

New Europe College GE-NEC Program 2000-2001 2001-2002



DANA JENEI
MĂDĂLINA NICOLAESCU
IOANA TUDORA
ANA MARIA ZAHARIADE

MIHAELA CRITICOS
ANDREEA MIHALACHE
GHEORGHE ALEXANDRU NICULESCU
IOANA TEODORESCU

Editor: Irina Vainovski-Mihai

Copyright © 2004 – New Europe College

ISBN 973 –85697 – 9 – 6

NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Str. Plantelor 21

023971 Bucharest

Romania

Tel. (+40-21) 327.00.35, Fax (+40-21) 327.07.74

E-mail: nec@nec.ro



DANA JENEI

Born in 1964, in Brasov

Ph.D. candidate, National University of Fine Arts, Bucharest
Dissertation: *The Late Gothic Wall Painting in Transylvania*

Art historian, Direction of Cultural Heritage, Department for Historical
Monuments, Brasov

Research travels and grants in France, Hungary, Italy

Participation in conferences and symposia in Romania and France
Several projects on the preservation of the cultural heritage
Numerous articles and studies on the Medieval and Renaissance art in
Transylvania

ART AND MENTALITY IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES TRANSYLVANIA

Beginning with the second half of the sixteenth century, the art of the Middle Ages became an enigma [...]. The meaning of those deep works has been lost. The new generations, having a different notion of the world, couldn't understand them anymore. The symbolism that was the soul of religious art has died. The Church was embarrassed by the legends that had given consolation to Christianity during so many Centuries. The Council of Trento marks the end of the old artistic traditions.¹

What Émile Mâle wrote in 1898 concerning French religious art can be applied to the whole of European Medieval culture. The first studies on Transylvanian art date back to the same age, when the Romantic spirit resuscitated curiosity about a past that was denied or ignored. Since then, Medieval Transylvanian art has been systematically analyzed and classified² but has never been approached with the mentality that generated it and which is extremely indebted to the Church, in this “epoch of the almighty Christianity”. Not even those documents from the Middle Ages that have been transcribed and published in a huge effort on the part of scholars have been used in this direction.³

New views on the research, the interdisciplinary approach and recent progress in the field of history of the mentalities applied to Transylvanian art as a part of Western culture and civilization, could bring to light, through the study of images as the most direct and pregnant expression of the ideology, the whole universe from beyond artistic representations.

Concentration on the meaning of the “image” dictated by the Word – *Logos* – explains the stress on iconography in the study of medieval art. “In the fifteenth century, as well as in the thirteenth century, there was no work of art that could not be explained completely through a book”.⁴ In the constitution of imagery, second in importance to the Gospels are the texts of theologians and mystics canonized by the Church.⁵ For religious art, the theologians were also the authors of the iconographic programs established in thorough contracts;⁶ they probably also chose the compositional patterns from model books, illustrations or, later on, from engravings. Whatever shape it was circulated in, the image was the faithful bearer of the idea, the doctrine. The iconographical exceptions, considered until recently as a sign of creativity of the medieval artist and of his liberty of expression, were rather, for the most part, expressions of the obedience towards a learned donor. Insofar as innovation and originality were not considered important at the time, even the great artists sometimes made free or literal copies of well-known works, being in part inspired by the illustrations in books with wide a circulation.⁷ The preserved works show that the Transylvanian masters used the same sources as elsewhere in Europe: *Biblia Pauperum*, *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, *Defensorium Beatae Vergine Mariae*, and, after 1460, German engraving.

Medieval Transylvanian civilization should be also understood from the standpoint of the mentalities that created it. For instance, the increasing number of pious acts – donations and endowing of religious works of art in testaments or the development of funeral chapels in Transylvania, as across the whole of Europe, symptomatically show an increasing concern for the afterlife, in a social context characterized by death, instability and incertitude. An image that was once considered an allegory of charity became, at a new and more attentive reading, an *exemplum*, a reminder for the pious of the sacrifices they must make in order to save their souls from the Purgatory. The same interpretation can be given to the recurrence of some major themes of medieval art, such as *Vir Dolorum*, the *Prayer in the Ghetsemani Garden*, *Maria in Sole*. Contemplation of those images as part of certain devotional acts could sometimes ensure a thousand of years of forgiveness for confessed sins through the indulgences of the Roman Church.

This paper starts from a re-evaluation of the iconography of Transylvanian Medieval art. This became possible after a thorough study, which helped identify new themes, and reconsider previous identifications.

The main aim of this paper is to correlate the data of an interdisciplinary approach that resorts to history, dogma and ideology in order to define and explain the mentality of the time. Archival sources that document this approach will be invoked for the first time in this context, as evidence of typical forms of belief and devotion. Seen this way, Transylvanian art regains the dimension that places it more clearly within the orbit of the Western civilization, in an area where great medieval cultures meet and to which Transylvanian art has made an original contribution.

Late Middle Ages Transylvania. A historical sketch. Figurative art

With the exception of the accidental and isolated experiences caused by historic events, which allowed Western artistic forms to penetrate the Near East, Transylvania, the inter-Carpathian Romanian province, was in the Middle Ages the easternmost area which saw coherent manifestation of such artistic forms. The medieval history of the three major Romanian principalities, situated between the extremes of East and West at the spiritual border between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, denominations that coexist in Transylvania, explains the different cultural evolution of these countries. In the fourteenth century, when the principalities of Moldavia and Walachia became independent states, Transylvania was already an autonomous principality, under the apostolic Hungarian kingdom suzerainty, together with Slovakia, Slovenia and Dalmatia. It is for this reason that Transylvania's history in the Middle Ages was closely connected to the history of central Europe. Following the disappearance of the Arpadian kings, the descendants of the Holy king Stephen, the throne of Hungary belonged to the kings of the Naples side of the Anjou family – Charles Robert (1308-1341) and Ludwig the Great (1341-1382). During the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg (1382-1435)⁸ and that of Albert of Habsburg (1435-1439) Transylvania became a part of the German Holy-Roman Empire. In the second half of the fifteenth century, during the reign of Mathias Corvinus, Hungary was to include Styria, Carinthia, Moravia and southern Austria. The king died in 1490 in a Vienna that he had conquered not long before.

In this wide territory, the circulation of pilgrim masters, following the great trade roads, assured the spread of artistic forms; it contributed to the configuration of local artistic trends under the spiritual authority of

Catholicism, confession of the majority of donors – the privileged strata known in history as *trium nationum*: the Germans, the Siklers, and the Hungarian aristocracy including the Romanian nobles who finally converted from Orthodoxy.⁹ It is for reason that we find the masters of Transylvanian art working in Bohemia or visiting Rome, while stylistic analogies and documents prove that artists from Germany, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Tyrol worked in Transylvania. From this perspective, Transylvanian art can be seen both as a creation of local masters, sometimes trained in important central European centers, and of the pilgrim artists who were bearers of the principal trends. The works still preserved that were created between 1300 and 1500 are of extremely different aesthetic levels; they reflect, as they do everywhere where the Gothic Style existed, the mentality, taste and financial possibilities of the donors.

The first known mural ensembles date to no earlier than the beginning of the fourteenth century and preserve, at the height of the Gothic age, the decorative linearity of Romanesque art, due to the influence of book illustrations on painting. At Homorod (1300), Mugeni, at Mălâncrav in the nave, or at Drăușeni, we find a linear-narrative style that is widely spread in the peripheral areas, and which ends by being taken over by folk art. Concurrently, fourteenth century Transylvanian art shows, both stylistically as well as on iconographic levels, echoes of the North-Italian painting, as can be seen in the murals of Ghelînța, Homorod (the devotional image *Pietà*), Mugeni (*The Last Judgement*), Sântana de Mureș. The end of the fourteenth century and the first decades of the fifteenth century remain under the sign of the stylistic vocabulary common to the whole Europe of the “International Gothic”. This is remarkably illustrated in the painting of the church choir at Mălâncrav, at Dârjiu, in the ensemble (signed and dated 1419) painted by *magister* Paul from Ung, a typical representative of the chivalrous spirit, or in the altar painted by Thomas from Cluj in 1427 for the Hronsky Svaty Benadik Benedictine Monastery in Slovakia.

Indications of the presence of a “softened” version of Italian painting allow us to talk at the same time of an original provincial synthesis at Vlahă, Sânpetru or Mediaș (1420). Towards the middle of the century, the links with the southern German painting become obvious in the great *Crucifixion* painted by Johannes from Rosenau on the northern wall of the choir of the parish church in Sibiu in 1445. Between 1460 and 1520, with the first Renaissance forms manifested mainly in panel painting,

Transylvanian art experiences a new wave of internationalization, motivated by the success of late Gothic Flemish painting in the whole of Europe. The most valuable murals at the end of the fifteenth century – the paintings in the Church “on the Hill” at Sighișoara and the image of *Virgin Mary With the Child Among Saints*, the gift of King Mathias for the Black Church in Brașov – are very likely linked to the artistic centers of south-western Germany and Bohemia, entirely enslaved by the painting of the Netherlands. Without being on the same artistic level but nonetheless very precious for their iconography, the ensembles preserved inside the funeral chapels in Hărman and Biertan (1500) are also worthy of mentioned here.

Albeit more weakly represented, figurative sculpture displays links to the *Weicherstil* of the Parlers’ sites in Central Europe from the second half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century. In a time in which artistic works were rather modest and destined normally to decorate the parish churches of the most important Transylvanian towns of Brașov, Sebeș, Sighișoara, etc., we find the unexpectedly avant-garde work of Martin and George, sculptors from Cluj. Their single remaining work, *St. George and the Dragon*, commissioned by the Emperor Charles IV of Luxembourg for his court in Prague, surpassed all European artistic achievements of the time. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the character of the sculpture changes towards a preponderance of wooden sculptures destined to decorate winged altars. The majority of the works dated after 1500 were carved in the workshops of Veit Stoss’ sons, settled in Transylvania, from where other isolated pieces also originated, which are now preserved mainly in the collections of the Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu.

Figurative art in Transylvania reflects on each level a mentality shaped by a historical, religious, and affective context common to fourteenth and fifteenth century Europe.

Late Middle Ages Transylvania. “The crisis of the symbols of the security”

If, after the year 1000, “Western Christianity created an organic and stable body, reinforced by a common thinking and sensibility”, then the fourteenth century forecasts, through the events that mark it, what Oberman calls “the crisis of the symbols of security”.¹⁰ There was a crisis

in the values and traditional certainties of Middle Ages civilization, symptomatic of a world nearing its end. The natural calamities – wars, the plague – which devastated the continent between 1348 and 1350, but also the famine and rapid social changes caused by economic growth and urbanization in the following centuries,¹¹ and the religious instability generated by the Great schism and by corruption within the Church¹² deeply marked collective mentality.

