will present iconological analyses of several paintings that have Ophelia at their centre, in order to reach a conclusion about the symbolism and its evolution in art, more precisely in the art of the 19th and early 20th century. Following my research, I have identified about 30 works from this period, which show a wide range of portraits of the character. These vary from one artist to another, from one movement to another, and even from one variant to another, in the case of artists who have portrayed Ophelia in several instances. Another task of the research in this essay is to see whether the painters faithfully followed the image of Ophelia as put on paper by William Shakespeare, or whether they chose to insert new elements that they felt suited her better. Whichever the case, it is important to know that symbols were equally important to the writer, and he often resorted to several iconographic conventions (Lyons 1977, 62) to give a certain depth to his characters.

The earliest work with Ophelia at its centre is Benjamin West's (1738–1820) *Ophelia and Laertes*, or *Ophelia's Madness* (Fig. 1), completed in 1792. As a neoclassical artist specialising in paintings with historical themes, West's work is executed in a clean, precise style, meticulous in detail and faithful to historical accuracy in that it depicts the court of the Danish Kingdom, indicated by the emblem placed above the king, as it would have looked in the Middle Ages. The clothing of the royal couple, Claudius and Gertrude, is also intended to be of medieval provenance, particularly with the crowns and capes they wear, but Ophelia and Laertes seem to be more aligned with Shakespeare's time through their garments. The attitudes of the characters also deserve a closer look: the courtiers, to begin with, are intrigued by the scene before them, listening curiously to Ophelia's songs; Gertrude and Claudius' faces express puzzlement and fright; Laertes and Ophelia, however, are the most theatrical in the composition – the girl, with the gleam of

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madness in her eyes, is handing out her flowers to those around her and singing, while Laertes adopts a highly dramatic pose, typical of a theatre actor, caught in the middle of his speech: "Sorrow, thoughts, love or hell/ She clothes them all in beauty." (Shakespeare 2009, 272)

That is the overall picture, but going back to Ophelia, we can also notice the following things about her appearance: although the play's text hints at the girl's youth (she is supposed to be around 16 years of age), in West's painting she has the body of a mature woman, with the typical forms of an ancient female statue - not surprising in a neoclassical work; her attire, too, takes us back to ancient Greece, with Ophelia wearing a peach *chiton* underneath, covered with a white *himation*, to which is added a black veil, a possible reference to the girl's mourning or even to Hamlet, since this is the protagonist's characteristic colour. Her hair is long and blonde, and her eyes are the same colour as the veil she wears. Of the flowers she shares, we recognise dandelions, common water-crowfoot (those white, rosemary-like little flowers), rue and rosemary, the latter being intended for her brother.

From Benjamin West onwards, or rather from the 19th century onwards, Ophelia officially becomes a favourite of artists and often comes to be portrayed solely on her own (Peterson 1998, 3), the emphasis being on the beauty and tragedy of the character. The first category of Ophelia paintings to be analysed is that of portraits, for which 9 relevant examples have been identified. To begin with, we have the portrait (Fig. 2) by the Romantic painter Thomas Francis Dicksee (1819–1895), who specialised precisely in painting literary themes, especially Shakespearean ones. Ophelia is shown here with bright blonde hair, half braided into a crown and decorated with what appears to be a green cord, and is dressed in a white dress, covered with a blue-green cape with jewelled neck and embroidery around the edges. She looks pensively to one side, and in one hand she holds what appears to be a prayer book, thus alluding to the next scene:

Read on this book;

That show of such an exercise may colour

Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,

'Tis too much proved–that with devotion's visage

And pious action we do sugar o'er

The devil himself. (Shakespeare 2009, 221)

Looking at the painting with this quote in mind is very important, because we have before us an Ophelia in a solemn, almost saint-like pose, but what lies behind the girl (the plot against Hamlet to which she is unwillingly part of) is as dark as the background. The author Bridget Gellert Lyons speaks of this juxtaposition of Ophelia, arguing that the image of a woman with a book denotes an "attitude of prayer and devotion", as opposed to the image of a man with the same item, which would indicate more of an intellectual curiosity (Lyons 1977, 61). Lyons also refers to the depiction of the Virgin Mary in the Annunciation scene, where she is symbolically depicted reading a prayer book (Lyons 1977, 61).

Similar to Dicksee's painting in terms of the symbolism of the book is that of Pierre Auguste Cot (1837–1883), a representative of Academism. Also referred to as Pause for Thought (Fig. 3), the picture shows Ophelia almost in her entirety, wearing a grey-toned dress with blue patterned sleeves. Her hair is blonde, slicked back, and crowned with a blue ribbon, and her eyes gaze searchingly at the viewer. Once again we have this juxtaposition of the docile Ophelia, which the light significantly envelops, like an icon, but whose gaze seems to abound with hidden meaning.

From the same year as Auguste Cot's Ophelia, we have Charles Sillem Lidderdale's (1831–1895), a lesser-known British artist. The portrait (Fig. 4) is small in size and, if the title did not indicate the identity of the character depicted, it would be easily mistaken for any other female figure: apart from her (possibly damp) blonde hair and white dress, the protagonist of the work does not display any other characteristic of Ophelia, and the red pearl necklace around her neck is not found in Shakespeare's text. Similarly as simple is the portrait (Fig. 5) painted by Édouard François

Zier (1856–1924): Ophelia's hair this time is more voluminous, a reddish blonde, on which she wears a gold ornament with two pink roses. She is also wearing a white dress decorated with gold embroidery and some precious stones.

The following work (Fig. 6) is by the portraitist Henri Lehmann (1814–1882) and could be contrasted with that of Pierre Auguste Cot, as it represents the contrasting image of Ophelia at the moment she went mad. We see her in a white dress with floral patterns in gold and pinkish tones, torn in the chest area, which leaves her shoulders bare. This Ophelia is no longer blonde but has brown hair and wears a flower crown on her head. Regarding the flowers, Lehmann has not hesitated to introduce the most significant elements for this character, especially for her most dramatic episode, so that one can distinguish columbines, daisies, and possibly also those "long-purples" with the "shameful" name. Last but not least, the tears in her eyes denote the pain leading up to her final act and give the true picture of Ophelia, that of a frightened child.

Ophelia (Fig. 7) by Georges Roussin (1854–1941) seems benevolent at first glance, but her hollow eyes reveal how she remains only a memory of what she was before her father's death. The same blonde hair, now dishevelled and full of flowers – rosemary and violets – frames her face and flows over her white coat. In her arms she holds a bouquet of purple irises, which could be a misinterpretation of "long-purples", as we shall see in other cases. In a similar pose, but in a much greener setting, is Ophelia (Fig. 8) by Ernest Hébert (1817–1908), whose other differences are the black garment she wears, the less diversified flowers in her hair (which do not seem to belong to the description in the text), and above all her face, which gives a neutral expression.

The last painting in this category is an unusual reinterpretation of Ophelia (Fig. 9) by Henri Gervex (1852–1929). Covered only in a white toga-like robe, this Ophelia is outlined in a Christ-like manner, yet her hands do not show the wounds she has suffered, but instead hold the flowers that have come to represent her – one of which is most likely the poppy,

signifying death. Her frightened face seems to be forever frozen in her mournful songs:

And will he not come again?

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead:

Go to thy death-bed:

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his poll:

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan:

God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray God.

God be wi' ye. (Shakespeare 2009, 272)

This shows how a new image of Ophelia is emerging in art, that of the heroine as Flora, whose myth was transposed from oral legends into Shakespeare's work and then taken up by painters. Returning to Bridget Gellert Lyons' work, she explains how the playwright used the two conflicting versions of the Flora myth to construct the character of Ophelia: In short, the first version refers to Ovid's myth, according to which the nymph Chloris was given possession of all the flowers on earth and thus became Flora; the second version was outlined by Plutarch, later by Boccaccio, and has at its centre *Flora Meretrix*, a prostitute from Rome who, thanks to Hercules, meets a rich man and inherits his fortune (Lyons 1977, 63-64). By associating the two hypostases, Ophelia was given a visual representation even before she was officially introduced into art (as images of Flora were widespread especially in the Renaissance), and her floral language was associated, in a subtle way, with her sexuality (Lyons 1977, 65).

Now that we have that established, we can move on to the next category of Ophelia paintings, namely those that show her in a natural landscape, either on or near the branch before meeting her end. The first painting (Fig. 10) is by the portrait painter Joseph Severn (1793–1879) and is probably one of the most innocent of the series: Ophelia, dressed in a white shirt over which she wears a black dress, lies on the water's edge with her feet on the creek, and a black beaded rosary is laid on the

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ground. Under her head she holds one of Hamlet's letters, but the most obvious reference to him is his name written in twigs and several flowers, including *orchis mascula*. All these elements seem to convey, first, that the real source of Ophelia's madness was her love for Hamlet, not the death of her father, and, second, that the love between the two was actually consummated, due to the strategic joining of the "long-purples" to the thrown rosary, a symbol of the girl's virginity. Equally symbolic are the poppies surrounding the young woman, foretelling her imminent death.

Richard Redgrave's (1804–1888) painting of Ophelia Weaving Her Garlands (Fig. 11) is a classic, following most of the canons of the character's portrayal: she sits on the branch above the water, is dressed in a white dress with puffed sleeves and wears a black girdle, while on her head is the usual wreath of flowers and leaves. Of the floral elements present, the common water-crowfoot stands out, taken directly from the text, but a new flower, the lotus, representing purity, can be seen in one corner (Kirby, Diffenbaugh 2011, 179). In a similar pose is Thomas Francis Dicksee's second version of Ophelia, from 1873 (Fig. 12), and we can also notice how the lotus flower seems to be appearing more and more often in the depictions of the female protagonist.

The next Ophelias on which we will concentrate are the two illustrated by the Pre-Raphaelite Arthur Hughes (1832–1915). The first version is from 1852 (Fig. 13), it has a semi-circular shape, since the description of Ophelia's death (as presented by Gertrude) is written in the margins, therefore the artist makes a direct reference to his source of inspiration. The protagonist of the painting fulfils all the criteria of Ophelia's physical appearance – the white, flowing dress, the long blonde hair, crowned with that wreath of flowers and leaves. Moreover, Hughes has transformed Ophelia into a pale, frightened, fairy-sized girl with her wings clipped, thus illustrating the archetype of the innocent woman that needs to be protected. The second version, the one from 1865 (Fig. 14), is a much more mature version than the first. The Ophelia depicted here has long, red hair with a sprinkling of daisies and rue, and her light blue

eyes gaze piercingly at the viewer. Her dress is white with gold embroidery, and a transparent veil drapes from her shoulder water-crowfoot stands a possible reference to the bride Ophelia might have become. In addition to the flowers decorating her hair, the painting also includes the forget-me-nots and the poppy, which although not present in the original text, makes a direct reference to the girl's tragic fate. Unlike Hughes's first painting, this Ophelia, in her posture and stance, seems much more sensual and nothing in her image refers to her true state of madness. One more element to note is the blue bird next to Ophelia's veil, which appears to be a hummingbird - if this is indeed the case, then it would represent yet another item on the list of symbols signifying death.

Next we will talk about a pair of two paintings that, in my view, are as similar as they are different, and they very well represent the dichotomy regarding the ways in which Ophelia is illustrated. The works in question are Victor Müller's (1830–1871) Ophelia from 1869 (Fig. 15) and William Quiller Orchardson's (1832–1910) Ophelia from 1874 (Fig. 16). While Müller's painting is rendered in warm tones, with a natural landscape that seems to come alive, Orchardson's presents a closed setting, best described by words such as "loneliness" and "oblivion". The tones also differ in the skin of the two characters, as Müller paints an Ophelia with rosy skin and red in her cheeks, while Orchardson chooses to use similar shades for his Ophelia's skin and dress. Both protagonists wear a white dress, but Müller's Ophelia wears an orange bodice with shades of gold, and her dress appears to be in perfect condition, while Orchardson's Ophelia's dress covers more the ground on which she sits, and her sleeves are torn. In terms of the attitudes of the two Ophelias, both exude theatricality and drama, but in opposite ways – Müller's Ophelia seems to gaze dreamily at her lover, while Orchardson's Ophelia gives the impression that she already knows her end and how close it is. The rendering of the floral elements is also significant: Orchardson carelessly scatters the flowers, most of them daisies, but Müller positions them with great care and doesn't forget to give his Flora the symbol of purity – the lotus flower.

The same contrast can be seen between the 1890 painting (Fig. 17) by Jules-Joseph Lefebvre (1836–1911) and the 1900 painting (Fig. 18) by Pascal Dagnan-Bouveret (1852–1929). The settings are roughly similar, the major difference being that Lefebvre's is more detailed, while Bouveret's brushstrokes are more graphic. Lefebvre's Ophelia is the embodiment of Flora, with her serene and resigned look, her long white dress, her voluminous blonde hair, and of course her bag of flowers – daisies, rue and Ophelia's favourite, the violets. The heroine illustrated by Bouveret, on the other hand, though no different when it comes to hair and dress, has extremely pale skin, and her haunting gaze is the kind that will stay with you for a long time. Bouveret's innovation is the replacement of the violets with cornflowers: in the French tradition, to which the artist is attached, these flowers symbolise delicacy, innocence and even hope for the future (Geisler 2021), which would be at odds with the girl's frightened face.

George Frederic Watts's Ophelia (Fig. 19) (1817–1904) looks like something out of a children's fairy tale book and has few of the features of Shakespeare's character: she is pale, blonde, covered in a white garment that looks more like a blanket than a dress; she rests her head on a piece of ground, gazing over a body of water, barely visible in the corner of the painting. Vegetation is present, but not flowers, so the painting does not overflow with meaning as other paintings have. Konstantin Makovsky's (1839–1915) Ophelia (Fig. 20) has the same fairy-tale look, but the attention to detail is much greater: the painting is typical of the Romantic Movement in its atmosphere – mist mysteriously envelops both the landscape and Ophelia, giving her an aura that turns her into a phantasm. The girl is holding a whole bouquet of flowers, including dandelions, cornflowers and the common water-crowfoot.

Representations of Ophelia are not confined to the movements of neoclassicism, romanticism or academism, and a good example is Ophelia (Fig. 21) by the realist Jules Bastien-Lepage (1848–1884). The artist was so impressed by the performance of the theatre actress Ellen Terry in Hamlet that he was inspired to render her on canvas, unaware that his version of

Ophelia would become as emblematic for French painting as John Everett Millais's painting had become for British painting (De Lafond 2012, 182). Lepage himself described the painting in a letter:

Her face bears marks of her grief and her madness. She is close to the edge of the water, leaning against a willow; the smile of her last song is still on her lips, and her eyes are full of tears. Only a branch supports her, and she is slipping unawares into the stream close beside her. Another moment, and she will be in the water. She wears a pale blue bodice, half green, a white skirt with loose folds; her pockets are full of flowers, and behind her you see the riverbanks – a wooded bank with tall flowering grasses and thousands of hemlocks, – flowers like stars in the sky, and in the back of the picture, a wooded hillside, with the sun setting behind bushes and nut-trees. (De Lafond 2012, 182)

The painting is unfinished, but its sketch-like appearance fits the story of Ophelia's abrupt ending (although it is not known why the artist never finished the painting). Equally appropriate to Ophelia's theme is the hemlock flower, hitherto unheard of in her depictions, which is a poisonous flower. Lepage also mentions in his letter that Ophelia's pockets are full of flowers, but this is not visible in the work itself, so an iconological analysis would not have much to work with in this regard.

The last painting in this category to be discussed is a unique depiction of Ophelia by the Spanish painter Plácido Francés y Pascual (1834–1902). This Ophelia (Fig. 22) is a far cry from any of the paintings we have examined up to this point and is instead closer to the iconography of the Penitent Magdalene: to begin with, the landscape is cave-like, and features elements such as a pitcher, a comb and a shepherd's staff. As for Ophelia, her appearance brings to mind the Magdalena Penitenta (Fig. 23) by the Baroque sculptor, also of Spanish origin, Pedro de Mena – long, unkempt-looking hair and shabby clothing, plus a look lost in thought. The only thing in this painting that references Ophelia is the presence of flowers, but even these are not among those mentioned in Shakespeare's text.

"Ophelias, and Ophelias again! They are here every year and every time the same dramatic

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situation is exploited: the moment when Shakespeare's virgin dies." (De Lafond 2012, 169) – this was the opinion shared by several French critics of the 19th century, a period when portraits of Ophelia were not uncommon in the Salons. As the quote shows, the moment of Ophelia's actual death was a favourite theme for painters, which is why it was time to discuss this category of work: the one in which "Shakespeare's virgin" meets her muddy death. The most common tendency in the rendition of this theme is to aestheticize the scene, as described by Gertrude, but there are small exceptions. Precisely because it is such a rare opportunity to see Ophelia in a different role from that of a nymph immortalised in her tragic beauty, I have chosen to begin with the painting (Fig. 24) by the Belgian Constantin Meunier (1831–1905). Meunier was a realist painter whose paintings had social themes at their centre, particularly concerning the lives of dock workers, miners and women working in various factories. The artist's interest in these social issues is also visible in the painting of Ophelia: the landscape makes no reference to the medieval kingdom of Denmark – instead it is bleak and dreary, rendered in shades of grey, with the shoreline where the girl's body was washed up in the vicinity of an industrialised town in the foreground. Ophelia is not the same character from the royal court either, but looks like a simple factory worker, dressed in a plain black uniform, and the colour of her skin is not much different from that of the cloudy sky, a sign that she has been in the water for a long time. Also, the clenched hand indicates that Ophelia is already in *rigor mortis*. For the first time we can see a painting that is closer to the grim but realistic description of the gravedigger than to Gertrude's flower-symbolised one: "and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body" (Shakespeare 2009, 290).

Also, a unique representation is Ophelia (Fig. 25) by Paul Albert Steck (1866–1924), in that she is depicted after she has already sunk into the water. However, unlike Meunier, Steck returns to the usual Ophelia canons: the long blonde hair, the white dress that falls from her shoulders, the flowers that continue to surround her even at the moment of death – of these we recognise the daisies, the pink

peonies, which are linked through myth and legend to nymphs and fairies, the violets and pink roses, which she holds to her breast. In the way he paints her, Steck gives back to the heroine the calm and grace, symbolised by the presence of the pink roses (Kirby, Diffenbaugh 2011, 183), that she lost after her father's death, and her face shows that she has finally achieved peace.

Through grace can also be described William G. Simmonds' (1876–1968) Ophelia (Fig. 26), to whom the artist has laid a "bed" in the midst of the waters that will slowly sink her. Although it is a watercolour (more accurately an illustration from a book), the painting is well detailed, from the green landscape surrounding Ophelia, the flowers that adorn her (violets, common water-crowfoot), to Ophelia herself. Her arms are open, waiting to embrace her end, she still has her last song on her lips, and her white dress, swollen with water, has the appearance of a bed on which she is resting. Harold Copping (1863–1932) also worked in watercolour when he painted scene 7 of Act 4 (Fig. 27), but his work is much simpler than Simmonds': Ophelia floats on the water, no longer supported by her white dress, and looks up, as if singing to someone watching her. The flowers are not very detailed either, but the pink roses and the water lilies stand out.

The Ophelia (Fig. 28) by Theodor van der Beek (1838–1921) and the Ophelia (Fig. 29) by Friedrich Wilhelm Theodor Heyser (1857–1921) also belong to the same typology, the only difference in appearance being that they do not have blonde but brown hair. They both float dramatically on the water, one hand held theatrically to their chests as they sing their last breaths. While van der Beek chose to illustrate only Ophelia, without much else in the background, Heyser did not hesitate to give his work a floral component with its symbolism: thus, around Ophelia one can see violets, water lilies, poppies, and a common water-crowfoot on her chest, which interestingly signifies ingratitude (Kirby, Diffenbaugh 2011, 171).

Finally, there remains a pair of paintings that are 30 years apart and are representative of two of the greatest trends of the 19th century, namely Romanticism and Academism. They

are therefore the paintings (Fig. 30) of the Academist Alexandre Cabanel and (Fig. 31) of the Romanticist Eugène Delacroix, both French and emblematic for the history of universal art through their works. Delacroix, for a start, is much more painterly, and his composition has the appearance of a dream, whereas Cabanel works with that precision and clarity typical of the academists, detailing even the tiniest crease in Ophelia's dress. The protagonist of Delacroix's painting has an almost primitive look due to the lack of a coherent expression on her face, her dishevelled brown hair, and especially her relatively transparent garment, which leaves her chest bare. Moreover, her posture seems unnatural, trying not to give Ophelia any dignity even at the moment of her death. Cabanel's Ophelia, on the other hand, is at once graceful and morbid: her light blue dress with floral motifs seems to hold her up for a few moments before she sinks into the water, and her blonde, flowing hair beautifully frames her face, which seems already fixated on her imminent death (De Lafond 2012, 176). As for the symbolic component linked to the presence of flowers, Delacroix's brushstroke does not reveal the identity of the flowers depicted, but only gives them a red colour. Cabanel, however, is more generous in this respect, so that flowers such as the usual daisies, common water-crowfoot and possibly poppies can be recognised.

In the 19th century, paintings depicting Ophelia alongside other characters in the play continued to be created, as we have seen in Benjamin West's earlier example. The author and painter William Gorman Wills provides such a depiction in his *Ophelia and Laertes* (Fig. 32), which shows the two siblings reunited after the death of their father. Both figures are dressed in typical medieval attire: Laertes wears a knight's costume and holds a sword in one hand, while Ophelia wears a simple white dress with mustard-coloured sleeves. Laertes looks anxiously at his sister, while she looks lost in the distance, sharing her flowers with him: rosemary and forget-me-nots, so that he will always have her in his thoughts. Ophelia also wears a wreath of flowers in her braided hair, and a "chain" of daisies around her neck.

An interesting interpretation is that of the artist Henrietta Rae (1859–1928), who depicts the scene in which Ophelia offers flowers to Claudius and Gertrude, under the astonished eyes of the courtiers (Fig. 33). The clothing of the people in the painting reveals that Rae has tried as far as possible to render the medieval court of the Danish kingdom in an authentic way, but the way he depicts Ophelia leads one to think of an orientalist-themed scene, with the young woman's body undulations and gestures that seem to capture her during a dance. Even so, the artist has remained faithful to the flowers Shakespeare depicted in the play, so that rosemary, pansies, columbines, violets and daisies can be identified.

Throughout this entire work, we have been able to see the evolution of Ophelia in 19th and early 20th century painting (with a small exception at the end of the 18th century), what conventions were preferred by the artists, what elements they took from the original text and what additions they made in terms of symbolism. We could also see how a universal portrait of the heroine – young, blonde, with a white dress, a sign of innocence that was too quickly taken away from her – took shape, from which there were, of course, some deviations, depending on the vision of each painter.