“*A bello, peste et fame libera nos, Domine*” was one of the most frequent prayers of the time,¹³ while devotional imagery shows a God offended by the sins of His people ready to fire the arrows of war, famine, plague or sudden death.¹⁴ Following the devastating Tartar invasions that began in 1394, the Turks became the most serious danger for centuries to the whole of Europe, with the countries of southeastern Europe being at the greatest risk.¹⁵ Against them, the churchmen preached continuously the saint war, the Turks being seen as a disaster of the times and the near cause of the end of the world. Their cruelty was frequently described in sermons and liturgies, and prayers were composed in which Heaven is called to protect Christianity. Priests and monks fight as soldiers on the battlefields in this war against “the army of Antichrist”.¹⁶

After the defeat of the crusaders armies led by king Sigismund of Luxembourg and Mircea the Old, prince of Walachia, in 1396 at Nicopolis, the whole fifteenth century was to suffer the menace of Ottoman invasions. Dan II, Mircea’s descendant, together with Fillippo Scolari,¹⁷ the Italian counselor to the king and leader of the Hungarian armies, led a common offensive against the Turks on the lower Danube. A royal decree in 1405 established that walls would surround all the cities of Transylvania, but by 1421, the fortifications of Braşov had still not been completed and the Turks destroyed the town, taking into captivity the whole council. After the invasion of 1438 Sebeş suffered a setback and was never to complete the bold project of remaking the whole parish church, already built by then up to the choir level, in Gothic style, on the model of St. Sebaldus Church in Nuremberg.¹⁸ In 1453 the Turks conquered Constantinople, and this was a real “psychological shock” for Europe.¹⁹ However, the extraordinary success of the “late crusade” led by Iancu of Hunedoara,²⁰ prince of Transylvania and governor of Hungary between 1446 and 1453, halted their advance. “Iancu of Hunedoara was an outstanding personality of the fifteenth century, the heroic century of resistance against the Turks. Defending the countries and people in South-eastern Europe against the Ottoman assaults, he was at the same time *the defender of European*

civilization".²¹ Each of his victories, acclaimed with hope and vivid admiration, was celebrated in processions and masses of thanks all over the Empire, in Rome, Venice and Oxford. After the battle of Belgrade that was to win peace for Western Europe for many years, pope Calix III named him *athleta Christi* and established a new feast day. Deeply faithful, Iancu would carry out his night attacks under the device "Almighty God and St. Michael", having beside him on the battlefield his spiritual father, Giovanni da Capistrano. This Franciscan monk, later canonized by the Roman Church, was one of the visionaries who announced "the near apocalyptic terms", making prophecies on the time of the coming of Antichrist and the end of the world.²² Iancu also had a special devotion to the Virgin of the Annunciation, probably borrowed from Filippo Scolari, the master of his youth. After each battle he would send war trophies to Santissima Anunziata in Florence, in sign of gratitude for her protection,²³ a church that even today hosts the miraculous icon of the Virgin. After the death of the prince in 1456, the pressure of Ottoman attacks began anew. Mathias Corvinus, Iancu's son, became king of Hungary in 1458. Giovanni da Capistrano prophesied of him that he would become a new Alexander the Great. Indeed, all of Christianity saw in the enlightened king the leader of crusades to come and a new *defensor Ecclesiae*.²⁴ The permanent threat determined Mathias to pronounce the order to "maintain the fortifications, the armament and ammunition at all times prepared". Consequently, even the religious architecture in Transylvania is that of a land under siege: churches, so remote to the immaterial image of the Gothic buildings, remained the last refuge of the community, as sacrosanct places. The invasion of 1493, during which many Saxon villages were burned to the ground, determined the start of a real fortification campaign for parish churches, a vast and unequalled phenomenon in Medieval Europe.²⁵

The continuous decline in the living standards of the poorer social categories in Transylvania, as well as in the rest of the Empire, led to successive revolts, culminating in the uprising of Bobâlna in 1437-1438 – a remote echo of the Hussite wars, in which the poor inhabitants of towns, salt mine workers and the lower nobility all took part. Almost one century later, in 1514, the army which had gathered near Buda under the leadership of Gheorghe Doja and which was supposed to begin a new crusade against the Turks, turned its arms on the aristocracy. The uprising spread rapidly to Transylvania but was suppressed and its leaders caught and executed after terrible torture.²⁶ Fearing a new popular uprising, the

young king of Hungary Ludwig Jagello refused to include the masses in his army for the battle of Mohacs in 1526. As a result, the Turks crushed the Hungarian army, the king himself, two archbishops and five bishops being killed on the battlefield. After Mohacs, the kingdom was erased for centuries from the map of Europe, while Transylvania preserved its autonomy as a principality.²⁷

After war came famine and the plague. Documents from 1456 mention a widespread famine that was also to threaten the country in 1470, when Mathias Corvinus forbade the export of wheat, millet, oat and barley from Transylvania to Walachia. A study of natural disasters from the end of the fifteenth century shows their impact on the demographic situation with statistical precision:

The famine of 1493-1494 together with the plague of 1495 had many victims, especially in the city of Braşov and in Burzenland. The parametric increase in the population of Braşov, which had been 0.72 percent between 1250 (after the devastating Tartar invasion of 1241-1242) and 1480, ceased, and there was no notable increase by the end of fifteenth century or during the next century, the population remaining stable at between 10,000 and 11,000. However, on the whole, the population of Transylvania increased, as indicated by some data, to a level of around 1,809,300 inhabitants with an average density of some 17 inhabitants per square kilometer.²⁸

In late Middle Ages Transylvania there was hardly one single decade that did not see a serious earthquake due to the existence of a seismic center on the edge of the Carpathian curvature. The annals of the Melk Monastery in Austria mention that in 1473 on August 29, at 11 a.m., in Braşov "there was a strong earthquake that almost made all the houses and even most of the town's walls collapse, such that everybody thought it was the end of the world".²⁹ For five days, there were violent earthquakes throughout Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia that "moved the mountains and hills, being felt in seven eastern provinces".³⁰

The "climatic anomalies", disasters and unaccountable phenomena left a strong impression on the sensibility of the population, reanimating, mainly at the turn of centuries, an apocalyptic psychosis. In 1480, king Mathias Corvinus asked the Pauline monks to pray for rain, the drought being followed the same year by a terrible plague epidemic in Burzenland. The Moldavian-German chronicle records that in Roman, Moldavia, on August 11, 1484, there was a "blood rain". This event convinced prince

Ștefan the Great to stop works on the site of the fortress begun three months earlier, because he believed the strange phenomenon to have been “a sign of divine wrath” against the malice and unfaithfulness of the people.³¹ In 1488, the Austrian Jacobus Kendlinger mentions another unusual weather phenomenon recorded in an inscription near the scenes of the Passion painted on the lower part of the tower of the Church “on the Hill” in Sighișoara: beginning with the day of St. Gerardus (September 24) there was so much snow falling for three days that the trees were broken.³² Such events, mentioned in the Transylvanian chronicles, are heavy with an apocalyptic undertone; they are reminiscent of the miracles described, for instance, by Dürer in his writings, and suggest a similar sensibility: “The greatest miracle which I ever have seen,” says Dürer, “happened in the year 1503, when crosses rained down on many people, on children more than on other people. Among these crosses I saw one as I have drawn it here”.³³

Late Middle Ages Transylvania. The new religious sensibility

All these disasters that marked history of the Middle Ages, interpreted as divine punishments for the sins of humanity and signs of time that announce the imminence of the Last Judgment, were the causes of major changes in people’s mentality and sensibility.

The mood of chiliasm, of the end of the world, pervaded the time about the year 1500 just as it filled the time about the year 1000. In those days, people turned to the prophecies of former ages, which came to have a new and real meaning for them.³⁴

Fear of the end of the world seems to have become more intense in the fourteenth century, while the legend of the year 1000 was created in the next.³⁵ The “anxiety of salvation”, “the feeling of self failure” (Ariès) or that of “disillusion and discouragement” (Huizinga) are all symptoms of a state of mind which the “black century’s” poetry speaks of and which was eventually to be reflected in one of the principal themes of the German Renaissance: the melancholy. “In those days of crisis and despair, the desire for an authentic religious life sometimes became an obsession”.³⁶ That is why, just before the Reformation, piety became

stronger than ever before, through the spiritual emancipation of the laymen. Christianity, a religion rather more accessible to priests and monks in the previous centuries, became accessible to the masses, which obstinately searched for divine mercy in places of pilgrimage or elsewhere. The new conception of “the world beyond” was preached mostly by the mendicant monks and strongly contributed to the spreading of a new religious sensibility, turned towards the care for the afterlife and the cult of the saints.

Care for the afterlife

One major consequence for religious practice was an unprecedented increase in the cult of the dead, generated by the growing importance that Western Christianity attributed to Purgatory. Both in ideology and religion, Catholicism at the end of Middle Ages was to a large extent a cult of the living in the service of the dead.³⁷

“In the Church’s hierarchy of contribution to the price of passage from this world to the next, the concern of dedicating as many masses as possible to oneself after death now displaced the earlier emphasis upon charity to the poor.”³⁸ Funeral services were conducted “almost without breaks, sometimes starting from the beginning of the agony and continuing for hours, weeks and even months. An incredible number of religious services made possible the subsistence of a quasi-specialized clergy”.³⁹ The testamentary dispositions included impressive amounts of money for religious services, many scholars seeing in those pious donations the cause of the economic ruin of the aristocracy in the late Middle Ages.⁴⁰

If we do not understand the obsession with salvation and the fear of Hell that characterized people during the Middle Ages, we will never understand their mentality and we will remain astonished in front of such an abandonment of a plentiful life, of power, of riches, which caused an extraordinary mobility of fortunes [...]⁴¹

Georges Duby mentions the case of the Gascon senior of Buch, who tried to ensure his salvation by paying, along with the 50 thousands services officiated in the year of his death, a fabulous number of masses to be officiated afterwards for 61 years by 18 chaplains.⁴²

Documents from Middle Ages Transylvania note the same preoccupation with salvation shown by kings and emperors, by the high clergy and nobility through masses, gifts for the Church and works of mercy. A document dated May 31, 1443, attests to a donation by Sigismund of Luxembourg and his successor Albert of Habsburg to the Chapel of St. Martin in Braşov, *extra muros*, for the salvation of “the souls of the saint kings of Hungary”.⁴³ Filippo Scolari, the Florentine *condottiero*, count of Timişoara, is granted recognition of his merits from the Pope for his generosity to the Church. In his testament issued August 15, 1426, in Orşova, he establishes the funeral ceremonial for him and his family, richly endowing the priests and the monks of the church in Székesfehérvár, the coronation place and necropolis of the Hungarian Kings, near which he built his funeral chapel painted by Masolino da Panicale.⁴⁴ In 1462 Mathias Corvinus increased his annual donation to the Dominican Monastery of Braşov from two silver marks to ten, in memory of his father, Iancu of Hunedoara. Thirty years later, count Nicolas Bethlen, *perpetuus patronus* of the Dominican Church in Sighişoara, settled a foundation for masses for the soul of the “great king” Mathias.⁴⁵ Beginning in 1477, bishop John Gereb started to grant clergy in Alba Iulia the right of testament, the first condition being the establishment of bequests *pro fabrica ecclesia*; the same bishop, in 1485, asked the Pope to grant the right of pilgrimage to all those who had made gifts for the maintenance of the same Cathedral.⁴⁶ In 1444 Johannes of Merghindeal offered St. Nicolas Church in Sighişoara “132 pure gold Florins and his part of the family lands in Vulcan” for the salvation of his and his family’s souls; with the same purpose, in 1446, Mychael *filius Salamonis* from Nadaşd donated his possessions – the villages of Boiu, Draşov and Sebeşel – to the St. Michael Cathedral in Alba Iulia, asking in return “officiated and sung masses for eternity: on Sundays, the St. Trinity Mass, Mondays, the Mass for the Dead, Tuesdays, the Holy Virgin Mary Mass, Wednesdays a service for forgiveness of sins, Thursdays, the Mass for Angels, Fridays, the Lord’s Passion, and on Saturdays again the solemn service for Holy Virgin Mary”.⁴⁷ Nicolaus Apa, the presumed donor of the extraordinary murals in the church sanctuary of Mălâncrav, gave through his will to a few churches, priests and chaplains, cult objects for the salvation of his soul after death, including: a big chalice received from the Emperor, which he gave to the St. Gerard church in Nuşeni, another chalice for XXX *missis* (St. Gregory’s Masses), which he gave to the Cathedral in Alba Iulia. To Peter, *plebano nostro de Nagfalu*, he donated six golden