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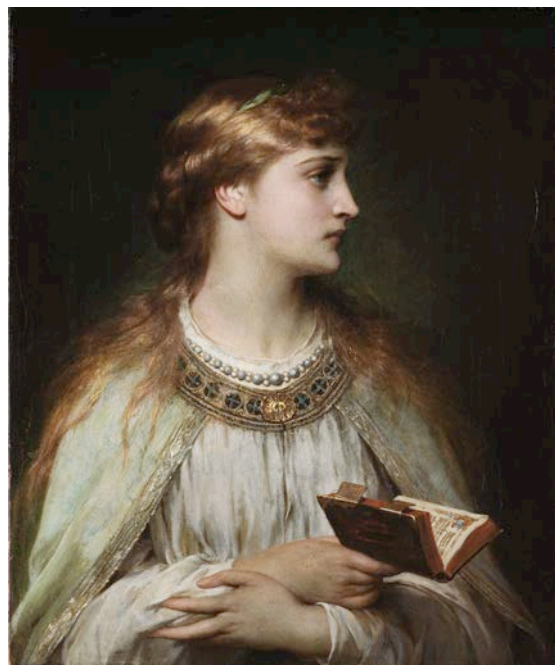
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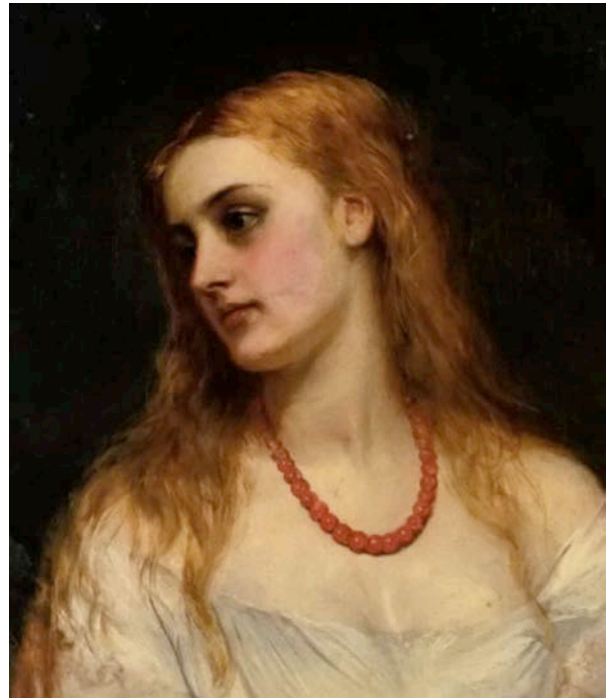
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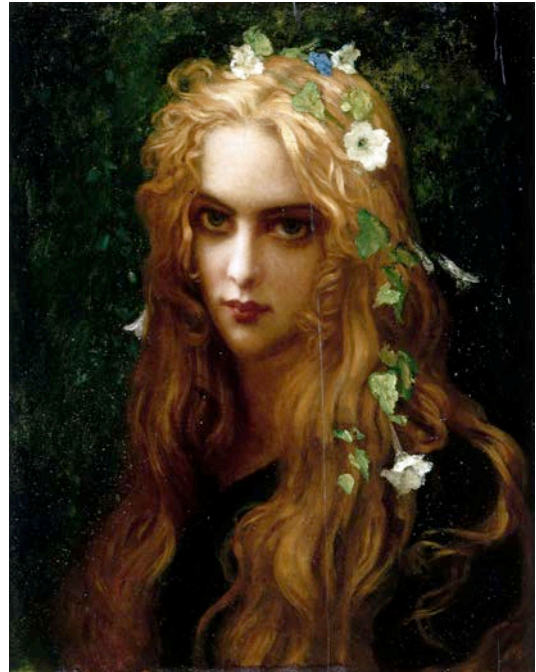
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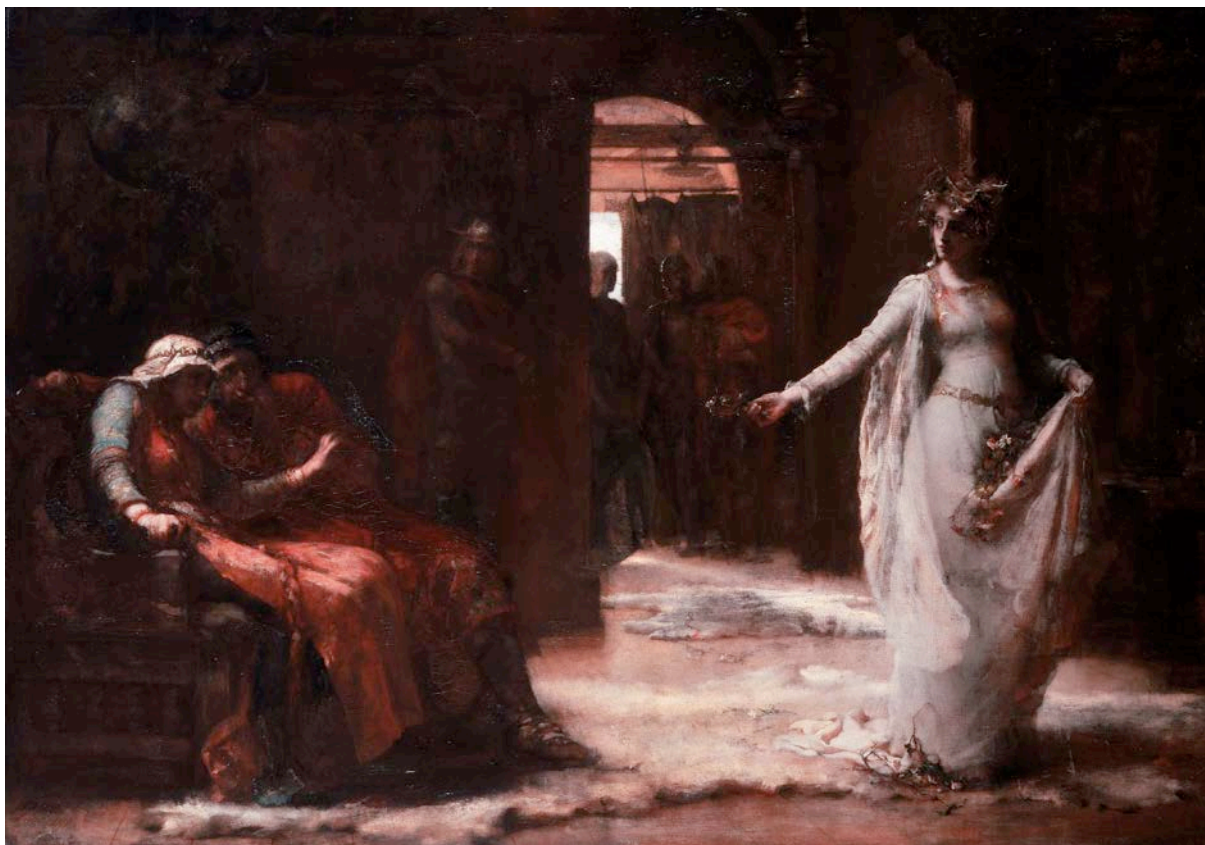OPHELIA IN THE VISION OF 19th-20th CENTURY ARTISTS**

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ALSACIANISM AND MUSEOGRAPHY.
A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF THE ART HISTORIAN HANS HAUG
(1890–1965)

Valentin TRIFESCU*

Abstract: *Hans Haug authored works of major importance for the history, identity and heritage of Alsace. His personality has been honored several times so far through exhibitions, studies and monographs. Nevertheless, the Alsatian art historian represents a subject worthy of scientific interest for Romanian researchers, as well; furthermore, his work and activity offers new interpretive perspectives on art historiography, museology, not to mention regional identities in Europe. By the way in which he valued Alsatian art and organized the museums in Strasbourg, Hans Haug developed a regionalist museographic conception, which was equally influenced by the national models provided by France and Germany; at the same time time, he distanced himself from the two by outlining a particular Alsatian perspective.*

Key words: *Hans Haug, Strasbourg, Alsace, regionalism, art, museography.*

Rezumat: *Hans Haug a lăsat în urmă o operă de o importanţă majoră pentru istoria, identitatea şi patrimoniul Alsaciei. Personalitatea sa a fost omagiată în mai multe rânduri până acum, atât prin expoziţii, cât şi prin studii şi monografii. Cu toate acestea, istoricul de artă alsacian reprezintă inclusiv pentru cercetătorii români un subiect demn de interes ştiinţific, opera şi activitatea sa oferind noi perspective interpretative asupra istoriografiei de artă, muzeologiei precum şi asupra identităţilor regionale din Europa. Prin modul în care a valorizat arta alsaciană, precum şi prin modul în care a organizat muzeele din Strasbourg, Hans Haug a dezvoltat o concepţie muzeografică regionalistă, care a fost influenţată deopotrivă de modelele naţionale oferite de Franţa şi de Germania, dar care, în acelaşi timp, s-a distanţat de cele două, prin conturarea unei perspective particulariste alsaciane.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Hans Haug, Strasbourg, Alsacia, regionalism, artă, muzeografie*

Born in 1890, in Niederbronn – an Alsatian town located today in the French department of Bas-Rhin –, Hans Haug (Fig. 1) lived all his life in Strasbourg. Only during his intellectual training did he leave the capital of Alsace, to study in various German and French university centers, as well as during the Second World War, when, due to the Nazi occupation, he took refuge "inside" France, because he became persona non grata for the German authorities (Meyer 2006, 267).

The young Hans Haug acquired an intellectual education in the bosom of the family first. His father, Hugo Haug (1865-1948), was a well-known personality at the time. In addition to his intense cultural activity, Hugo Haug held

the important position of secretary of the Strasbourg Chamber of Commerce (Ahnne 1976, 11). More than likely, Hans Haug got an early taste for the fine arts and for the museum from his father, because, like any respectable patrician, Hans Haug had sincere and intense concerns in the field of art and heritage. In this sense, Haug senior was part of the Society of Friends of the Arts in Strasbourg, to which he dedicated a monograph in French (Haug 1932), while Hugo Haug wrote mostly in German . Moreover, one of Hans' uncles was a well-known geographer, who became a professor at the Sorbonne, and another uncle, with the pseudonym Henri Albert (1869-1921), gave French culture the first translation from Nietzsche (Ahnne 1976, 11). We can easily observe the fact that all three men in whose environment Hans Haug grew up clearly showed Francophile attitudes, although they were of German ethnicity. The proof is

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the fact that the geographer uncle made a brilliant career in the Parisian university environment, and the other literary uncle signed with a French pseudonym and had an intense publishing activity in the journals Mercure de France and Journal des Débats (Ahnne 1976, 11).

From an early age, since 1907, Hans Haug has entered as a volunteer within the Museum of Decorative Arts in Strasbourg, which was headed, at the time, by the well-known professor Ernest Polaczek (1970-1939) (Ahnne 1976, 5). In a short time, under the influence of the patrimony hosted by the museum, Haug began to write his first art history studies, which were dedicated to Strasbourg goldsmiths and clocks (Beyer 1978, 5). His volunteer internship lasted until 1919, during which time he did, partially and intermittently, his university studies in history, art history and philology at the University of Strasbourg, at École du Louvre in Paris and at the University of Munich and at Hanover Polytechnic (Meyer 1995, 229). Between 1913 and 1914 in Strasbourg, he wrote his bachelor's thesis dedicated to Strasbourg architecture from the 18th century (Meyer 1995, 229).

Little is known about the period of Hans Haug's years of intellectual and professional formation. Researcher Anne-Doris Meyer believes that the training course in Munich, which lasted a semester, must have had a great influence on his later museographic conception. On that occasion, the young student frequently visited the museums of the Bavarian capital, and the Bavarian Museum particularly impressed him (mention should be made that it was a regional museum). This is probably where Hans Haug acquired his preference for a museography in which there is a perfect harmony between the setting and the work. Although the museum building was a modern pastiche of an Italian Renaissance building, the interiors were padded with old woodwork. We will find this practice faithfully applied, later, in Haug's mature museography, although this was an "old-fashioned" one (Meyer 2006, 268) for the respective era, with the mention that the Museum of Decorative Arts, the Museum of

History and the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame in Strasbourg were buildings from the Gothic, Renaissance or Baroque era, and not "neo" romantic or contemporary replicas. Thus, as noted by the researcher Anne-Doris Meyer, in his museography, Hans Haug found a harmonious balance between the German and the French conception of the arrangement of the interior spaces of museums; this occurred against the background in which the French museographic standard – in which a medieval building was adapted successfully meeting modern museographic requirements – was the Cluny Museum in Paris (Meyer 2009b, 34-35).

In 1920, Hans Haug was officially appointed museographer of the Museum of Art and the Museum of Decorative Arts in Strasbourg, given that, at that time, the art historian was 30 years old and had a rich activity as museographer and writer. His main mission, which will prove to be a unique opportunity, was to reorganize the collections of the two museums, which had been withdrawn from the picture rails and sheltered from the bombings during the First World War (Pijaudier 2009, 10). On that occasion, Hans Haug radically modified the old museographic conception applied to the museums in Strasbourg during the Prussian occupation by the famous professor Wilhelm von Bode (1845-1929), general director of the Royal Museums in Berlin. Thus, he rebalanced the collections of the Strasbourg museums with a true infusion of Alsatian, Rhenish and French art, which were enriched during von Bode's time only with works from the Flemish and Italian schools, in accordance with the fashion of the era (Ahnne 1976, 5; Pijaudier 2009, 10). His constant policy of acquisitions meant that, in 1938, the Strasbourg museums had no less than 120 Alsatian paintings and a significant number of French paintings from the 19th century and from the impressionist and post-impressionist periods (Ahnne 1976, 6).

The year 1920 was particularly important for the activity of Hans Haug and for the life of the museums in Strasbourg. Together with his good friend, colleague and collaborator, Adolphe Riff (1890-1971) – museographer at the Alsatian Museum in Strasbourg –, Hans

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Haug founded the History Museum in Strasbourg (Pijaudier 2009, 11).

On February 1, 1945, after the French administration was re-established in Alsace, Hans Haug was appointed director general of the Strasbourg Museums (Ahnne 1976, 10), a position he invented, thus controlling, with an iron hand, the activity of all museums from the city. Consequently, until his death, Hans Haug remained an active presence in the life of the Strasbourg museums; furthermore, even after his retirement (1963), he reserved the right to supervise the restoration works at the Rohan Palace – the headquarters of the museums of Art, Decorative Arts and Archeology – and also to write the catalogs of the goldsmith and ceramic sections of the Museum of Decorative Arts (Meyer 1995, 3). According to Anne-Doris Meyer, this "administrative putsch" had great effects on the museums in Strasbourg; under the leadership of Hans Haug, they acquired not only an extended independence from the interference of the local administration, but also a unitary vision regarding museography and the acquisitions policy, Haug treating the interests and specificities of each individual museum, with the same unbiased care and professionalism (Meyer 2006, 280).

However, the great achievement of Hans Haug can be considered the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame in Strasbourg (Fig. 3), a museum that was born on his initiative, in 1931 (Trifescu 2009, 116). Cécile Dupeux suggestively characterized Hans Haug's creation as "le musée d'un homme" (Dupeux 1999, 7-18). In this sense, as we argued on another occasion, in the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame "Hans Haug had the opportunity to put into practice his entire conception of Alsatian art, his writings on the history of art thus being fulfilled through a visual discourse, as well" (Trifescu 2009, 116). The museum had the mission of presenting the evolution of regional art in Alsace, starting from the year 1000 until the 17th century, when Strasbourg came under the rule of France (Haug 1959, 2). In other words, Hans Haug's intention was to create a museum in which regional Alsatian art could not be categorized as belonging to France, because it had been created before 1648, the year Strasbourg passed into French possession (Meyer 1995, 122).

Hans Haug wrote very little about his theoretical conception regarding the way museums are organized (Meyer 1995, 148). However, he managed to convey a powerful message through applied museography. In this sense, as we previously stated, "his entire activity as a museographer, as well as that of an art historian, was a true plea for the recovery of a local past, in an era of nationalisms and centralizing states. Haug wanted to gather in his museum all that Alsace gave to humanity; in this way, the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame became a total museum where the collections of painting, sculpture, architecture were grouped and presented, furniture, tapestry, goldsmithing and stained glass made on the territory of medieval and pre-modern Alsace" (Dupeux 2007, 249; Trifescu 2009, 416).

For Hans Haug, the absolute priority was the artistic creations made on the territory of Alsace. They acquired a symbolic and affective value for him, while artists and works of art from abroad did not interest him at all (Trifescu 2009, 416). "Haug never bought a representative creation from the Italian or Spanish school, which are usually so hunted by all the great museums; he only focused on the art that had a direct connection with Alsace" (Trifescu, 2009, 416).

Even in his museography, Hans Haug was obsessed with rendering the Alsatian specifics. Representative in this sense is the medieval Alsatian garden in the courtyard of the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame. Here the Alsatian art historian and museographer gave life to a medieval garden, which was not just any kind of medieval garden, but a strictly Alsatian one. So, for its realization, Hans Haug studied only the medieval authors who had connections with Alsace and only the paintings, in which gardens were represented, made on the territory of Alsace (Haug 1957, 3, 7-8). The result was an atmospheric space where the visitor could make visual contact with the former world of a medieval Alsace imagined by the museographer Hans Haug (Trifescu 2014, 121-129).

In short, Hans Haug's museography can be assessed as follows: "Le musée de l'Œuvre est consacré à l'espace rhénan, communauté d'esprit et de culture que l'histoire contemporaine ne peut altérer. Mais au sein de

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(1890-1965)

cet espace, l'Alsace conserve toujours son indépendance et se distingue par une atmosphère différente. Tout comme dans ce livre écrit à la fin de sa vie, Hans Haug construit un musée de L'art en Alsace, faisant naître la cohésion d'une origine commune et insistant sur la continuité d'une production artistique [...]" (Meyer 1995, 267).

Hans Haug had a strong and prolific personality, which manifested itself fully in three fields of activity: museography, art historiography and drawing. His scientific personality was doubled, in this way, by that of an occasional artist who signed his works with the pseudonym Balthasar (Trifescu 2009, 414). His works covered a surprising thematic variety, among which stood out studies of nudes and clothing, wine bottle labels or moralizing caricatures.

From his artistic creation, the landscapes deserve special attention, they are always "Alsatian", they describe an affective Heimat in which the birthplaces were drawn, on the background of which there rose the tower of a church, the cathedral of Strasbourg, a castle from the countryside or a village with its houses built in the specific Alsatian technique of half-timbering (Meyer 2009, 213-214).

It should be noted that Hans Haug imagined all his museography on paper before, making a lot of preparatory drawings. In this way, the artist came to serve and complement the scientist's great love: the Museum. On this occasion, we can trace what were the initial intentions, and what was the final museographic scenography, thus being able to account for the trajectory and changes that Hans Haug's museographic conception took. Consequently, we will have the surprise of discovering the "imaginary museum" of Hans Haug, which did not materialize every time. Suggestive, in this sense, are the drawings for room VII of the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame, where the famous statues from the portal of the South side and from the Southwest portal of the facade of the Strasbourg cathedral were exhibited (Fig. 3-5). Thus, we can analyze the initial museographic intention, represented by the drawings of Hans Haug in the pose of the artist with the pseudonym Balthasar, and the actual

museography – organized according to other spatial criteria – put into practice by the same man, this time, in his capacity of museographer. Thus, in the initial project carried out by Balthasar, it can be observed the preference for an arrangement based on subjective criteria, lacking respect for chronology, the Church and the Synagogue occupying a central place with other medieval works placed symmetrically around them. If at the beginning, Hans Haug imagined an atmospheric museography, in which the visitor was invited to participate in a scenography of great visual expressiveness invented according to symmetrical and aesthetic criteria, in the end, the museographer opted for a rational arrangement, in which the chronological and thematic criteria were respected.

As the researcher Anne-Doris Meyer noted, there is a very thin line between the artist and the museographer Hans Haug (Meyer 2006, 278). The expansion and redevelopment actions within the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame represented a real work site, both for the artist and for the museographer Hans Haug. Thus, the famous medieval garden, which was located in the courtyard of the Museum l'Œuvre Notre-Dame, was first imagined by the artist Balthasar (Meyer 2006, 278).

Hans Haug left behind a work of major importance for the history, identity and heritage of Alsace. His personality has been honored in various ways, most prominently through the volume In Memoriam from 1967 (CAAAH 1967) dedicated to him; the exhibition with his artistic works, from 1965-1966 (Ahnne 1975, 7); and the exhibition organized by the Strasbourg Museums, devoted to all his activitity, from October 9, 2009 to February 28, 2010. Hans Haug always remained a living presence in the cultural life of Strasbourg, arousing the interest of several Strasbourg researchers through his complex personality. In addition, I was surprised to find that, among the old antique dealers in Strasbourg, Hans Haug remained a professional landmark. At the beginning of 2009, in our discussions with one of the best-known antiquarians in Strasbourg, the octogenarian Jean Bastian, we learned that Haug had the reputation of an excellent

museum administrator, being (re)recognized for his talent for endowing the collections of the Strasbourg museums with works of great value, obtained at a reduced price. Moreover, even today, his writings on goldsmithing, ceramics or porcelain from Alsace are an indispensable bibliography (with the changes imposed by the passage of time, obviously) for art historians, antiquarians and museographers from Alsace.

Through the way in which he valued Alsatian art and organized the museums in Strasbourg, Hans Haug developed a regionalist museographic conception, which was equally influenced by the national models offered by France and Germany; at the same time, he distanced himself from the two, by outlining a particularistic Alsatian perspective. The meeting of two antinomic national models did not generate an open identity conflict, but, paradoxically, produced an intermediate identity, which stands under the sign of "both" or "bi". By equally drawing on two cultures and national identities, a "third identity" was born and it functioned in the "logic of the secondary" theorized by Virgil Nemoianu, developing a "weak" attitude, which was permanently in a more or less open tension with the "strong" national models. In this line of ideas, Hans Haug was a follower of the "third way", the regionalist way, which functioned alternatively – when it came to drawing on national identity models –, in the logic of "both" (both French and German) which, in a self-neutralizing translation, sometimes became "neither-nor" (neither French nor German).

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THE ABSENT MOVEMENT: NEO-CONSTRUCTIVISM IN EASTERN EUROPE

Andrei POPA*

Abstract: *The history of art in Eastern Europe after World War II is deeply intertwined with the political landscape of the region. Following the war, the imposition of Social Realism as the only accepted form of artistic expression, created a relatively uniform period across Eastern Europe. However, as time progressed, new styles, influenced by the local tradition or the West emerged, such as Surrealism, Art informel, Pop art, and various forms of conceptualist practice. Amidst these evolving artistic movements, a distinctive style known as neo-Constructivism emerged, which continues to spark ideological debates to this day. It has achievements in painting, design, sculpture or installation and it draws its origins from the earlier Russian avant-garde, but it was largely overlooked by Western critics and gradually marginalized by artists in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, it represents an element of originality within the region and reflects an optimistic period in its past.*

Keywords: *neo-Constructivism, Eastern Europe, cultural policies, geometry, abstraction*

Rezumat: *Istoria artei în Europa de Est de după cel de-al Doilea Război Mondial este strict legată de sfera politică, de diferite perioade alternative de închidere și dezgheț în cazul fiecărui regim politic. După o perioadă relativ uniformă cauzată de impunerea realismului socialist ca singura formă de exprimare acceptată, încet dar sigur, tradiția modernistă locală a fost reevaluată și s-au adoptat noi stiluri, în principal sub influența Occidentului: suprarealismul, art informel, pop-art sau diferite forme de practică conceptualistă. Dar a existat și un stil oarecum individual, care stârnește dezbateri ideologice chiar și astăzi, având realizări în pictură, design, sculptură sau instalație: neo-constructivismul. Avându-și originea în avangarda rusă, acest stil a fost în mare parte ignorat de către criticii occidentali și abandonat mai apoi de artiștii din Europa de Est, chiar dacă constituie un element de originalitate al acestei regiuni, o expresie a unei perioadei optimiste a trecutului său.*

Cuvinte cheie: *neo-constructivism, Europa de Est, politici culturale, geometrie, abstracționism*

The association of abstraction with the free art of the West and figuration with regimented socialist space was a prevalent perception for a significant period. However, this distinction becomes problematic when examining the political realities of both Western and socialist contexts. Among the countries in Eastern Europe, former Yugoslavia held an exceptional position due to its unique hybrid political regime. While it was a Communist country, it diverged from Stalinism and embraced the principle of self-management in all spheres of society, including culture. This distinctive political stance had implications for the art scene in Yugoslavia. Following the devastation caused by the war, the young federal republic faced significant challenges and had to seek assistance from countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to prevent famine and secure financial aid to rebuild its industries. Despite these difficulties, Yugoslavia experienced later remarkable economic growth, with industrial production alone increasing by 162% in 1956. This economic prosperity laid the foundation for positive developments in various aspects of human activity, including the arts (Kolešnik 2017).