Florins, a tunic, a *pallium*, two mitres, demanding in exchange, along with the celebration of 30 other masses in the churches of Nușeni and Mălâncrav, that he be mentioned for eternity in his prayers: "*habeat me in memoria perpetua in orationibus suis*".⁴⁸ A document dated December 13 1447 confirmed the donation of Peter, count of Brașov; he gave the villages of Zărnești and Tohan to the *Corporis Christi* brotherhood of the Church of the Virgin Mary in Brașov.⁴⁹ Anna, the widow of Georg Appa, left two vineyards to the St. George Church in Dumbrăveni "*pro missa perpetua*" on October 28, 1448.⁵⁰ Count Nicholas Gereb of Roșia donated on February 24, 1461 a house belonging to his family to the church St. Nicolas in Seligstat, while Count Nicolas of Ocna Sibiului, vice prince of Transylvania, endowed in his will written August 7, 1465, the parish church from Sibiu and monasteries from Cluj and Sighișoara "*pro perpetuam missa*"; he also left to Thomas, his chaplain, 25 golden Florins to make pilgrimages to the Roman Curia and to the Church of the Virgin Mary in Aix-la Chapelle, for the benefit of his soul.⁵¹ Petrus Greb, Antonius Sander's son from Brașov, also gave on 100 Florins (*primum cento florenos*) on June 1, 1460, for "a pilgrimage to the Holy Land", 20 Florins for the building of the parish church, and 10 Florins to the Dominican monks to officiate an annual mass for his soul.⁵² Rich townspeople also donated or endowed religious works of art in their testaments: Margaret, the widow of Simon Abel from Bistrița, gave two houses to the Lord's altar from the Chapel of St. Jeronimus in Vienna in 1403,⁵³ while Margaretha Schleffer of Cluj prearranged in her will (dated April 29, 1459) daily masses for two years in the St. Michael Church and one year in the Church of the Monastery of the Predicant Friars in Cluj. She also donated large sums of money for the building of the two edifices and for the altars inside, "*pro animae suae salute*".⁵⁴ Katherine, daughter of Laurentius Klomp, gave the chapel of St. Lawrence the Martyr in the cemetery of the parish church in Brașov a mill on the Șprengi brook for a daily mass for the salvation of her husband's soul and the souls of her friends and relatives "in all the times to come".⁵⁵

Lay people along with clergymen were absorbing, through books, the teachings of Church. In 1461, Jacobus from Roderbach donated several religious books to the St. Peter and Paul Monastery in Brașov:⁵⁶ "the sermons of magister Niklas from Dinkelsbühl on time and saints, *item* a book with ten precepts on the seven vices, eight bliss and penitence, *item* the Bible, *item* the confessor handbook *cum lepra morali*, *item* the sermons of St. Gregory [the Great], *item* the praises to Virgin Mary, *item*,

four books of the Dialogs of St. Gregory [the Great]”. This donation, one of the rare testimonies to the literature read by lay people at the time, is also important from another point of view: such books were the sources that fed the late medieval imaginary of the world beyond and molded mentalities.⁵⁷

Images of the world beyond

In Transylvania and elsewhere in the Christian Middle Ages Europe, burials were done *ad sanctos*, near the altars that hosted the relics of saints, first inside the church, and then around it.⁵⁸ Showing new forms of devotion and serving the demands of the pious practice connected to the cult of dead, many funeral chapels were built inside cemeteries; funeral masses were also considered more efficient if conducted nearer the graves. “More than a place for prayers and mystic contemplation, the chapel is a place of funeral cult”;⁵⁹ the overtly didactic images that decorate its walls uphold on a visual level the values of Christian eschatology.

Developing the same mentality, beliefs and cult needs, chapels were built in Catholic Transylvania, frequently near parish churches, in the free royal towns – in Braşov, Sibiu, Mediaş, as well as in the countryside – in Biertan, Cislădie, Curciu, Velţ, Orăştie, Sânpetru, Hărman, Valea Viilor, etc.⁶⁰ It should be noted that the only coherent ensembles of wall painting with exclusively eschatological themes are still preserved inside the funeral chapels of Sânpetru, Hărman, Mediaş and Biertan. Their meticulous iconography, scrupulously conforming to the doctrine, is a most precious proof of the religious mentality of the time. But the imagery of the world beyond is also present on the walls of the churches or on the panels of the altars, as medieval psychology cannot be understood without taking into account the deep attachment to *artes moriendi*, apocalyptic preaching and images of the Last Judgement.

The Paradise. Hell. Abraham’s Bosom

The Gospel according to Mathew lies at the basis of the whole Middle Ages conception of the world beyond, and the apocryphal Apocalypse of Paul describes Paradise, and a Hell full of punishments. “St. Augustine and the first Latin Fathers elaborated an almost definitive conception on

salvation".⁶¹ At the beginning of the twelfth century, the belief still existed that after Judgment Day there will be two groups of souls for eternity: the chosen and the damned. The iconography of the two places, Paradise and Hell, in Transylvanian late Middle Ages art, always connected to the theme of Judgment Day, is basically no different from the accepted one: Paradise is represented either as a reflection of the primitive idea of an enclosed garden (Biertan, around 1500), with palm trees above which shines, in the words of Psalmist, the "Sun of Justice" (Hărman, around 1500), or as *Heavenly Jerusalem*, with imposing buildings (Sighișoara, before 1500). At Sânpetru (around 1400) and Mediaș (1420), Paradise is presented through the scene of the *Coronation of the Holy Virgin* surrounded by musical angels and torch bearers, while at Mugeni, Ghelînța and Sic (fourteenth century), Mary, the universal protector of souls, appears in Heaven as *Mater Misericordiae*. Where there are also explanatory inscriptions on the scrolls, the words of the Son of Man from the Gospel of Mathew (25-34) are always written above Paradise: *Venite Benedicti Patris mei*. Faithfully illustrating the text of the Bible, the good deeds that lead to salvation are sometimes represented nearby. Such representations, including the six evangelical works of mercy and care for the dead⁶² are preserved at Hărman. The same preoccupation with pious acts, "charity bonds" that unite all the members of the Church, dead or alive, appears in fifteen-century Transylvanian testaments. Petrus Greb from Brașov left three houses to be put to "pious use", money for the poor in the hospitals, and for the lepers and *leprosarium*; Margaret, the widow of Johannes Schleffer and Katharina Lukachy from Cluj⁶³ also gave money, medicines, grey cloth and wine vessels to the poor, endowing at the same time several hospitals. An identical message appears in the representation of charity in a scene with a pronounced funereal character at Sânpetru: rich townsmen bearing candles, offering food and clothes to the poor and invalids.

Inscribed with the same words of the Redeemer taken from the Gospel according to Matthew, Hell is frequently represented by the figure of the monster Leviathan, the iconographic illustration of the description in the Book of Job. After the weighing of souls, the sinners (Biertan) or the personifications of the seven deadly sins (Sighișoara) are banished by Archangel Gabriel into his widely open mouth; at Hărman an old formula comes back, in which a group of sinners in chains is taken to Hell by the devils. The damned, wearing the signs of worldly power, are lead by a Muslim – Islam, the most serious danger of the times being seen as an

analog to Antichrist – followed by a Pope, an Emperor, a Bishop, a King, a Cardinal, a woman, or a Saracen. An important exception in this type of representation can be seen in the elaborated and original context of the funeral chapel at Sânpetru, which depicts the fallen angels tumbling down punished by Archangel Michael (Apocalypse of John, 12, 7). This image of Hell, is not, however, unique; it also appears, for instance, on a later woodcut from *Les Heures à l'usage de Rome* by Jean de Pré (1488), where the usual formula, inscribed on a scroll, is uttered this time not by Jesus, but by God the Father: *Discedite a me maledicti*.⁶⁴

Half way between Heaven and Hell stands St. Michael, the unfailing character of Judgment Day. An ancient rival of Satan and eternal protector of souls, “the glorious Michael the Archangel, leader of the heavenly army” is represented not only as the defeater of evil but also as the one who weighs the souls. The Archangel stands with his sword above his head, protecting the soul whose deeds he is weighing. He is ready to strike the devils that come directly from the mouth of the Hell (in a painting by Vincentius from Sibiu, 1520) and try to cheat by pulling down the plate of vices with a hook and filling it with mill stones (at Bistrița and Sântana de Mureș, end of XIVth century), or with scrolls inscribed with the enumeration of sins, in an outstanding representation preserved on the vault of the Church “on the Hill” in Sighișoara (1483). *Psychostasis*, a scene of the Last Judgment Day which, taken by itself, is evocative of the Last Judgement on a spiritual level, illustrates Christian eschatology in a concentrated manner, as does the devotional image of Archangel Michael killing the dragon in the mural paintings and winged altars in Mălâncrav and Biertan.

The appearance of the belief in Purgatory was to change irreversibly the manner of configuration of the world beyond within the Latin Church. The idea of “the existence of an intermediate time” and of “an intermediate space” was also to be found earlier in Christianity, Abraham’s Bosom being thought of as the first Christian representation of Purgatory. At the beginning of the twelfth century, the doctrine concerning what happens between death and resurrection was not yet clearly defined.

Some believe the dead wait in the graves or in a dark and neutral place assimilated to the grave, as the *Sheol* from the Old Testament. Others, more numerous, believe that souls will be received in certain houses. Among these houses there is one that is different, that of Abraham’s bosom,

where the souls of believers are gathered and wait for the proper Paradise, meanwhile entering into a place of coolness and rest.

The idea of coolness (*refrigeriu*) that can be found in all Middle Ages Catholic funeral inscriptions (*Deus refrigeret spirituum tuo, in refrigerio anima tua*), originally meant “the joy of the world beyond the grave promised by God to His chosen ones”.⁶⁵ Transylvanian documents from the mid-fifteenth century frequently use this formula. A paper issued on May 31, 1443, shows that Emperor Sigismund donated a house to the St. Martin Chapel in Braşov “*ob salutem et refrigerium animarum divorum regum Hungariae ac singularem devotionem*”. Michael of Nadeş gave his property to the St. Michael Cathedral in Alba Iulia in 1446, count Peter of Braşov gave two estates to the *Corpus Christi* brotherhood of the St. Mary Church “*ob suae salutis ac animarum progenitorum suorum perpetuum refrigerium*”, Johannes of Merghindeal endowed St. Nicholas Church of Sighişoara “*pro refrigerium animae suae et suorum progenitorum animarum*”, while Katherina Klomp, the widow of Thomas Roth of Braşov donated a mill to the St. Lawrence Chapel in exchange for eternal masses for “the salvation and cooling of the souls of her late husband and those of all her friends and relatives”.

Having as its source the parable of the poor Lazarus from the gospel according to Luke (16:19-26), Abraham’s Bosom, the place of waiting for believers until the appearance of Purgatory, is still mentioned today in the most widespread funeral service in Catholic ritual, from which a short invocation spreads through prayer books and inscriptions on gravestones: “God, send thy holy angels and through their hands let the soul be taken to the bosom of Abraham.”⁶⁶ In the moralized context of the Last Judgment, Abraham’s bosom continues to be represented both in Orthodox and Catholic art, illustrating the gospel *stricto sensu*. The angels bring the soul of the poor Lazarus to the bosom of the Patriarch, while the thirsty pitiless rich man implores from Hell: “*Pater Abraham miserere mei et mitte Lazarum, ut intignat extremum digiti sui in aquam, ut rifregeret linguam meam, quia crucior in hac flamma*” (Hărman).⁶⁷

Purgatory. The suffrages

Belief in Purgatory was first to be found in the practice of the Catholic funeral ritual in “the suffrages, or supplications for the dead” (*suffragiis*), with the help of which it is possible to save from Purgatory the souls of

those whose sins were labeled in the twelfth century as “excusable” and in the following centuries as “light” or “small” (*levia, minuta*).⁶⁸ The authors of the doctrine, which proliferated from the beginning of the twelfth century onwards, were relying on arguments having some scriptural basis, thus giving the Purgatory doctrine a validity within the dogmatic corpus of the Catholicism. The existence of Purgatory is based on the belief in a double judgment. There is, first, the individual judgment that takes place in the moment of death, while the last, the universal judgment, takes place at the end of time. The imagery of the first judgment was mainly reflected in the illustrations to *Ars moriendi*, the book that taught Christians at the end of the fifteenth century how to die in a proper way. The tympanum of an altar painted by Vincentius of Sibiu shows this final moment when the priest places a candle in the dying person’s hand and pronounces the last rites: IESU. FILI. DAVID. MI[SERE]RE ME. The soul is conquered for Heaven by the guardian angel, in spite of the devils, that could neither frighten, nor tempt it.⁶⁹ This belief in the existence of two judgments is also reflected in the mural painting in Mugeni⁷⁰ where, in contrast to canonical representations, the chosen ones go to Jesus the Judge, *leaving* the Paradise as souls already saved.