Indeed, it was not a coincidence that Yugoslavia, particularly Zagreb, became a stronghold for neo-Constructivism, primarily in its abstract form. Zagreb, in a first phase, emerged as an international artistic center, largely due to the activities of the EXAT 51 group and significant exhibitions known as "New Tendencies". These exhibitions, which took place between 1961 and 1973 at the

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Contemporary Art Gallery, focused on experiments in visual perception. They eluded the distinction between Western and Eastern artists, becoming international in the true sense of the word, an expression of the fact that Zagreb had become one of the most interesting artistic centers of that time (Piotrowski 2009, 110). The capital city of Croatia, with its burgeoning artistic scene and its embrace of neo-Constructivism, presented a stark contrast to the gestural-Abstract Expressionism seen at the Venice Biennale. As the neo-Constructivist movement gained momentum in Zagreb, it attracted attention and support from local institutions, this concretising in numerous commissions, exhibitions, and the creation of public monuments. Among the artists who presented this form of expression in the visual arts, we mention the members of the previously constituted EXAT-51 group: Ivan Picelj (1924-2011), Aleksandar Srnec (1924–2010), Božidar Rašica (1912–1992), Vlado Kristl (1923–2004), or even the artist Julije Knifer (1924–2004), who's artistic practice revolved around the obsessive repetition of the meander motif for 40 years. We can exemplify the dedication to this geometry-tributary art through Ivan Picelj's work "CM-11-II" (Fig. 1). But whoever thinks that in the former Yugoslavia abstraction was easily accepted it can't be more wrong, the first major exhibition of the EXAT 51 group in 1953 caused a whole scandal, it was transferred to Belgrade in a short time, and only there did it receive positive feedback (Baudin, Milovac 2017, 178). The Zagreb-Belgrade rivalry was already present, it will give an *Art informel* touch to the latter, as a reaction to the preponderance of neo-Constructivism in Croatia. However, we can mention the abstract geometric artists Miodrag B. Protić (1922–2014) or Stojan Ćelić (1925–1992) in Serbia as well. In Slovenia, another republic of the federation, Avgust Černigoj (1898–1985) stands out with his prodigious activity, but he is mostly assimilated to the first Constructivist wave. Coming from an older generation, he even attended the Bauhaus school in Weimar, becoming a political emigrant who spends only the last years of his life in his native country.

Despite an atmosphere of relative freedom, the citizens of former Yugoslavia were still subject to close monitoring by the authorities.

This context influenced the artistic and creative endeavors of individuals, including the members of the EXAT 51. They (along with the architects Bernardo Bernardi, Zdravko Bregovac, Zvonimir Radić, Vjenceslav Richter, Vladimir Zarahović) were also very prolific in design, graphics, sculpture and film. Aleksandar Srnec contributed to the advancement of Zagreb Film's animation department, and Vlado Kristl is known more as a filmmaker, even abandoning his previous geometric abstract pursuits. After he obtained the fame with his film "Don Kihot" (Don Quixote) made at Zagreb Film, he realised another one in 1962 "The General and the Real Human Being" (produced by Viba Film, Ljublijana) an obvious allusion to Tito's regime, a film that brought him into troubles, all copies being destroyed. He thus continued his work in Germany, leaving behind his native country for good. Critically addressing political issues was not an option (Turković 2017, 175).

A second country where political control became more relaxed during this time was Poland. As long as they didn't directly address political themes, artists were pretty much free to do whatever they wanted. Here there was a notable presence of a Constructivist avant-garde movement, which had a strong national consciousness and provided a historical and ideological framework for artists to relate to. This Constructivist traditionis is represented mainly by the groups: "Blok", "Praesens" or "a.r." and in Poland, neo-Constructivism played a role of opposition to Socialist Realism, being an organic continuation of the interwar developments. Here there is a prestigious museum that cultivates this art, Muzeum Sztuki (the Museum of Arts) in Łódź (Fig. 2) and the border separating the various Modernist factions is surprisingly well defined (Piotrowski 2009, 112). Poland caused the indignation of Soviet critics by participating in the exhibition of the brotherly countries in Moscow (in 1958) where it showed abstract art – unlike Romania which conformed to the attempt to renew Socialist Realism (Cărăbaș 2018, 565). Soon after, the Polish Communist Party issued a funny directive allowing no more than 15% abstraction (Piotrowski 2009, 70). Obviously this was not respected. Katarzyna Kobro (1898–1951) was an important member of the Polish avant-garde,

with an influence that remained active long after her death. She had Russian origins (only in 1922 moving to Poland) being familiar with the events in her native country. Another avant-garde artist was Henrich Stażewski (1894–1988), but he had a consistent activity even after the war. Many other artists continued their geometric abstract concerns from the interwar period. From the neo-Constructivist generation we mention: Magdalena Więcek (1924–2008) in sculpture, Zbigniew Gostomski (1932–2017), Ryszard Winiarski (1936–2006), Kajetan Sosnowski (1913–1987), Edward Krasiński (1925–2004), Adam Marczyński (1908–1985) in painting, but also Stefan Gierowski (1925–2022) with his interests into the luminescence of color. The trend was also affirmed by the first Biennale of Spatial Form in Elbląg in 1965 (Fowkes 2020, 56). We should also mention the "Wroclaw 70" symposium (who celebrated two decades since the incorporation of the Western territories) where Henrich Stażewski created a large scale light installation.

One of the pioneers of abstract art in the world was a Czech, František Kupka (1871–1957), but he was active in Paris and is well integrated into the Western art canon. He created the first abstract works in 1910–1911 (Muller, Elgar 1972, 123). In Czechoslovakia, a great interest appears in the '60s for neo-Constructivism, within the relaxation of cultural policies. One of the first exponents of this tendancy was Alojz Klimo (1922–2000), who reached the abstract form after the stylizations of urban environment. The iconoclastic group "Křižovatka" (Crossroads) in Prague was created by Jiři Kolár (1914–2002), Běla Kolářová (1923–2010), Vladislav Mirvald (1921–2003) (Fig. 3), Karel Malich (1924–2019) with a special energetic sensitivity and Zděnek Sýkora (1920–2011), who has been using geometric abstract structures since the '50s. Other artists active in Prague who addressed this trend were Jan Kubiček (1927–2013), distinguishing by his precise pictorial work, dominated by the absence of literary content, a sense of order and a striking visual message, Radek Kratina (1924–1999), Hugo Dermatini (1931–2010), Václav Boštík (1913–2005), Stanislav Kolibal (b. 1925), etc. The latter two formed the group "UB 12" in 1964. The "Concretist Club", founded in Jihlava in 1967 by the theoretician

Arsén Pohibný, was an important artistic group that brought together Czech and Slovak artists. The club was driven by a shared interest in exploring more radical means of artistic expression that reflected the modern world and technological progress (Fowkes 2020, 57). Bratislava based artists interested in neo-Constructivism are Miloš Urbásek (1932–1988) and Milan Dobeš (b. 1929), who has a museum in the Slovak capital dedicated to his work. He made numerous Op-art or kinetic objects in the '60s and participated in many important international exhibitions. Other Slovak artists who addressed this trend are Milan Grygar (b. 1926) originally from Zvolen, and in Košice there we find Mária Bartuszová (1936-1996) (member of the Concretist Club) and Juraj Bartusz (b. 1933). One of the speakers of the previously mentioned "New Tendencies" exhibitions (in 1969) was Jiři Valoch (b. 1946), a prodigious artist, critic and art historian, who played a significant role in putting Brno on the map of contemporary art. He organized "Computer Graphic" one of the earliest international computer art events in the House of Arts in Brno in February 1968 (Fowkes 2020, 62). Perhaps is not a coincidence that Woody Vasulka (1937-2019), one of the pioneers of this new medium, was born in the main city of Moravia, but he emigrated to New York in 1965. There he met Steina, his future wife, and both are renowned artists, instrumental in exploring the artistic possibilities of computers and electronic media. They approached the computer as a tool for artistic creation in a manner similar to painters engaging with their palette, utilizing it to create virtual and immersive environments (Rush 2001, 90). Also from Brno there was Dalibor Chatrný (1925–2012) with a neo-Constructivist period, and in this city, as well as in Karlovy Vary, the exhibition "New Sensibility" (Nová Citlivost) took place in 1968, a real turning point in the direction of the freedom of expression, and things seemed to be moving towards a socialism "with a human face". But "normalization" came from another direction, in August 1968, a coalition led by the USSR (of which only Romania was absent, among the member of the Warsaw Pact) ended what was called the "Prague Spring" forcing the Czechoslovak avant-garde in the underground and cutting short the artists' appetite for

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optimistic, rational or geometric experiments. It was the end of hopes for many intellectuals, an universal model of culture was still not possible in this context (Ševčik 2006, 185). Thus the re-politicization of art became inevitable.

In Hungary, the tragic Revolution of 1956 and the subsequent period of political repression had a significant impact on the cultural development. However, with the introduction of the "goulash Communism" under János Kádár, there was a gradual relaxation of control and some elements of consumerism were introduced on a communist background, all fueled by credits, production licenses and Western investments (Sugár 2006, 212). But until then, let's see how things are going with the local art scene. Big names of worlds Constructivist art originate in this country, Lászlo Moholy-Nagy (1909–1946) was among the most influential Bauhaus teachers, and Victor Vasarely (1906–1997) is known around the globe for his Op-art original practitice, an art that conveys the impression of movement to the viewer. Nontheless, Vera Molnár (b. 1924) began her work with geometric-abstract paintings, later being another well known pioneer of computer art. However, they all stand under the sign of emigration, leaving their native country for the West. A great figure of the Hungarian avant-garde in the interwar period was Lajos Kassák (1887–1967), an artist still active in Hungary after the war. He had influenced János Fajó (1937–2018) (Fig. 4), among others. Another still active exponent of the interwar avant-garde was Sándor Bortnik (1893–1976), a favorite of the regime for his political views. In Budapest, the artists of the Zugló circle (a district of Budapest), namely István Nádler (b. 1938), Imre Bak (1939–2022), Pál Deim (1932–2016) and Tamás Hencze (1938–2018), all had neo-Constructivist beliefs. But there was also Dezső Korniss (1908–1984) or György Jovánovics (b. 1939), with a certain period dominated by this tendancy. A large exhibition of the artist Victor Vasarely was organized by the regime in 1969 at the Kunsthalle, to show its own allegedlly progressive character (Fowkes 2020, 59). The artist in question was originally from Pécs, where an interesting neo-Constructivist movement was formed, represented by the group "Movement '70" (Mozgás '70), dominated by Ferenc Martyn

(1899–1986), the censorship being somehow more relaxed in the province. Together with the gradual liberalization of the regime there was a proliferation of diverse artistic expressions and movements. Artists began to explore various forms of practice, such as happenings, performances, conceptual art, object art, and arte povera, among others, geometric abstraction being just one of many, and artists migrating quite often between otherwise antagonistic tendencies. This type of syncretism of creation is attesting the phenomenon of dominance by the West in the art of Eastern Europe, here it became more important for artists to distance themselves from forms sponsored by the political regime rather than affiliating themselves with a specific movement or style. (Piotrowski 2009, 127).

Piotr Piotrowski, in his book "In the Shadow of Yalta, Art and Avant-garde in Eastern Europe, 1945–1989" makes an interesting correlation between Khrushchev's secret speech criticizing Stalin's cult of personality and the neo-Constructivist direction in art (Piotrowski 2009, 144). In some countries this speech was widely read (the case of Poland), in others (such as Romania) it was little distributed, and in East Germany and Bulgaria, not at all. Therefore, in these countries (especially Bulgaria) this movement could not develop, as well as the political thaw that was supposed to make it possible did not taked place, or was insignificant. In East Germany, however, there were Constructivist artists who continued the interwar tradition, for example: Hermann Glöckner (1889–1987), Manfred Luther (1925–2004), Karl-Heinz Adler (1927–2018) or Horst Bartnig (b. 1936) but they had to confront the official hostility towards abstract art. The regime never came to terms with this major direction in art, and the artists' works were only widely known after 1990 (Fowkes 2020, 60-61).

Neo-Constructivism, had its impact on the cultural policies of Romania during a short period of thaw. While other Eastern European countries embraced the movement earlier, Romania experienced a slight delay in its adoption. This delay, however, brought about some elements of originality to Romanian artistic creation, particularly the integration of conceptual concerns into the local neo-

Constructivist phenomenon. One distinct aspect of Romanian creation was its attention to nature. This focus on environment and the incorporation of natural elements into artistic activity added a unique dimension to the movement. Additionally, Romanian artists demonstrated a willingness to experiment, pushing the boundaries of artistic expression beyond the confines of neo-Constructivism. Initially, the movement was primarily concentrated in the city of Timişoara. This can be attributed to the city's proximity to the former Yugoslavia and its stronger connection to Western influences. The "1+1+1" group was formed here in 1966 by Roman Cotoşman (1935–2006), Ştefan Bertalan (1930–2014) and Constantin Flondor (b. 1936). It is interesting to note that the first exhibition of the Timişoara avant-garde in Bucharest took place in 1968 at the Kalinderu Hall, where together with those previously mentioned (Bertalan, Cotoşman and Flondor) there had also exhibited Diet Sayler (b. 1939) and Molnár Zoltán (b. 1937). (Fig. 5) The "1+1+1" group participated in 1968 at the Triennale in Milan, in the same year it was present at the "Konstruktivismens Arv" exhibition in Oslo and in 1969 at the Constructivist Art Biennale in Nürnberg, where it obtained an important prize, confirmations of the originality of the Timişoara School (Flondor-Palade 2020). After Roman Cotoşman left for the West, the other two members get close to Doru Tulcan (b. 1943) and others, forming a new group, "Sigma" in 1969, a major milestone in the development of neo-Constructivist art in this country. In Romania, artists that also followed a geometric abstract direction in the Communist era were: Hans Mattis-Teutsch (1884–1960), Max Hermann Maxy (1895–1971), Gheorghe Berindei (1921–1999), Stefan Sevastre (1926–2017), Liviu Stoicoviciu (b. 1942), Florin Maxa (1943–2018) and others (Cârneci 2013, 76-77). Liviu Stoicoviciu is a notable figure in the art landscape of Bucharest. He is recognized for a distinct approach to artistic creation, characterized by strong emphasis on radical abstract geometry throughout his entire career. Stoicoviciu's work showcases his dedication to exploring geometric forms and their relationships, often relying more on the intricate beauty of numbers rather than the expressive qualities of color (Dan, Demetrescu

2021, 13). Another artist that Erwin Kessler considers "the main Romanian exponent of art driven by innovation and oriented towards processuality" (Kessler 2016, 18) is Ştefan Bertalan (Fig. 6). As the older and driving force behind "Sigma", he played a significant role in shaping the group's artistic direction and its impact on the local art scene. Bertalan was also associated with the Architecture Department in Timişoara. Here he promoted participatory education and forward thinking, going from the deepening of geometrical studies to utopian urbanism projects (Flondor-Palade 2020). The idea of a holistic dimension in Ştefan Bertalan's activity is an interesting one, overall, the integration of various elements and perspectives in his work, as well as an interest in exploring the relationship between matter and spirit, may contribute to the originality and distinctiveness of his creations (Pintilie 2015, 5).

After his exclusion from Timişoara (in 1981), Ştefan Bertalan moved for about 3 years to Sibiu, the city of his wife (who was a curator at the Brukenthal National Museum), awaiting emigration to West Germany. He considered Sibiu to be an acultural city, which is not too far from truth, especially if we think about that period. The political regime had taken a neo-Stalinist turn for several years now, and in this particular case, two employees of the State Security were permanently standing in front of the house where Bertalan lived, this is how the regime knew to reward the neo-Constructivist artists for their contribution. It appears that Ştefan Bertalan's creative process also took a more introspective and internalized direction, seeking refuge in the basement, and as we learn from Erwin Kessler, he went as far as accepting the vegetal status wholeheartedly (Kessler 2009, 30). He thus literally portrayed himself in a potato. This stage, neo-Expressionist, is considered by the previously mentioned critic to be one of great strength, it is as if an artist must necessarily suffer in order to be interesting. We also note here a significant shift in the cultural policies of the Nicolae Ceauşescu's regime. They are becoming now more oppressive, with increased censorship, surveillance, and repression of dissent. The cult of personality around Ceauşescu grew stronger, with his image and ideology permeating all aspects of Romanian society. Here is what had been a

young hope of international politics, Nicolae Ceauşescu ended up being identified with Stalin, the fall of his regime being one the most resounding among the countries of the East. Previously, is hard to believe that he inaugurated a period of cultural relaxation and was a favorite of international politics, after refusing to invade Czechoslovakia.

In the former USSR the neo-Constructivism hardly developed at all, paradoxically, the vast influence of the Russian avant-garde had a more significant impact on Western art. Due to the obliteration of Constructivism from the Russian consciousness, the general public, as well as the artists, were not even aware of their own cultural heritage. They learned about it thanks to the Western influence, and the leaking of information during periods of relative political relaxation (Čufer 2006, 374). The original Constructivist style that emerged in Russia during the early 20th century (unlike its post-war version) was characterized by a revolutionary spirit and a utopian vision. In the tumult of those revolutionary years, the question of the social utility of art was insistently raised. This was not necessarily something new, long debates whether or not art should fulfill a social utility had existed before (Bourdieu 2012, 111). The principles of high art were paralleled by too much spiritualism in the work of Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944). Pure abstraction was also accompanied by a certain mysticism in the work of Kazimir Malevich (1879–1935), the Constructivism of the brothers Antoine Pevsner (1884–1962) and Naum Gabo (1890–1977) was equally pure, but more materialistic in extraction, while at the end of social involvement we have Vladimir Tatlin (1885–1953) or Alexander Rodchenko (1891–1956), they were evolving towards "productivism" fulfilling the Lenin's demand for the transformation of society, and becoming a kind of designers (Piper 1991, 406). There is a notable difference between the original Constructivist art that emerged before and during the Russian Revolution and the later manifestations of the movement. The shift in social involvement and the change in ethos are distinguishing features. In contrast, the neo-Constructivism took on a different character. It shifted towards a more introspective and intellectual reflection on the nature of art itself. Artists of the neo-Constructivist movement focused on exploring formalistic aspects, geometric abstraction, and the autonomy of art. The exception is perhaps the case of the former Yugoslavia (which also temporally precedes this style from the other Eastern countries), where the artists nevertheless got involved in the affairs of the society, in order to define a visual identity of the young socialist federal republic. The rivalry between Stalin and Trotsky also stands out, the latter being a political patron of Constructivism. At the time of its exclusion (in 1927), the total subjection of art to party interests had already been achieved, and this led to the building of Socialist Realism. If the emergence of this style – still a modernist one-meant the replacement of Constructivism (and its export through emigration), neo-Constructivism was like an upside-down evolution, being possible only after the death of Stalin. The re-emergence of abstract and geometric art in the Eastern space, ended the authoritarian reign of Socialist Realism. Numerous artists from the former USSR emigrated to the West, taking their ideas with them. Kandinsky's work at the Bauhaus is well known (also, other Russian artists gave lectures at the Bauhaus), El Lissitzky went to Germany, Naum Gabo founded a school in England, Antoine Pevsner settled in Paris, the famous Dutch De Stijl group should also be mentioned here, which took up the ideas of this movement with great interest (Elger, Holzwarth 2021, 236). Some of the representants of this art remained in the USSR, but they abandoned abstraction, migrating either back to figurative painting or straight to product design. Unlike the impressive legacy left behind by the Russian Constructivism, the rediscovery of the movement happened more in the other Communist countries (and certainly in the West or Latin America), but with less significant achievements, we have to admit. On the territory of the USSR, we can hardly find now an artist like Francisco Infante (b. 1943), with neo-Constructivist concerns dominated by the spiral. The influence of Nordic geometric trends was also felt in the occupied Baltic countries, one example being the Estonian Leonhard Lapin (1947–2022) with his geometric abstract phase.

In the turbulent history of the original Constructivist style, the main future characteristics must also be sought, such as the

dominance of geometry, austerity, dynamism and the elimination of the anecdotal from art. The approach was similar to that of an architect or engineer (we recognize here the myth of the engineer from the former Communist countries), the artists were more interested in the physical properties of the materials used: glass, iron and steel represented the future in the emerging industrial age (Gompertz 2014, 166). A common theme that we find in all periods is that of rapid industrialization, with the relocation of large populations into the urban environment, this also causing a housing crisis, and necessitating the work of architects and the synthesis of several artistic disciplines. A red line connects the rapid industrialization of Russian society to the Törnen colony in Weimar, the massive presence of architects in the EXAT 51 group, or even to the functioning of Ștefan Bertalan as a professor at the Faculty of Architecture in Timișoara. The common denominator is the fact that it was built abundantly, the homes of the numerous proletarians had to be coherently aestheticized; but there was also the need to reduce costs through systemartization and reasonable consumption. The relationship with the industry was not only one-way, in many countries we have acquisition of works by factories, the sponsorship of art exhibitions (the case of the exhibitions organized at IPARTERV in Budapest is eloquent), something that gave an important impetus to the neo-Constructivist movement. In all periods we find optimism as a defining characteristic, the trust in a better society, something also made possible thanks to the technological advance, materialising in front of man's eyes. Another major characteristic of all time Constructivism is working together, the favoring of collectivism over the resources of individuality, assiduously promoted in the Western part of the Iron Curtain. From here we easily reach the philosophical side of this description, Constructivism is dominated by a materialist conception (similar to that promoted by the socialist regimes), against existentialism with its pessimism, and against the individuality. This competing conception integrated chance and spontaneity into the creative process, opposing the strict mathematical and geometrical rigor. The evolution and eventual decline of neo-

Constructivism is only a part of art history. Ultimately, the balance between rigor and chance, structure and spontaneity, varies from artist to artist and can be seen in different forms throughout the art world.

Another theme we are all aware of is that of emigration. We observe it recurrently in the artistic field, there's no exception. This brain drain impoverished a region, less populated and developed, and does the same even today, the *modus operandi,* from the other perspective, is to accept only those values that are coming "insight" the Western market system (Čufer 2006, 375). We cannot suspect that neo-Constructivism was an exclusive art movement, because there are several important representatives from different countries, members of national minorities (see the Romania's case for example). Now we have to adress the presence of women within this movement. They did not stand out much after the Second World War, we only find some representatives in Czechoslovakia such as Běla Kolářová, Mária Bartuszová or Magdalena Więcek in Poland. This is in contrast to prior Russian Constructivism, where women were numerous and even held positions of power (such as Liubov Popova, Alexandra Elekster or Varvara Stepanova), and different also to the Bauhaus school, which accepted an approximately equal number of women among its students. But even there, women presence is slowly declining in proportion, with the increasingly pronounced character of the school towards architecture, and the radicalization of society, women taking refuge in the textile workshop (Droste 2019, 162). The evolutions that characterize neo-Constructivism in terms of gender distribution do not differ much from what was happening worldwide at that time, we have to take into consideration that we are only reffering to a region with a pronounced traditionalist character.

The political implicatios of this movement always gave rise to discussion, neo-Constructivism was met with suspicion because it was seen as convenient for the system in place, and for aligning itself with the prevailing political ideology or power structures in a certain period. This style will always stand next to Socialist Realism, but its in an opposite position to it, representing a

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contrasting or divergent approach to art. The pursuit for freedom is just a fundamental and inherent human trait, in this certain period perhaps the different regimes may have realized the effectiveness of discreet surveillance compared to overt or blatant terror. The discussion surrounding a perceived liberalization in a particular context, potentially referring to a shift towards economic cooperation with a capitalist bloc, is indeed a justified one. Once the fruits of this collaboration proved poisoned, the benefits of liberalization were withdrawn, and the conditions were suddenly no longer suitable for abstract art. Communism itself collapsed later, Vasile Boari finding anthropological mistakes in the attempt of the former regimes to create the new man, an artificial creation, imagined against human nature (Boari 2011, 12).

A general features of Eastern European creation is the emergence of *Art informel* (also known as Abstract Expressionism), and then Pop art made a significant impact in many Eastern countries. Both styles can be seen as a response to the influence of American culture, and the promotion of these art forms was achieved through cultural policies. During the Cold War era, the United States sought to demonstrate the perceived superiority of its lifestyle and its cultural values, and art played a significant role in this narrative. Pop art celebrated consumer culture and mass media imagery, but has come to speak more about glut and complacency (Kozloff 2008, 143). In the conditions of socialist economies, this overlap seems rather hilarious to us, only in the former Yugoslavia and in Hungary do we see incipient forms of a market economy, more trustworthy is the desire of various communist regimes for Western credit and production licenses. The Bitzan-Șetran artistic couple (also a Romanian export brand at the time) produced large-scale paintings of the dictator and his wife in a pop art manner (Calciu *et al.* 2019, 176), a thing that shows us how art can become the subject of manipulation in various ways. Here we see the very absent Romanian consumerism, under the well-known conditions of the rationed food program, which trully meant starving the population. Perhaps not enough has been written about the element of naivety in a

region that has taken on styles and currents that don't fit.