Establishment of a place of redemption and of a time for expiation rapidly progresses in the second half of the twelfth century. Even if *Purgatorium Sancti Patricii* guarantees the success of the suggested place, it is Parisian theology that names and defines this place between 1170 and 1180, in the course of exchanges between the school of Notre Dame and the Cistercians from the abbeys situated in eastern and northern France. In the thirteen century Purgatory finds its place in Christianity: on a dogmatic level, through the letter of Innocent IV to Eudes de Chateauroux (1254) and the decisions of the second Council in Lyon concerning the unification of the Latin and the Greek Church. On a theological level, by the integration of Purgatory in all the important theological systems, from Guillaume d’Auvergne and Alexandre de Hales to St. Thomas Aquinas, and on a popular level, that of the mass of believers, through the preaching and little stories taken from *exempla*.⁷¹

The “final” birth of the Purgatory is fixed at between 1170 and 1220,⁷² and its name gains currency in the last third of the thirteen century,⁷³ while in 1259 the doctrine of Purgatory receives papal definition.⁷⁴

In this context, care for the afterlife is of utmost importance. The Doctors of the Catholic Church found the Biblical source of the doctrine

of Purgatory in the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians (3, 13-15): "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (*quasi per ignem*).⁷⁵ For some theologians, Purgatory, "this place with no suffering and no joy", means only "the depriving of the beatific vision". Furthermore, unlike Hell, where "there is no salvation",⁷⁶ the souls from Purgatory pray, enjoying the presence of the saving angels. The believers can help through supplications "the souls of the righteous from Purgatory". In the *Dialogs* of St. Gregory the Great, a text known and read in Middle Ages Transylvania, the categories of the suffrages were already specified,⁷⁷ a hierarchy asserted also by the famous *Legenda aurea*, composed by the theologian, hagiographer and Dominican preacher Jacobus da Voragine around 1260. In these writings, known to be among the most used literary sources of late Middle Ages Catholic iconography, an entire chapter is reserved for the "commemoration of souls", in which four suffrages are most strongly recommended: the prayers of the devoted and friends, charity, partaking of the host, and fasting.⁷⁸ This hierarchy underwent slight changes over time: the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1439)⁷⁹ finally declares the mass as being of the highest importance and the Church the supreme earthly authority for the salvation of souls. Transylvanian testaments show that the donations to the Church are, among the suffrages, nearly of the same importance as the Eucharist, which "breaks the chains of the realm of the dead and takes the souls to the shelter of life and light".

The iconography of the Purgatory. Images of supplications in the wall painting of the Corporis Christi Chapel in Sânpetru

At the same time as the doctrine, an iconography of Purgatory developed, which dates, in the German areas of culture, from the fourteenth century.⁸⁰ For France, Jacques Le Goff mentions a first image in the Breviary of Philippe le Bel, illuminated by master Honoré sometime between 1253 and 1296,⁸¹ in which we already find the elements that will come to characterize Purgatory iconography: the flying angels helping the redeemed souls rise toward Jesus. One century later we find another miniature that illustrates the day of the remembrance of the dead (2

November), in the Breviary of Charles V. This time the angels are lifting the souls out of the fire.⁸² The divine purifying fire, different from infernal fire, is another typical iconographic element of Purgatory, with roots in the Bible, and is sometimes sufficient in itself to evoke it.

In keeping with the theological sources, Purgatory iconography⁸³ also includes images of the suffrages assembled in a coherent program. Vovelle maintains that each church must have had an altar devoted to the souls of the Purgatory that faithfully reproduced a popular image of the world beyond.⁸⁴ In the murals of the Chapel *Corporis Christi* in Sânpetru,⁸⁵ whose program was conceived, in accordance with custom, by a theologian,⁸⁶ representation of the suffrages finds its place in a sophisticated context that requires, beyond the direct message of the image, several levels of reading. The didactic-moralizing charge is amplified by the mediaeval conventions of representation. Paradise, represented by the scene of the *Coronation of the Virgin* on the east side, is opposite to the Hell into which the devils fall, punished by Archangel Michael. The southern wall is devoted to the martyrs St. Stephen and St. Lawrence, the perfect ones, who go straight to Paradise where they are rewarded by the sight of God, *visio beatifica*, Jesus showing Himself in the open door of Heaven; on the northern side, those who were “not very bad, not very good” (*non valde mali, non valde boni*) in Purgatory are redeemed by the mass of St. Gregory the Great, charity works, partaking of the host and donations to the Church.⁸⁷

In the practice of the Catholic Church, the mass of Pope Gregory was considered extremely helpful for the souls in Purgatory. The iconographic program at Sânpetru underlines its importance by its position on the upper part of the wall. In this image that shows the Saint himself officiating, all the souls are released; helped by an angel, they move towards Jesus. Through his theological work, especially *Dialogi*⁸⁸ and the miracles attributed to him, Gregory the Great, Doctor of the Latin Church, is one of the saints always linked with Purgatory through the belief that his series of 30 funeral services officiated right after death will guarantee salvation. Even lay people read Gregory’s Homilies and Dialogs, and his 30 masses were asked for in the testaments.⁸⁹ The theme of *St. Gregory’s Mass* was frequently associated with Purgatory in Medieval Spanish altars, in the art of France and the Netherlands.⁹⁰

In the lower part of the same wall at Sânpetru, the iconography develops around the theme of the *Mass for the Dead*, also including the other suffrages that help in saving souls: the Eucharist, the works of mercy

and Archangel Michael. The central image, that also illustrates the dedication of the Chapel – *Corpus Christi* – blends two rare images of the Catholic iconography: the Mass for the Souls and the Miracle of Transubstantiation, as a reminder of the expiating power of the Eucharist that unifies in spirit the living and the dead. “The holy mass, says *Summa confessorum* of Thomas de Chobam (1215) is celebrated for the living and for the dead, but twice as much for the dead because the holy mysteries from the altar are pleas for the living, signs of gratitude for the saints and, for those in Purgatory, supplications to be granted divine mercy and be spared the punishments”.⁹¹ Above the host blessed by the priest, the figure of the child Jesus reminds us of the central truth of the Christian faith, that of the Son of the Living God who offers Himself to the believers in every holy mass through the renewal of the mystery of Incarnation and sacrifice without bloodshed. Linked with the miraculous apparitions and the bloodstained hosts of the late Middle Ages, the image at Sânpetru also provides a rare iconographic representation of the visible incarnation of the child Jesus, under the blessings of the priest, above the holy gifts.

Near the scene of Transubstantiation, richly and fashionably dressed characters carry in their hands funeral candles and give food and clothes as charity to the poor and invalids. They help the souls in prayer escape from the place of punishment, symbolically represented by a cauldron, while the others hopefully await their salvation. In this painted lesson of *charitas christiana*, the two worlds are figured on the same plane: “the living take care of the dead because they themselves are future dead, and in a Christian society – and this is particularly true for the Middle Ages – the future has no chronological sense, only an eschatological one”.⁹²

Psychostasis, the scene which at Sânpetru closes the cycle of suffrages, is a reminder of Doomsday and has, in the conception of the time, an additional connotation linked to the belief in Purgatory and indulgences: “the image of St. Michael weighing the souls kept alive in everyone’s conscience the idea that there was a hope of redemption of the sinful through donations [to the Church]”.⁹³ In the image at Sânpetru, a rare detail, lost in Sântana de Mureş but still preserved at Dârjiu (1419) or in Slovakia, at Kraskovó and Piveticice, is worth noting: the saved soul, always to the right of the Archangel, holds with both hands a funeral candle with two saving hosts, a direct reference to the Eucharistic funeral sacrifice with the help of which the soul had been saved. St. Michael, the angel of death and the protector of souls, belongs to the iconography of Purgatory:

a German woodcut from the end of the fifteenth century, featuring in the background angels saving souls, clearly shows the power of intercession attributed to the Saint in connection with "the third site".⁹⁴ In the already mentioned image of the dying man painted by Vincentius from Sibiu, half of the surface is also dedicated to St. Michael weighing the souls and striking the devils. As the guide of the souls, he is invoked in the mass for the dead: "St. Michael, the standard bearer, will lead the souls toward the sacred light". He is the first saint named in testaments after The Holy Trinity and numerous Middle Ages funeral chapels and altars are dedicated to him. This suggests the possibility of a second dedication of the *Corporis Christi* Chapel at Sânpetru, to St. Michael, given that St. Michael is represented there several times.⁹⁵

As in the frescos from Martignac en Quercy⁹⁶ or in the painting of Enguerrand Quarton, located in the proximity of the representation of Purgatory is the image of Paradise, where The Holy Mother is crowned. This metaphorical image of the union between Christ and Mary, which has its origins in the Song of Songs,⁹⁷ shows that through Mary the mystical union extends to the whole Church that she symbolizes, so that some suffering souls are released the very moment the crown is set on her head.⁹⁸ In this sense we should mention an *exemplum* in which a woman's soul, returned for a short period to earth, tells that the most important Marian feast, the *Assumption*, is one of the days on which most souls are released from Purgatory; the same is true of the feast of St. Michael, of the guardian angels or of All Saints.⁹⁹ It is worthy of note that all these themes exist in the iconography of the chapel at Sânpetru. Under the scene of the *Coronation of the Virgin Mary* in Paradise, the *Deesis* can also be seen: Mary and John the Baptist mediating beside Jesus, leading groups of saints. Far from the terrifying idea of the Judgment Day as a tribunal, all the saints pray for the salvation of mankind. In the calendar of the Latin Church, the day of the dead, "the fortunate ones waiting in the Purgatory", is significantly connected with the feast of All Saints a day earlier. The link between the two feasts is strongly emphasized in medieval literature, these days being considered as a respite for the souls in Purgatory.¹⁰⁰ The saved souls contribute to the treasure of merits of the Church, to which all the souls have access through the *communion of the saints*, interceding in their turn for the salvation of the people still living on earth. For this reason, the presence of the archdeacons Stephen and Lawrence, saints with great merits earned by their martyrdom and honored by the Catholic Church with privileges such as *vigilia*, *octava*

and *reclama*, gains additional signification in this iconographical context; in an *exemplum* from the collection of the Dominican Étienne de Bourbon, a vision is recounted according to which once in Heaven, Stephen intercedes for Saint Paul, who had been present at his lapidation. Of St. Lawrence, the tradition says that he has the privilege to descend every Friday to the Purgatory in order to save a soul.¹⁰¹ The communion and intercession of the saints – that of the *triumphant Church* in Heaven – joins the suffrages of *the militant Church* – the living church on Earth – for the salvation of the *suffering Church* of the souls in Purgatory. Jesus shows Himself to the saints and blesses the saved ones.

The Limbo

Parallel to the appearance of Purgatory, in the context of the big reshuffling of the geography of the afterworld of the twelfth century, a new place was born – the Limbo of the Patriarchs, inspired by the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, in which the resurrected Jesus descends to save the Fathers of the Old Testament.¹⁰² There is only one known representation of the descent of Jesus in Hell in late Transylvanian Gothic art: a secondary episode of the scene of the Resurrection in the altar of the *Passion of Christ* in Mediaş (after 1480).

Although by the end of the thirteen century the three regions of the afterworld, Paradise/Hell/Purgatory had become the prevailing system, in the writings of certain scholastics a system of five regions was configured, the Limbo of Children remaining a subject of debate for many centuries thereafter. For St. Augustine, baptism being an essential condition of the salvation, non-baptized dead children cannot enter an intermediary place of rest and happiness, although they are not stained by personal sins, only by the original sin.¹⁰³ Unlike Purgatory, a place of transition, the Limbo of Children, like Paradise and Hell, is an eternal place and remains so also after the Last Judgement. St. Bonaventura spoke about *limbus inferni*, a *locus inferior* in Abraham's bosom, which includes the Limbo of the Holy Fathers and the Limbo of Children, where the punishment of senses is not endured, but only the punishment of not seeing the face of God. The theologians prefer this canonical variant from the beginning of the thirteenth century, even though not declared official by the councils.¹⁰⁴ For Thomas Aquinas, "the Limbo of Fathers and the Limbo of Children differ according to the quality of the reward and the sufferings endured: children cannot hope for eternal life, which

shines in the light of faith and grace that the fathers enjoy in their limbo". In the not very numerous mediaeval representations, the depriving of the "vision of bliss" is assimilated to the lack of light, to the dark, the Limbo of children being figured as a dark grotto, placed somewhere at the edge of Hell, in which the little non-baptized pray. This scene can be observed in Enguerand Quarton's masterpiece painted for the Carthusian monk Jean de Montagnac in Villeneuve les Avignon, in Spanish art, on the predella of the altar from the museum of the Cathedral in Majorca,¹⁰⁵ or in the San Mateo Church from Castillon. The only image of the Limbo of children preserved in Transylvania is to be found in the Church "on the Hill" in Sighișoara. This representation is painted above the scene of the Hell, as part of the *Last Judgement*, situated on the eastern wall of the nave.¹⁰⁶

The cult of the saints

Recurrent apocalyptic fears, fed by supernatural revelations, intensified the cult of saints that became as strong as it was in the early centuries of Christianity. On the walls of the Transylvanian fortified churches, which were places of prayer but also shelters for the whole community in times of danger, the saints were presented as powerful protectors and ideal models, "the living stones" of the Heavenly Church. Here, *ad sanctos*, the pilgrims left their names scratched on the surface of the paintings, as an eternal reminder of their passage through the sacred places, which would assure the protection of the saints whose relics and icons were kept inside.¹⁰⁷

The sanctuary shows the Lord among his Church, formed by the Apostles and the Prophets – sometimes holding scrolls inscribed with the Creed, the Evangelists, the Fathers of the Roman Church, and the Holy Mother as *Mater Ecclesia* – the symbol of the Church and *Mater omnium* – the universal protector of the souls.¹⁰⁸ This is followed immediately by St. Anne, the Virgin's mother and the source of Jesus' earthly family. Her devotion seems to have increased in central and Eastern Europe one century earlier than in the West, where only towards the end of the fifteenth century did it become "completely attached to the cult of the Virgin, all her family enjoying this favor".¹⁰⁹ Images of the *Mettercia* – the group of Ann/Mary/Jesus – are frequently encountered in the churches in the historical territory of Hungary; however, the developed scheme of the Holy Family appears, as a particularity, only in Transylvania at the

end of the fourteenth century. Here, two images were painted at Sântana de Mureș and Mălâncrav, at a time when this theme was virtually unknown in the rest of Europe.¹¹⁰ The images worship Anne and her descendants, as did late religious prose, *Mettercia* being represented among the Holy Virgin's sisters, the first witnesses of the Redemption – Salomé and Maria Cleophé – and their sons, John, James Major and James Minor, Simon, Judas Thaddeus – the future apostles, and Joseph Justus.¹¹¹ Archangel Michael as protector, but also as the saint of the dead and of Purgatory, is also present in every Transylvanian mural ensemble or altar. When he is represented killing the dragon, he is frequently paired with St. George, the protector of the knights. Catherine and Barbara, represented together systematically in the German cultural area, are also extremely familiar in Transylvania, where they accompany the Virgin as the Woman of the Apocalypse or in the Heavenly Garden. The other virgin saints – Margaret, Dorothy and Ursula, “the great martyrs of Christianity” – Stephan and Lawrence, the founders of religious orders – Dominic and Francis, or Nicolas, the patron Saint of Transylvania, are also present in the imagery dedicated to the saints. Louis of France, patron of the dynastic house during the reign of King Louis d’Anjou (1342 – 1382) and the Holy Kings of the Hungarian crown, Stephan, Emeric and Ladislas – are represented mainly in murals, in homage to royalty. St. Ladislas, the Hungarian king who was victorious against the Cumans, and to whom miracles were attributed, came to be considered the absolute defender against the Asiatic invaders. The main episodes from the life of this “frontier hero” were painted inside the churches, in the areas most exposed to invasions: northern Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and South-east Transylvania, where there they are still preserved in Mugeni, Ghelintă, Chilieni, Biborțeni, Daia or Dârjiu.¹¹² His *vita* was probably written under the spiritual patronage of the Anjou royal family in Hungary, within the theological milieu of the bishopric in Oradea, the principal place of devotion, where his relics were preserved and where the first painted cycle was probably represented.¹¹³

The popular faith has attached further meanings to certain icons. Jesus as the Man of Sorrow and Mary as the Mother of Mercy intercede and protect the humanity from the arrows of divine wrath, war, famine, plague or sudden death, in images of devotion endowed with indulgences by the Church.¹¹⁴ It was also considered that he who has seen the image of the Holy Face of the Savior printed on the *sudarium* – the *Vera Icon*, would enjoy protection all day long against violent death without communion.¹¹⁵

The same was true of St. Barbara, represented with the chalice and host, and of St. Christopher, whose huge figure could be seen on the outer walls of churches all over Europe, and are preserved in Transylvania at Strei, Mălâncrav, Daia (in two superposed images), in Sighișoara etc. The texts of some prayers preserved near his image in France and Germany clearly show his role as protector against bad death – *mala morte*, famine and plague.¹¹⁶ Other “saints of the plague” worshiped in Transylvania are Sebastian, Roch and Anthony; to his place of worship in St. Antoine en Viennois (Dauphiné), Sigismund of Luxembourg, the king of Hungary, made a pilgrimage during the epidemic at the beginning of the fifteenth century.¹¹⁷

The indulgences of the Roman Church and the images of piety

If in the beginning Christians only knew eternity or an indeterminate expectation, “the triumph of Purgatory” in the thirteenth century prolonged the time of life and memory beyond death, the Church extending its power to the other world by developing the system of indulgences.¹¹⁸ The Church, as a mediator of redemption, having the authority to dispense and apply the treasure of the merits of Christ and of the saints, grants forgiveness before God for the confessed sins of the believers, the indulgences also being capable of application to the souls in Purgatory: “Because the believers belong either to the militant Church or to the triumphant church, they [those in Purgatory] are in between and [...] may be submitted to the power of the priest due to the power of the keys”,¹¹⁹ says Albert of Hales, “the theorist and witness of this evolution”, in an essential text for the development of the doctrine.

The indulgences were at first given only to the crusaders.¹²⁰ On the occasion of the first jubilee, in 1300, Pope Boniface VIII gave to all the pilgrims in Rome plenary indulgences – *plenissima venia peccatorum* – extending their action, in that year of forgiveness of sins, to the dead too, though initially salvation of the souls was possible only *per modum suffragii*. The successors of Boniface VIII granted indulgences to all those who served the Church in the late crusades against the Turks or the heretics. Martin V grants them in 1420 to those who would fight against the Hussites in Bohemia, in the war led by Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg in which Transylvanian troops also participated.¹²¹ Nicholas V¹²² gave indulgences in 1447 and 1453, just after the fall of Constantinople, as did Calyx III in 1455 and Pius II in 1463,¹²³ to all of Christianity called to

fight against the Turks and to those who would aid the Crusade with donations and devotional acts,¹²⁴ contribute to the defense of the towns,¹²⁵ or help in the rebuilding of the churches destroyed by Muslims in Braşov in 1450¹²⁶ and Sebeş in 1455.¹²⁷ In the fifteenth century indulgences were used abundantly and could also be obtained through devotional acts:

In the middle of our lives we are still far away from death, not thanks to our merits, but to the prayers of the saints and the suffrages of the Church. The mediator between God and people, Jesus Christ, saved us. He offered his body on the altar of the cross of God the Father as an immaculate sacrifice and, by giving his holy blood, he left an invaluable treasure of indulgences useful for any evil people, whose administration was given to St. Peter and his successors and to each of us. The altar from the lectorius of Virgin Mary parish Church, raised in the honor of the Body of Christ, needs financial support. For the spiritual benefit of those who, in front of the altar, kneel and pray "Our Father" and "Hail Mary", willing to reward all those who repent and confess their sins, for those who in all the devotion pilgrimage days will come, will attend the mass and the other divine services and will help with books, candles, wills or other means which they will bring to the aforementioned altar, or for those who pray to God before this altar for their parents and benefactors' souls, every and anytime they will be doing these acts of devotion, from the Almighty God's clemency and by authority of Peter and Paul, 40 days of indulgences for their imposed punishments, by mercy and in God's name we give them forever.¹²⁸

This quite eloquent text of the letter issued on January 6, 1466, by Johannes, bishop of Moldavia and a supplicant on behalf of the bishop of Transylvania, clearly shows that the spiritual effort was considered the first condition of forgiveness.

The indulgence theorists took pains to point out that indulgence was attached not to an image or a relic but rather to the act of devotion made before it, and this act was incomplete without full confession and penitence. On this basis many churchmen were willing to defend it mainly as a stimulus to penitence.¹²⁹

In respect of what concerns the offerings that were demanded by the Church in order to obtain the indulgences, we should mention that among donations and acts of piety, testaments and prayers for the souls in Purgatory are specially asked for, as also shown in other documents: "*Pia mater*

ecclesia de animarum salute sollicita devotiones fidelium per quaedam munera spiritualia remissiones scilicet et indulgentias invitare consuevit (1451).¹³⁰

This is the frame in which scholars of the Middle Ages explain the new “book-keeping mentality” extended also to the imaginary, as an attempt of retrieving an order that was lost by the dissolution of the “qualitative” values of existence. The number and the measure, as means of order creation, were also applied to the afterlife, making “the time of Purgatory to be included in the time of the indulgences”.¹³¹ Thus, the years of forgiveness obtained by the living could proportionally shorten the period spent by the soul of the dead in Purgatory.¹³² In Transylvanian Medieval documents this time is always specified: for pious visits, but also for donations to an altar or to a church, 40 days, 100 days or even 50 years of forgiveness – in the case of the Church of Virgin Mary in Braşov destroyed by the Turks that Pope Nicholas V wanted to see rebuilt – would be granted.¹³³

The recurrence of certain themes in the Middle Ages figurative art is also linked to the indulgences, with some images extracted from their narrative context and being an intrinsic part of the devotional act. Selected from traditional religious iconography, these images (*Andachtsbilder*) “function as a concise symbol of great evocative power, emphasizing the emotional content of the subject in order to awaken pious thoughts”. The indulgences were frequently attached to the relics preserved in the altar shrines decorated by sculptors; sometimes their meaning was extended to certain works of arts, which then became objects of pilgrimage.¹³⁴ Popular piety brings even today masses of believers to the miraculous icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland¹³⁵ or to the statues of *Schöne Maria* in Regensburg¹³⁶ and *Madonna with Child* in Şumuleu-Ciuc (1500) in Transylvania¹³⁷ – to mention just a few examples in central and eastern Europe. But it was the Church itself that promised forgiveness, for instance, to those who pray before *The Calvary* exposed in the French Monastery in Champmol,¹³⁸ monumental crosses were erected near churches, at crossroads or at the edge of roads that were spreading everywhere in Europe. As a traditional theme of piety, the *Crucifixion* also retains a strong position in Transylvanian art. The oldest known *Calvaries* are from Deal Frumos and Merghindeal and are considered representative works of the late Gothic woodcarving.¹³⁹ The painted images seem to convey more about the implications of the devotional act.¹⁴⁰ In symbolically concise images, on neutral backgrounds that

suggest atemporality, only the principal characters of the episode are represented: the Redeemer between Mary and John the Evangelist (Vlaha). The sacred blood of Jesus, symbol of the Eucharist, is gathered by flying angels in chalices (Mediaş and Cluj) or by a donor (Homorod). In Hărman, the Crucifixion is at the center of a representation of universal salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus. Near the cross, the three states of the world – *oratores, bellatores, laboratores* – pray together with the symbolic characters of the Biblical parable, the customs official and the Pharisee,¹⁴¹ with apostles, prophets and saints.