Already with the latest achievements of the avant-garde, we are entering postmodernity, and we cannot fail to notice a new politicization of art in Eastern Europe. Neo-Constructivism was replaced (sometimes in the work of the same artist) by performance or happening, by Pop or neo-Expressionist art, or in the case of Romania by an anti-Modern style, not approached by anyone else, the neo-Byzantinism. More than a repulsion in the face of state atheism, the respective style was in his turn instrumentalized by the regime, being convenient because it brought nationalist clichés, through the autochthonist specificity proclaimed by the artists. The return to the roots has also manifested in the Russian space, due to the lack of ideas generated by the obvious failure of the regime (Koldobskaya 2006, 275), in Poland the influence of the church was manifested by sponsoring moralizing conceptualist trends (Piotrowski 2009, 141), but nowhere did this neo-Bizantine style had developed, the religion in Romania actually replaced the Communist system, once it collapsed (Dan 2006, 264). Maybe this is the key element of originality, but it looks more like a confusion in the face of various human activities.

Serge Guilbaut proves to us that the Universalism claimed by Western civilization is only a short hand for domination, an instrument of cultural politics with an obvious imperialist character (Guilbaut 1997, 21). Particularly important was the need to influence the opinions of intellectual artists from the Eastern space, as well as John D. Rockefeller's prior founding of MoMA (Museum of Modern Art), a private institution until today, following the interests of American foreign policy, and always supporting the myth of successful entrepreneurship (Fehr 2006, 468). Thus we can see how Tadeusz Kantor was touched by Abstract Expressionism during his visit to Paris, and then received an exhibition in 1961 at MoMA, becoming an indisputable personality of the history of arts (Eva Cockroft 2008, 153). We can also see in a more correct light the tours that were made in Eastern Europe (and not only) with exhibitions that presented the achievements of American art

(for example the two major exhibitions in Bucharest from 1969 and 1970) that precipitated the appearance of some imported cultural forms (Radu 2016, 62). After the authoritarian reign of Abstract Expressionism - otherwise sanctioned even by the American public and artists -there comes the Pop style, but also him, as well as its successors: Fluxus, minimalism, conceptualism, etc. they were all supported in the same way, and massively exported abroad as part of the cultural front during the Cold War. After all, we have the same foundations established by the secret service, generously financed from the state budget, or by private philanthropists more or less interested in spreading some ideas. (Čufer 2006, 367-368) This is what American cultural policies are all about, art goes along with political interests, it means prestige and influence, so the powerful create their own history, this leading to the exclusion or marginalization of artistic creations that do not align with those interests or do not fit into the established narratives.

Wasily Kandinsky (and many others more) emigrated in the U.S.A. due to the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe, now Michigan's congressman George Dondero is attacking him for the blame of bringing upon the United States the virus of Communism hiden in modern art. Another former student and later a teacher at the Bauhaus, who ended up in the USA was Joseph Albers (1888–1976). Among the various reactions to his activity we note that of Rosalind Krauss, a response to his "Homage to the square" series. The famous art critic and theoretician deeply disavowed neo-Constructivist art, considering it antidevelopment, resistant to change, antinarrative, hostile to literature, too much art autonomist and downright schizophrenic. In the same essay "The Grid" she accused abstract geometric art of materialism, and trying to wage a battle with God (Krauss 1978, 10-12). In a dishonest tradition of blending facts and fantasy, this downright mean-spirited demonstration refuses to take into account the ever-increasing depth and advance of geometry, reducing everything to a banal grid. In reality, the artist who works with mathematical forms has as many creative means at his disposal as the gestural artist, who integrates chance into his creation. Not only this, fractal geometry teaches us now that

even the most irregular shapes have their own geometry, that everything in nature indeed has a logic, since geometric patterns were discovered in the case of chaos too. Its the revenge of geometry, but the opinion of the critic Rosalind Krauss, widely spread, is testimony about how to outfashion a style, and we can't help but to remember here the words of the critic Paul Westheim from 1923: "three days in Weimar and you've seen enough squares for a lifetime" copiously dismantled by history. Much more weighted in argumentation, Rudi Supek tells us in his essay "Confusion regarding Abstract Art" that this form of art represens an end result of the iconoclastic movement, but the procesess of purification in painting end up gradually in the interwar period, since then geometric abstraction hasn't produced much novelty. More to say, he also finds significant contradiction between highlighting the emotionality on one hand and rationality, mathematical method on the other (Supek 2017, 50-52).

The post-war period witnessed a resurgence of geometric abstraction in various centers of the art world, both in the West and in Eastern Europe. Piotr Piotrovski notes that the utopian, revolutionary ideas of Russian Constructivism were abandoned only in post-war Eastern Europe, while in the West paradoxically they were able to continue freely (Piotrowski 2009, 141). While the Western artists like Frank Stella, Kenneth Noland or Elsworth Kelly are superstars of contemporary art (better known as "hard-edge" painters), their Eastern European counterparts, less fortunate, remained inconspicuous until today, even if their artistic achievements are exceptional. Another distinction between Western and Eastern art creation is the price of works of the same style, this one being rather low in the East, but far higher on the other side of the former Berlin wall, itself sold by piece in the US's supermarkets.

The abandonment of neo-Constructivism in Eastern Europe has a lot to do with the Prague invasion, but even more with political factors and the gradual ending of openings of the former Communist countries. The lack of massive means of promoting this art is another important factor to consider. While neo-Constructivism emerged as a left-wing art

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movement, it did not always align with the political ambitions of the ruling authorities in the Eastern bloc. In its early stages, this style was seen as a potentially progressive and innovative one, that could serve the interests of the socialist state. Its emphasis on geometric abstraction, rationality, and social utility seemed to align with the principles of collectivism and modernity propagated by Communist regimes. As a result, some authorities initially tolerated or even promoted neo-Constructivism as a state-sanctioned art form. However, as the movement evolved and artists delved deeper into its explorations, it began to diverge from the prescribed aesthetic and ideological frameworks of the ruling regimes. The movement's radical and experimental nature, coupled with its exploration of non-representational forms and rejection of Socialist Realism, often made it too politically ambiguous or ideologically independent for the authorities. As a result, it faced increasing suppression from the state, particularly as political openings diminished and cultural policies became more rigid.

I tried to provide here a concise summary of the main characteristics of the movement, within the limitations of this format, its important artists, I discerned the relationship with neo-Constructivism's illustrious parents, what exactly it resembles and what distinguishes it from the Russian original style, but also which were the competiors in the era and what was the situation of cultural policies of the USA, at least during the Cold War. Another inevitable conclusion of this writing is that the practice of instrumentalization of artistic creation by various political regimes is always present, in proportion to how much is invested in cultural actions, and its unmasking is just a tendency of the last decades. This approach is also an ethical one (with the shared need of belonging), aimed at bringing a contribution to the fame of some artists that had to navigate the challenges and complexities of the Cold War era, caught between the opposing forces of the two blocs, but nevertheless artists with particularly interesting creations. They defined an era, one of that times when the dichotomy beetween abstraction and figuration was a big deal.

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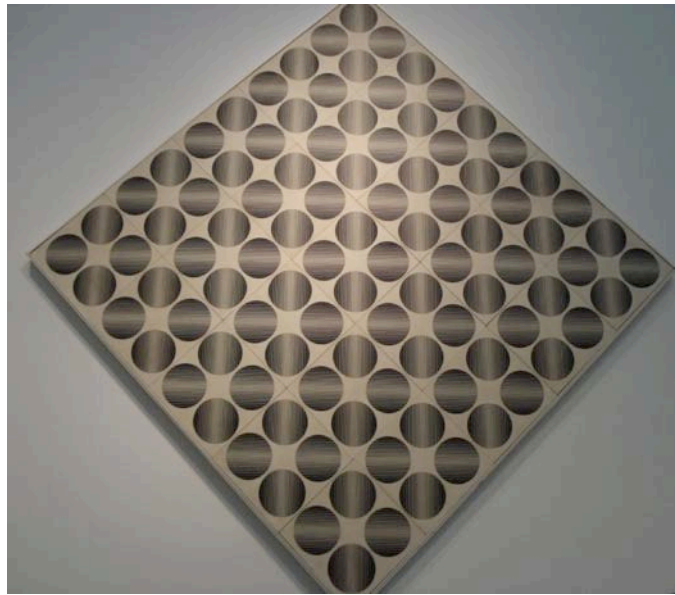
Fig. 1. Ivan Picelj, *CM-11-II*, 1964/66.
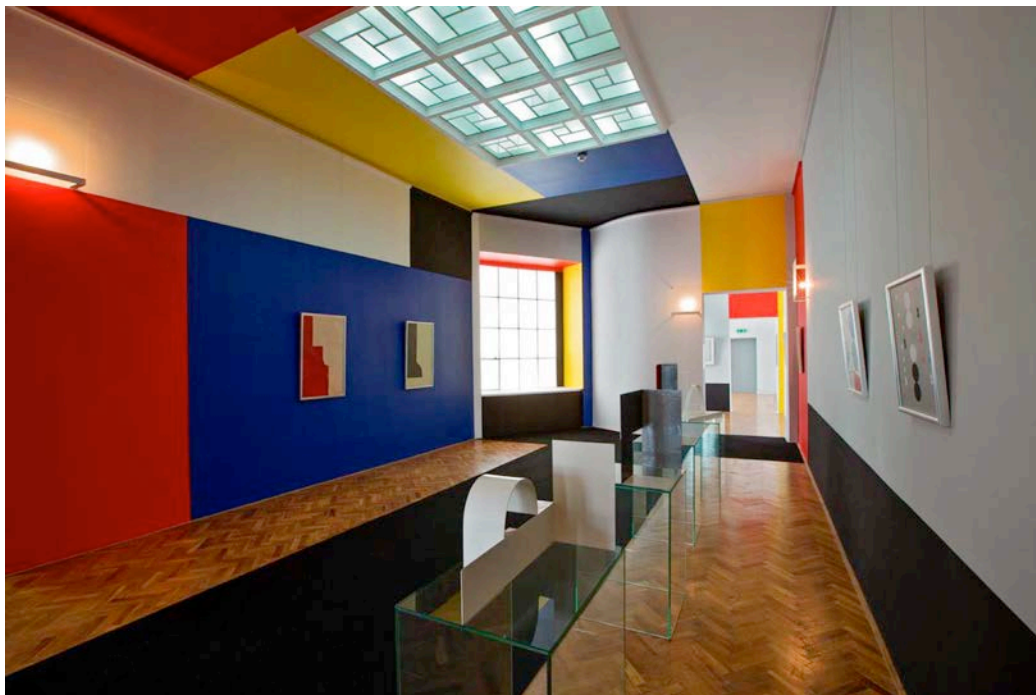Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb (photo: Pumovici)

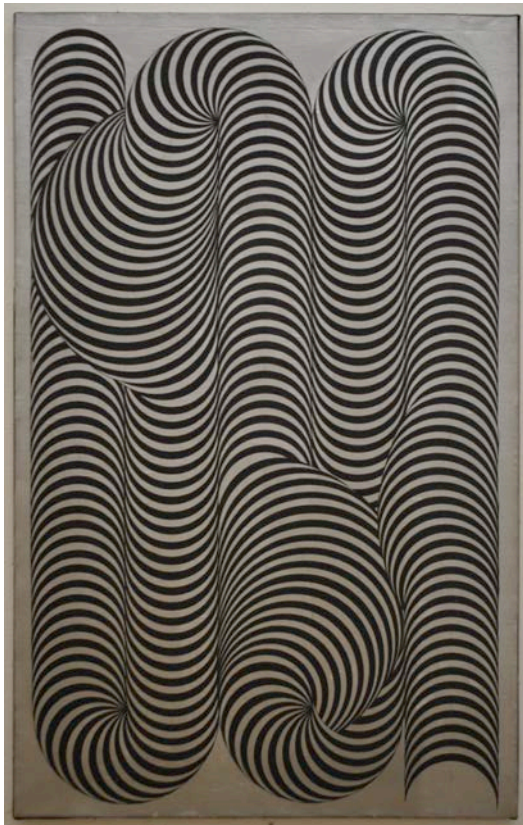Fig. 2. Museum of Arts Łódź (photo: Ms w Łodzi)