The year after the 1400 Jubilee, in which Pope Boniface IX granted one hundred days of indulgence to those who would visit St. Michael Church in Cluj, he encouraged, with the same promise of forgiveness, pilgrimage to the image of *The Prayer on the Mount of Olives*, an image that decorated the exterior of the edifice.¹⁴² Only a similar benefit from indulgences could explain, for instance, the presence on the outside walls of St. Sebaldus Church in Nuremberg of no less than six independent carved votive images of the *Agony of the Lord*, a theme whose obvious funerary significance in German art has already been shown.¹⁴³ The same composition in high relief, usually placed outside, on the southern wall of the choir, can be found in all important churches, it also being one of the most frequently represented iconographic themes of Gothic carved stone in Transylvania. To the image referred to by the papal document in Cluj, we should add those from Feldioara (1410-1420), Sebeş (1430),¹⁴⁴ Sibiu 1480, Baia Mare and Biertan, where it can be found among the other reliefs of the pulpit carved by Ulrich of Braşov in 1523-1524¹⁴⁵.

Concerning the devotional images, Mâle speaks about the iconographical theme of *Vir Dolorum*, which represents the vision experienced by St. Pope Gregory the Great in the Santa Croce of the Gerusalemme Church in Rome in the sixth century.

If after confession, seven 'Our Fathers', seven 'Hail Marys' and seven short 'St. Gregory's prayers' are said before a representation of Christ of Mercy [*Vir Dolorum*], 6,000 years of 'real forgiveness' would be obtained. One claims that St. Gregory himself obtained this favor from Jesus Christ. In the course of the fifteenth century, the Popes increased the by that time already amazing number of indulgences such that the number of years of forgiveness became prodigious: a manuscript from St. Geneviève's Library speaks of 14,000 years, while an altar from Aix-la Chapelle speaks of 20,000 years, and the manuscripts and *livres d'Heures* from the end of the fifteenth century speaks of no less than 46,000 years of indulgences. An

enormous number, but one which the Church, viewing everything from the perspective of eternity, considered too small. Under the representation of the *Christ of Mercy* from St. Léonard in Oise something even more surprising can be read. In case. it says, that after prayers are said in front of the image, you visit a graveyard, you would gain as many years of forgiveness as were bodies buried in the graveyard since the beginning. In all these instances, as can be well seen, the image of *Christ of Mercy* had to be contemplated.¹⁴⁶

The indulgences explain the extraordinary spread of this image, mainly in the funeral art, first reproduced by the Italians in the fourteenth century after the Byzantine prototype, which is preserved even today in the Church where the miraculous vision took place. The pilgrims brought it to the North, and at the end of the fifteenth century it was spread through engravings.¹⁴⁷ A replica by the Flemish artist Israel van Mechlen bears the message: "This is a copy of the holy image of piety which Pope Gregory the Great had made of his vision."¹⁴⁸ A complex scheme attributed to the Florentine Master of Mercy, preserved nowadays in Bologna, makes more explicit the link between *Vir Dolorum* and forgiveness, by including in the lower part of the image two praying souls that await their salvation by the accomplishment of devotional acts.

In Transylvania *Vir Dolorum* – Jesus in his grave – was also one of the most frequent devotional images, represented in the mural paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century. These can be found at Vlaha, where they are closest to the original, Strei – above the main entrance and in the presbytery, Mălâncrav – twice, once in the east on the axe of the altar's apse and again on the northern wall of the choir, and in same place at Nemșa, this location being linked with the presence of the Holy Sacrament in the tabernacle. At Homorod, above the niche that sheltered the *sacramentarium*, on the northern part of the ancient choir of the church, a dead Jesus is present between Mary and John the Evangelist in the iconographic manner that is favored by Italian artists, the style itself disclosing the influence of the Trecento painting after Giotto. The emotional charge introduced by the presence of Jesus' Mother and his beloved apprentice, those who remained with Jesus until his death, is emphasized by the tender gesture of the Holy Virgin, familiar in representations of the *Pietà*, that amplifies the sense of Jesus' sufferings, mystically perpetuated after his death. One century later, *Pietà* itself

became an image endowed with special indulgences and a solemn mass was to be officiated on the first Sunday after the octave of the Ascension.¹⁴⁹ But the most frequent iconographic type of this theme in central Europe, according to Mâle, which represents the moment of St. Gregory's vision during the mass, is preserved only once in Transylvanian Gothic art, in the funeral Chapel *Corporis Christi* in Sânpetru, where canonical data are not respected. The saint officiates with the deacon Peter attending and keeping his papal *triregnum*; in the moment of the consecration of the host three angels in prayer appear as a symbol of the Holy Trinity. Jesus as Child appears in the correlated image of the Transubstantiation above the Holy Sacrament. At Sânpetru this image belongs to the cycle of *suffrages* for the salvation of souls from Purgatory, "which humanity, confident in the promises of St. Gregory the Great, will release through their prayers".¹⁵⁰ In the figurative sculpture¹⁵¹ *Vir Dolorum* is the image that decorated for a long time the stone tabernacles, directly linked with the Eucharistic meaning of the theme; this happened at Bazna (1504), Târciu (1504), and Vorumloc (beginning of sixteenth century). In the paintings of the second part of the fifteenth century, the image becomes more complex, with a detailed presentation of the instruments of passion, Middle Ages Christians "meditating upon these instruments of suffering and death that saved humanity". Such representations have their origins in the liturgical collections of the fourteenth century in which appear the first hymns of "Christ's instruments of passion". Again the frequency of these mystical compositions was due to the promised indulgences, sometimes recorded near the images: "Those who gaze at these instruments in honor of the passion will gain 6,000 years of forgiveness".¹⁵² Held by Jesus, on the predella of the Gothic altars (Mălâncrav and Cincu),¹⁵³ or displayed on the background of *Vir Dolorum* between angels (Sântimbru), the instruments of passion are developed, under heraldic influence, into the independent *Arma Christi* motif.¹⁵⁴ In Sighișoara, alongside the instruments of passion held by an angel – the cross, the crown of thorns, the nails, the whip, the lance, the reed and the sponge – other things also appear, "which tell one after the other all the scenes of the drama": the cock of Peter's denial and the ladder of the descent from the Cross. *Arma Christi* are literally represented in Biertan on a red shield, the symbolic color for the bloody sufferings of The Lord.¹⁵⁵ The shield is held by an angel who interposes it in front of the arrow of divine anger sent to punish a humanity full of sins (*pestbild*), also protected by the

cloak of the Mother of Mercy, in this image that emphasizes, shortly before the Reformation, the tenets of faith of the Roman Church.

In the late Middle Ages, Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, the protector and advocate of all souls, is worshiped more intensely than ever. The daily prayer of *Ave Maria* was considered sufficient for redemption.

According to the documents, if one recited the rosary three times a week, one obtained twenty-three years, twenty-three weeks, and twenty-three days worth of indulgences; if one recited the rosary three times a day, one obtained 168 years, 231 weeks, and 21 days; if one recited it three times a day for a week, one received a bonus of 150 years; and finally, if one recited it nine times a day for a year one was entitled to 15,492 years of indulgences.¹⁵⁶

In late mediaeval images, Mary is venerated mostly as the *Mother of Mercy* and as the *Virgin of the Apocalypse*, in accordance with the words of the Holy Scripture: "And a great sign was shown in the sky: a woman dressed with the sun, having the moon under her feet and wearing on her head a crown of twelve stars". In a time of debates and controversies, *Maria in Sole* is the first formula of figuration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.¹⁵⁷ The inscription *Concepta sine peccato* that sometimes accompanies the devotional image confirms it as a symbolic representation of the belief that God created the Holy Virgin before time and that she was untouched by the original sin. The reading before the image *Maria in Sole* of the prayer *Ave Sanctissima Virgo Maria mater dei, regina coeli, porta paradisi* guaranteed 11,000 years of indulgences,¹⁵⁸ which explains its impressive spread in the second half of the fifteenth century by means of German engraving. In Transylvania, the Woman of the Apocalypse is represented in the iconographical variant *Virgo inter virgines*, between Barbara and Catherine (Hărman, 1500¹⁵⁹.) In the painting donated by king Mathias Corvinus to the parish Church in Braşov, one of the Transylvanian masterpieces from the end of the fifteenth century, the theme *Maria in Sole* between the same saints, is metaphorically linked with the theme of the garden of paradise –*hortus conclusus*, an ancient attribute of the Virgin inserted in the Litanies.¹⁶⁰

After the first quarter of the sixteenth century, only a few devotional themes were still in existence, being contested even by certain religious currents, especially those inspired by Luther's predecessors.

It was naturally a recurrent worry of the popular devotional books that concrete, simple people were unable to sustain the finer points of distinction in the use of images, the cult of saints, and the doctrine of indulgences, and it is likely that many did distort or oversimplify.¹⁶¹

After the Reformation, the Protestants, through their attacks against indulgences, obliged the Catholic Church to reconsider its traditions, leading to the disappearance of certain devotional themes.¹⁶²

Between the year 1300 – the time of the oldest preserved figurative representations, and 1526 – the year of the battle of Mohacs and a turning point in the history of Eastern Europe, a period of major ideological changes that prepared the ground for the Reformation, Catholic Transylvanian art reflected the mentality of a complex society, with problems that belong, in all respects, to “Western Medieval civilization”. Once the contours of the field are established, other themes could be added to those already considered within the limits of my paper, and approached by means of a similar exploration of sensibilities and mentalities through the visual arts of late Middle Ages Transylvania.

The main ensembles and iconographic themes mentioned in the text:

Braşov: The image of the *Virgin with the Child*, crowned by angels between saints is preserved in the tympanum of the south-east portal of Mathias Corvinus, donated by the king between 1477 and 1490.

Biertan: *The Prayer in the Garden of Ghetsemani*, an image that together with other scenes decorates the carved pulpit made by Ulrich from Braşov for the parish church, in 1524-1526. In the chapel of the Catholic Tower, part of the fortified ensemble of the church, the following scenes are conserved: *The Mystic Betrothal of St. Catherine* (outside), *The Annunciation*, *The Adoration of the Magi*, *The Last Judgment*, *St. George and the Dragon*, *Psychostasis*, *Arma Christi*, *Mater Misericordiae*. c. 1500.

Dârjiu: Paul from Ung painted *Psychostasis* as an independent scene in 1419, along with other images inside the parish church, of which the most important are: *The Cycle of St. Ladislav* and the *Conversion of St. Paul*.

Ghelinţa: The fragmentary ensemble preserved in the sanctuary of the Reformed church, the rare representation of *The Holy Family with St.*

Anne among Apostles, dating from the last decades of the fourteenth century.

Hărman: The funeral chapel preserves an ensemble dominated by three iconographic themes: *The Crucifixion*, *The Last Judgement* with the representation of the *Works of Mercy*, *The Parable of Lazarus*, and *Abraham's Bosom*; the *Glorification of the Virgin* with the scenes of the *Annunciation*, the *Nativity* in the rare variant *Defensorium Mariae*, *Coronatio Virginis* and *Maria in Sole Between St. Barbara and St. Catherine*, c. 1500.

Homorod: *Pietà*, a devotional image from the end of the fourteenth century, painted over earlier frescoes (1300) on the northern wall, near the niche of the tabernacle; *The Crucifixion with a Donor*, c. 1419.

Mălâncrav: *Vir Dolorum*, represented twice in the painting of the choir of the Apa family church, in an ensemble dominated by *The Christologic Cycle*, saints, including St. Christopher, and *The Holy Family with St. Anne*. In the same place an altar is also preserved, with the image of *Vir Dolorum* with the instruments of passion on the predella, and *St. George*, *St. Michael and the Dragon*, on the outer wings.

Mugeni: On the northern wall of the nave of the parish church, along with other earlier representations (the lives of St. Ladislau and St. Margaret), the *Last Judgement*, with peculiar iconographic details, painted at the end of the fourteenth century.

Medias: Inside St Margaret's Church, on the southern wall of the nave are painted scenes from the *Christologic Cycle* and *The Last Judgment*, as independent images (1420). The altar, dating after the 1480s, is dedicated to *Christ's Passion*, represented around the central image of the *Crucifixion*.

Sânpetru: In the *Corporis Christi* Chapel a coherent ensemble is preserved, with the following scenes: *St. Michael Punishing Lucifer*, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, *Deesis*, *The Martyrdom of St. Stephen and Lawrence*, *The Suffrages of the Souls in Purgatory* (*St. Gregory's Mass*, *Acts of Charity*, the *Transubstantiation*, *Psychostasis*). On the vaults the evangelists and the doctors of the Latin Church are represented, and on the arch the prophets. Dated ca. 1400.

Sighişoara: Among other images inside the Church "on the Hill": *Arma Christy*, *The Last Judgement* with the scenes of the *Paradise*, *Hell* and the *Limbo of Children*, *St. Christopher*, *Psychostasis* on the net vault (1483). At the basis of the western tower, Johannes Kendlinger from Sankt

Wolfgang painted four passion scenes in 1488, and a disciple of his, scenes of St. Francis' life.

Strei: Above the main entrance to the small family church, painted at the end of the fourteenth century by a team led by master Grozie, originally from North Dalmatia, the *Vir Dolorum* image was painted; the same image inside, in the axe of the choir. Outside the sanctuary stands the huge image of *St. Christopher*.

Vincentius from Sibiu: Author of the image of the dying man – *Ars moriendi*, on the tympanum of an altar painted around 1520, now preserved in the Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu.

Vlaha: In the sanctuary of the parish church, the devotional images *Vir Dolorum* and *The Crucifixion* are preserved, dating approximately from the 1380s.



1. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The western wall of the nave.
The Last Judgement: Deesis, Angels with the Instruments of the Passion, the Resurrection of the Dead, Paradise, the Mouth of Hell as Leviathan, the Limbo of the Children. End of the 15th century



2. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The western wall of the nave.
*The Last Judgement: Paradise, the Mouth of Hell as Leviathan,
the Limbo of the Children.* Around 1500



3. Sighişoara, the Church "on the Hill". The vault of the nave.
St Michael. 1483



4. Sânpetru, the Funeral Chapel of the Parish Church. The northern wall.
The Suffrages for the Souls in Purgatory: Woks of Mercy. Around 1400



5. Sânpetru, the Funeral Chapel of the Parish Church. The northern wall.
The Suffrages for the Souls in Purgatory: The Eucharist. Around 1400



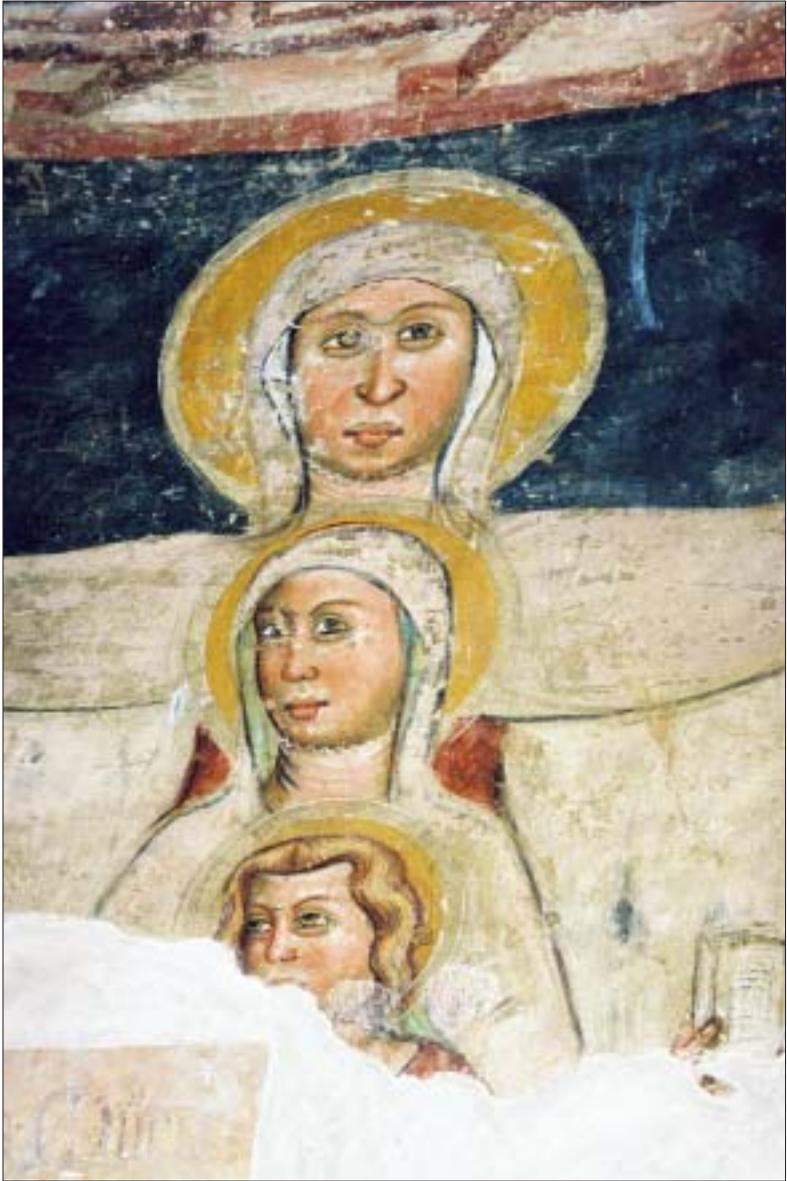
6. Medias, the Evangelic Church. The vault of the choir. *Jesus and His Church Symbolized by the Virgin: Evangelists, Doctors of the Catholic Church and Apostles with scrolls with fragments of the Creed.*
Around 1500



7. Hårman, the Funeral Chapel. The southern wall. *Jesus and His Church*, detail: *Evangelists and Doctors of the Catholic Church* on the vaults, the *Creed of the Prophets and Apostles* on the walls.
End of the 15th century



8. a. Sântana de Mureș, The Presbyterian Church. The choir. *Holy Family with Anna Mettercia Worshipped by Angels*. End of the 14th century



8. b. Sântana de Mureș, The Presbyterian Church. The choir.
Anna Mettercia. End of the 14th century



9. Alma pe Târnavă. The Presbyterian Church. *St George*. The southern wall of the choir. Beginning of the 15th century



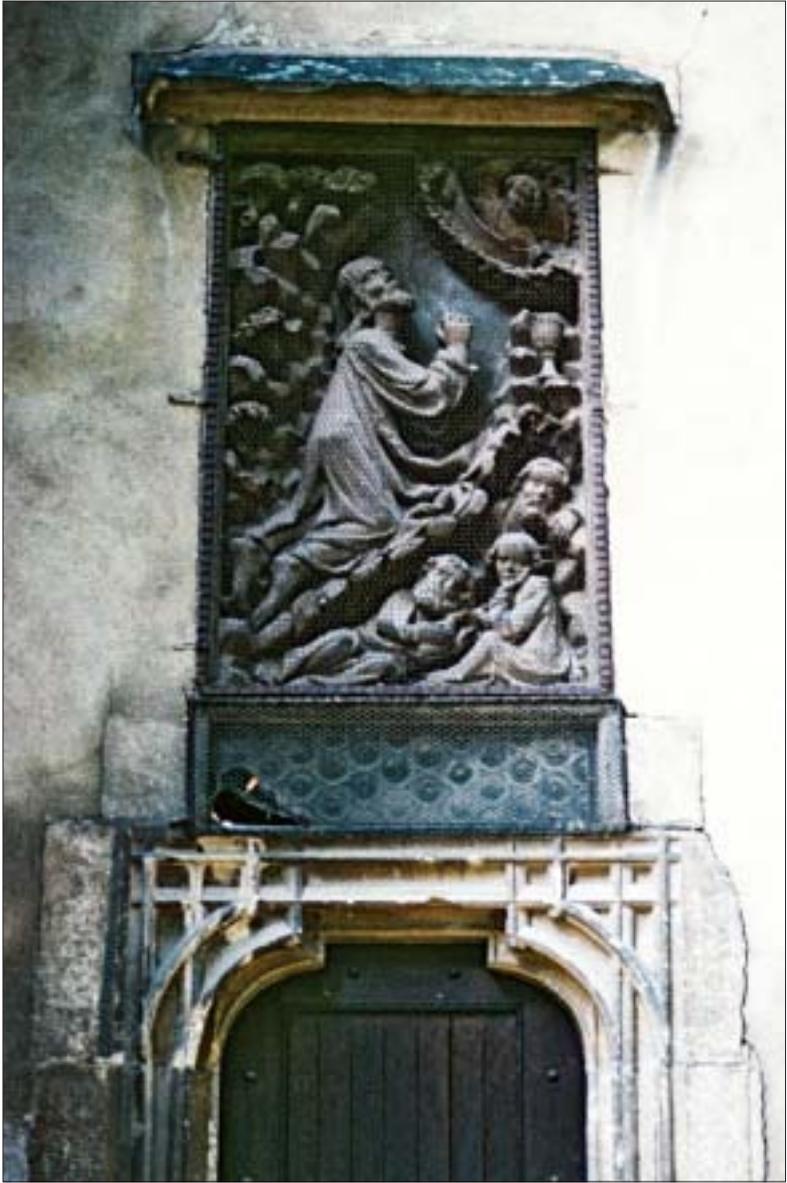
10. Strei, the Orthodox Church. The main entrance. *Vir Dolorum*.
End of the 14th century



11. Mălâncrav, the Evangelic Church. The triumphal arch.
Mater Misericordiae. 1405



12. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The triumphal arch.
Vera Icon. 1483



13. Sibiu, the Evangelic Church. The entrance into the sacristy.
The Prayer in the Garden of Ghetsemani. 15th century



14. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The choir. *Arma Christi*.
15th century