Fig. 3. Vladislav Mirvald, *Untitled*, 1967.
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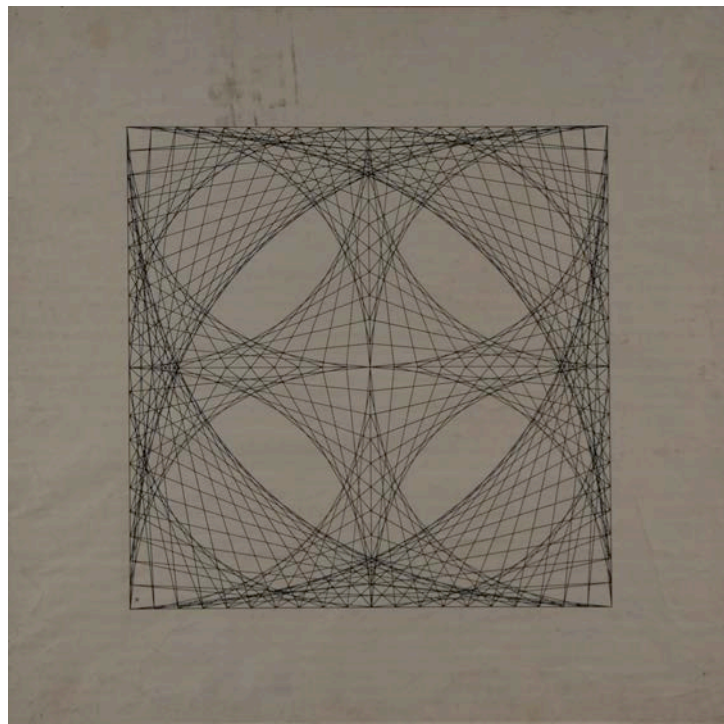Fig. 4. János Fajó, *Ellipse*, 1980
(photo: János Fajó)

Fig. 5. Ştefan Bertalan, *Bucurii şi cunoştinţe energetice* , 1973/75.
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RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE ART COLLECTIONS
OF THE BRUKENTHAL NATIONAL MUSEUM (JULY 2022 – JULY 2023)

Iulia MESEA*

Co-authors /Administrators of the collections:
Adrian LUCA, 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 continues its policy of enriching its collections. Since the last report, in July 2022, up to now, July 2023, a number of eighteen works (painting, graphics, and decorative art) entered the collections of the museum. Part of them is donations from contemporary artists who organized solo shows in the museum, others are donations of the artists' successors and some are made by other donors. The donors of this year are the artists Sergiu Chihaia, Ştefan Orth, Christian Eugene Paraschiv, and Constantin Pele, and Mrs. Eibenschütz Hannelore, Professor Sabin Adrian Luca, Shirin Malikova, Director National Carpet Museum of Azerbaijan, and Mrs. Elke Scheiner represented by Irmagart Sedler.*

Keywords: *Brukenthal National Museum, donations, donners, art collections, contemporary art exhibitions*

Rezumat: *Probând acelaşi interes în dezvoltarea patrimoniului pe care îl administrează, conservă, cercetează şi valorifică expoziţional, Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal şi-a îmbogăţit colecţiile de pictură, grafică şi artă decorative cu 18 piese, în ultimul an. Urmând tradiţia ultimilor ani, o parte a pieselor intrate în colecţii au fost donaţii ale artiştilor contemporani care au organizat expoziţii în muzeu. O serie de piese provin din donaţii ale unor colecţionari sau donatori ocazionali. Donatorii ultimelor douăsprezece luni sunt (în ordine alfabetică): artiştii Sergiu Chihaia, Ştefan Orth, Christian Eugene Paraschiv şi Constantin Pele, alături de doamna Eibenschütz Hannelore, Prof. univ. dr. Sabin Adrian Luca, Shirin Malikova, Director al Muzeului Naţional de Covoare din Azerbaijan şi doamna Elke Scheiner reprezentată de Irmagart Sedler.*

Cuvinte cheie: *Muzeul Naţional Brukenthal, donaţii, donatori, colecţii de artă, colecţionari, expoziţii de artă contemporană*

Showing permanent attention to the patrimony, to its administration and to the development of the collections, the Brukenthal National Museum has continued its policy of enriching its collections. Since the last report, in July 2022, up to now, July 2023, a number of eighteen works (painting, graphics, and decorative art), entered the collections of the museum. Part of them was made by contemporary artists who organized solo shows in the museum, others are donations of the artists' successors and some are made by other donners.

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The works donated are presented according to the collection they became part of and in the alphabetical order of the donners.

A. Brukenthal Contemporary Art Museum

Donation of Sergiu Chihaia

1. No. inv. AD 799, Sergiu Chihaia, *Cacti*, 9 pieces, mixed technique (metal, plastic, cement), dimensions: 1) 130×11×9 cm; 2) 125×10×10 cm; 3) 136×10×10 cm; 4) 121×10×10 cm; 5) 138×10×10 cm; 6) 103×10×10 cm; 7) 99×10×11 cm; 8) 124×10×10 cm; 9) 123×10×10 cm, unsigned, undated [2022].

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2. No. inv. AD 800, Sergiu Chihaia, Waterfall, mixed technique (wire, plastic), dimensions 130×470 cm, unsigned, undated [2022].

Donation of Professor Sabin Adrian Luca

3. No. inv. PC 18, Aurel Hrib, St. Luke (Sfântul Luca), oil painting on wood, dimensions 28.5×28.5 cm, signed on the back, lower right: "A. Hrib", undated

Donation of Christian Eugene Paraschiv

4. No. inv. PC 19, Christian Eugene Paraschiv, *Relic XI*, oil on canvas, the work is signed on the reverse, in black "Paraschiv", undated [2009], dimensions: unframed 60×90 cm, framed 64×94 cm.

5. No. inv. PC 20, Christian Eugene Paraschiv, *Typewriter*, oil on canvas, the work is signed on the reverse, in black: "Paraschiv", undated [2015], dimensions: unframed 75×100 cm, framed 81×106 cm.

Donation of Constantin Pele

6. No. inv. PC 21, Constantin Pele, *Historical Sibiu*, oil on canvas, dimensions: without frame 110×90 cm.

7. No. inv. PC 22, Constantin Pele, *Winter in the city (Sibiu)*, oil on cardboard, dimensions: without frame 41.5×32.4 cm.

8. No. inv. AD 797, Constantin Pele, *City of Sibiu*, photographic collage on cardboard, dimensions: without frame 125×74.5 cm

Donation of Ştefan Orth

9. No. inv. PC 23, Ştefan Orth, *Eruption*, oil on cardboard, dated 2004, dimensions: 675×880 cm

B. Graphic Collection

Donation made by Mrs. Irmgard Sedler, on behalf of Mrs. Elke Scheiner, (donation no. 3721 / 29.10.2022)

1. No. inv. 13791 Eva Maria Scheiner, *Abstract composition*, water colors on paper, glued in the corners, with adhesive tape, on duplex cardboard; 29.5×25.5/ 35.5×31.5 cm; signed and dated, lower right, with black pen Eva Maria Sch/ 1975, stamp with red ink, on the right side containing the name, function and address

of the artist. below the frame. The piece has small losses of color and the paper layer.

2. No. inv. 13792 Eva Maria Scheiner, *Composition with two characters*, water colors on paper, glued in the corners, with adhesive tape, on duplex cardboard; 30×40 / 35×44 cm; signed and dated, lower right, with black pen Eva S / 1967, on the cardboard on the right side, under the work, the stamp of the artist is visible, in red ink, which includes the name, function and address.

3. No. inv. 13793 Eva Maria Scheiner, *Composition with three characters,* watercolors on paper, glued in the corners, with adhesive tape, on vellum paper; 30×40 / 40.5×46 cm; signature, place and date, are written on the lower right, with black pen Eva S / Munich / 1967; under the work, the stamp of the artist is visible, in red ink, which includes the name, position and address. The paper on which the piece is pasted, has small marginal cracks.

4. No. inv. 13794 Eva Maria Scheiner, *Farbspiel / Color game,* water colors applied in the stamp technique (Kartoffeldruck) on paper, glued in the corner area, with adhesive tape, on duplex cardboard; 30×40 / 41×44 cm; top right, technique and title, lower right, signed and dated, with black pen Eva S / 14, 1967, on cardboard on the right side, below the work, the artist's stamp is visible, in red ink, which includes the name, position and address.

5. No. inv. 13795 Eva Maria Scheiner, *Theresienwiesenfest / Oktoberfest*, water colors on paper, taped in the corners, on duplex cardboard; 39×30 / 48×35 cm; dated and signed lower, middle 1967 / Eva S, lower on the lower right, the place and title of the work: Munich / Theresienwiesenfest / Oktoberfest are written, with a black pen, on the right side, below the work, the stamp of the artist is visible, in red ink, which includes the name, position and address.

6. No. inv. 13796 Eva Maria Scheiner, *Still life,* water colors on paper, glued in the corners with adhesive tape, on duplex cardboard; 26.5×35 / 35.5×39 cm; the

place, date and signature are written, with a black pen, in lower right side, Ravensbg / 2 VI.61 / Eva S, on the right side, under the work, the stamp of the artist is visible, in red ink, which includes the name, function and address.

7. No. inv. 13797 Eva Maria Scheiner, *Still life with Nesquik,* water colors on paper, glued in the corners with adhesive tape, on duplex cardboard; 34.5×48 / 40×53 cm; signed and dated, in pencil, lower right, Eva S /67, on the right side, under the work, the stamp of the artist is visible, in red ink, which includes the name, function and address.

C. Decorative Art Collection

1. No. inv. A.D. 798 – "ZEYVA" knotted carpet, Guba, Azerbaijan. Dated: 2021. Made by the Department of Traditional Weaving Techniques of the National Carpet Museum of Azerbaijan. Materials: warp, batting, plush – wool, cotton; Technique: symmetrical knot, plush, handmade. Dimensions: 96×56 cm. Donation: Shirin Malikova, Director National Carpet Museum of Azerbaijan. Deed of donation no. 6121 of 23.12.2022. Entered into the collection of Decorative Art of the Brukenthal National Museum according to the evaluation report no. 6231

of 30.12.2022. Inscription: "Zeyva". Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum. The carpet was donated to the museum on the occasion of the exhibition: Azeri carpets: learning through art, from 22.12.2022 to 31.01.2023, at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

2. No. inv. A.D. 801 – Author unknown, Glazed earthenware plate with an English landscape with a cathedral; Technique: pressing in the form of a painted body applied by stamping, dimensions: 48×38×4 cm. Two stamped marks can be seen on the back: "Davenport" and "18", but also two stamped marks: one bearing the name "Davenport" and an anchor with the number 44, to the left and right of it; and the other shows the number "18", probably the number at which the part was found in the factory catalog. Davenport Pottery, English earthenware and porcelain manufacturer based in Longport, Staffordshire, England, dated: 1844 (matching the stamped mark).

The works donated by Mrs. Eibenschütz Hannelore (according to the act of donation no. 3701 / 30.06.2023) entered the Decorative Art collection of the Brukenthal National Museum according to the evaluation report no. 3705 / 30.06.2023.

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Fig. 4. Eva Maria Scheiner, *Abstract composition*

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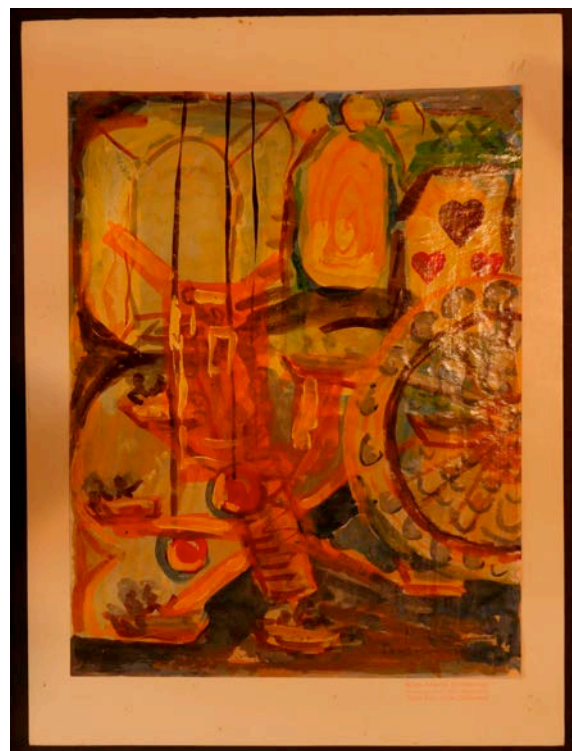Fig. 7. Eva Maria Scheiner,
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Fig. 8. Eva Maria Scheiner,
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Iulia MESEA
Co-authors / Administrators of the collections: Adrian LUCA, Cristina MIHU, Valentin TRIFESCU

Fig. 9. Eva Maria Scheiner, *Still life*

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