15. Hărman, the Funeral Chapel. The vault. *Maria in Sole*.
End of the 15th century



16. Braşov, the Black Church. The south-eastern entrance.
Virgo inter virgines. End of the 15th century

NOTES

- 1 Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France. Étude sur l'iconographie du Moyen Âge et sur ses sources d'inspiration*, Paris 1990, p. 11.
- 2 Victor Roth, *Geschichte der deutschen Plastik in Siebenbürgen*, Strassbourg, 1906, (herausg. von) Victor Roth, *Die deutsche Kunst in Siebenbürgen*, Sibiu, 1934; I. D. Ștefănescu, *L'art byzantin et l'art lombard en Transylvanie*, Paris, 1938; Bálogh Jolán, *Az erdelyi Renaissance. 1460-1541* [The Transylvanian Renaissance. 1460-1541], I, Cluj, 1943; Radocsáy Dénes, *A középkori magyarország falkepei*, Budapest, 1954; Virgil Vătășianu, *Istoria artei feudale în țările române* [The History of the Feudal Art in the Romanian Provinces], I, București, 1959; Alfred Stange, *Deutsche Malerei der Gotik. Österreich und der ostdeutsche Siedlungsraum von Danzig bis Siebenbürgen in der zeit von 1400 bis 1500*, München-Berlin, 1961; Vasile Drăguș, "Iconografia picturilor murale gotice din Transilvania", [The Iconography of the Gothic Wall Paintings in Transylvania] in *Pagini de veche artă românească*, București, II, 1972; *Arta gotică în România* [The Gothic Art in Romania], București, 1979; *Arta românească* [Romanian Art], I, București, 1982.
- 3 *Documente privind istoria României* [Documents Concerning the History of Romania], seria C, Transilvania, București, 1951; *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, I-VII, Hermanstadt, 1892 - București, 1991. My deepest gratitude goes to Gernot Nüssbacher, co-author of the sixth and seventh volumes and coordinator of the eighth, for his constant support and for the translation of the Latin texts.
- 4 Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Âge en France. Étude sur l'iconographie du Moyen Âge et sur ses sources d'inspiration*, Paris, 1949, p. II.
- 5 *Legenda Aurea*, the most used literary source of the medieval art was elaborated by the theologian, hagiograph and Dominican preacher Jacobus da Voragine, Bishop of Genova, around 1260. A major influence on artistic representations was also exercised by works such as *Meditationes vitae Christi*, attributed to St Bonaventura, *The Visions of St Brigitta of Sweden* etc. See Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 28.
- 6 Famous in this sense is the contract between the French painter Enquerand Quarton and Jean de Montagnac for the panel of the *Coronation of the Virgin* finished in 1454, at Villeneuve-les-Avignon; see Michel Laclote, Dominique Thiébaud, *L'École d'Avignon*, Paris, 1985.
- 7 "Schongauer graveur. La gravure en Allemagne au XVe siècle", in *Martin Schongauer. Maître de la gravure Rhénane vers 1450-1491*, Paris, Musée du Petit Palais, 1991-1992, p. 84.
- 8 Sigismund of Luxembourg was the son of Charles the IV (1346 - 1378), the Emperor who made Prague the capital of the German Holy-Roman Empire.

His second son, Vaclav the IV, was King of Bohemia (1378-1419), while Sigismund, King of Hungary, became Roman King in 1410, King of Bohemia (1419-1421 and 1436–1437), King of Italy in 1431 and Emperor beginning in 1433.

⁹ In 1355, the Romanians, predominant from an ethnic and demographic point of view, are mentioned for the last time in documents of the other Transylvanian nations: “*cum universus Nobilibus, Saxonibus, Syculis et Olachis*”. In order to preserve their privileges, some Romanian *czerial* families converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism, finally leading to their hungarization. See Stephen Fischer-Galați, Dinu C. Giurescu, Ioan-Aurel Pop (coordinators), *O istorie a românilor. Studii critice* [A History of the Romanians. Critical Studies], Cluj-Napoca, 1998, pp. 95-98, and Adrian Andrei Rusu, *Ioan de Hunedoara și românii din vremea lui* [John of Hunedoara and the Romanians of his Time], Cluj-Napoca, 1999, where the problem of the Romanian Nobility and the consequences of the union of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, after the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1436-1439) in Transylvania is widely treated.

¹⁰ Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformation*, Massachussets, 2000, p. 25.

¹¹ *Cronicon Dubnicense*, written around 1358, attests to the great number of victims of the plague in these territories See Paul Cernovodeanu and Paul Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului. Calamitățile naturale din trecutul României (până la 1800)*. [The Apocalypse Knights. Natural Calamities in the Romanian Past up to 1800], București, 1993. On a European level, around 30% of the population disappeared during the epidemic in 1348-1350. See Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

¹² The Roman Church is torn by crises without precedent: the removal of the Papality headquarters in Avignon, the “Babylonian captivity” (1309-1378), the “great schism” (1378–1417), during which two or even three Popes dispute their legitimacy. Against this background appear the reformers John Wycliff in England and Jan Huss in Bohemia who, though condemned by the Church at Council in Konstanz (1414–1417), when the schism ends with the effective involvement of King Sigismund of Luxembourg, prepare the scene for the Reformation of the beginning of the sixteenth century. See Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹³ “Of war, plague and starvation, release us God”, in Jean Delumeau, *Frica în Occident (secolele XIV-XIII). O cetate asediată* [Fear in Occident (Fourteenth – Eighteenth Centuries). A Besieged Fortress], București, 1986, I, p. 274; see also Cernovodeanu and Binder, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

¹⁴ Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of the Renaissance Germany*, London, 1980, fig. 140.

¹⁵ The first conquest of the Turks in Europe was Gallipoli, followed by the whole Balkan Peninsula. The resistance of the countries from the north Danube kept the Turks out of central Europe for about 150 years. Turkish invasions in Transylvania in 1432, 1436, 1438, 1442, 1444 and so on.

- ¹⁶ Delumeau, *op. cit.*, II, p.131.
- ¹⁷ Filippo Scolari or Pippo Spano (1369-1426), from Florence, Italy. Count of Timiș since 1404, supreme commander of the royal army, one of the closer counselors to King Sigismund of Luxembourg. Considered one of the greatest *strategists* of his time, being the central figure of the resistance against the Turks at the lower Danube after the death of Mircea the Old, prince of Walachia. See Ioan Hațegan, *Filippo Scolari. Un condotier italian pe meleaguri dunărene* [Filippo Scolari. An Italian *condotiere* on Danubian lands], Timișoara, 1997]
- ¹⁸ Drăguț, *Arta*, p. 46 and 78.
- ¹⁹ Delumeau, *op. cit.*, II, 118.
- ²⁰ Iancu of Hunedoara came from a Romanian (*cnez*) family, ennobled for military services by King Sigismund of Luxembourg. Until 1429 he was in the service of the Florentine *condotiere* Filippo Scolari. Between 1431 and 1433 he improved his military skill in Milan, before entering the service of the King. See Rusu, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46. In 1441 Iancu became prince (*voivoda*) of Transylvania, then governor of Hungary in 1446 and captain general of the kingdom in 1453. Starting in 1441, Iancu achieved a series of brilliant victories over the Turks, even on the south of the Danube in the territory of Serbia and Bulgaria. As governor of Hungary he created a common military system together with Walachia, Moldavia, Albania and certain Serbian forces. See Fisher, Giurescu, Pop, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-106.
- ²¹ Fisher, Giurescu, Pop, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
- ²² St Giovanni da Capistrano (1386-1456). As an “inborn inquisitor”, he fought endlessly against the enemies of the Latin Church: *Fratricelli* in Italy, Hussites, Turks and Jews in central Europe. See Delumeau, II, p. 154.
- ²³ Hațegan, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
- ²⁴ Ivan Cloulas, *Lorenzo Magnificul*, București, 1987, p. 318.
- ²⁵ “Preserved still in a great number and spread over a large territory, the peasant fortresses of the fortified churches are the most important and original contribution that the Transylvanian architecture made to European heritage”, in Drăguț, *Arta*, p. 113. Nowadays, a group of such fortresses are monuments on the World Heritage List.
- ²⁶ After the bloody repression of the rebellion the “*unio trium nationum*” was constituted – an alliance between the Hungarian, Saxon and Sikler Nobles against all *inner* and outer dangers, an act that in effect cancelled any rights of the Romanians in Transylvania See Fisher, Giurescu, Pop, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
- ²⁷ In 1521 the Turks conquered Belgrade, an extremely important defensive position of Europe. In the Diets of the Empire in Speyer (1523) and Nuremberg (1524), the Hungarian delegates begged for help without success, one explanation being that “in Europe, all those who were not directly menaced were indifferent to the Turkish danger”. M. P. Gilmore, *apud* Delumeau, *op. cit.*, II, p. 124.

- 28 Cernovodeanu, Binder, *op. cit.*, p. 39 - 40.
- 29 Gernot Nussbächer, *Din cronici și hrisoave* [From Chronicles and Documents], București, 1987, p. 55.
- 30 *Urkundenbuch*, VI, pp. 516-517, doc. 3901, *apud* Nussbächer, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-233.
- 31 Cernovodeanu, Binder, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.
- 32 1.4.4.8. *Annorum domini numeris dum fluxerit iste – Hoc opus expletum est auxiliante deo – tempore quo triduo Gerhardi sit tibi sign – Nix gravis et boreas fregit et lapst – hui Opifex Jacobus – Kendlinger de s. Wolf.* *Apud* Cristoph Machat, *Die Bergkirche und die Mittelalterliche Baukunst in Siebenbürgen*, München, 1977, p. 20.
- 33 Otto Benesch, *The Art of the Renaissance in Northern Europe. Its Relation to the Contemporary Spiritual and Intellectual Movements*, Massachusetts, 1974, p. 10.
- 34 Benesch, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
- 35 Delumeau, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 7-8.
- 36 Mircea Eliade, *Istoria religiilor și credințelor religioase* [History of Religions and Religious Beliefs], București, 1988, III, p. 217.
- 37 Calpern, *apud* Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
- 38 Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
- 39 Philippe Ariès, *Essais sur l'histoire de la mort en Occident du Moyen Âge à nos jours*, Paris, 1977, p. 97.
- 40 J. Heers, *apud* Philippe Ariès, *Omul în fața morții* [Man Faced with Death], București, 1998, I, p. 262.
- 41 Le Goff, *apud* Ariès, *Omul*, I, p. 261.
- 42 Georges Duby, *Arta și societatea. 980-1420* [Art and Society. 980-1420] București, 1987, II, p. 106.
- 43 *Urkundenbuch*, V, doc. 2459. The king's donation was the ruined royal manor near Saints Peter and Paul monastery in Brașov.
- 44 In the early decades of the fifteenth century, Filippo Scolari's court in Timișoara and that of Oradea, where his cousin Andrea Scolari was bishop between 1409 and 1416, were the main centers of Italian art and culture in the area. In 1425, he invited Masolino da Panicale to decorate his funeral chapel in Székesfehérvár. "Indirect evidence" indicates the painter's presence in Timișoara and Oradea. Unfortunately, all the works created during this period that ended in 1427, were later destroyed. The *postumus* portrait of the *condotiere* along with those of King Sigismund and cardinal Branda Castiglione, papal legate in Hungary since 1410, were painted by Masolino, in the *Feast of Herod* in the baptistery in Castiglione Olona, in 1435. But the best-known portrait of Pippo Spano is that by Andrea del Castagno, in the Villa Legnaia near Florence (today in the Uffizzi), included among the "uomini famosi" of the town. See Hațegan, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-142.

- 45 Bálogh, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-102. Nicholas Bethlen, member of the king's suite, was also the donor of the wooden painted ceiling in the church in Goganvarolea (around 1500), a masterpiece of Transylvanian art, now preserved at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest.
- 46 *Idem, op. cit.*, p. 96.
- 47 *Urkundenbuch*, III, p. 301, doc. 1494.
- 48 5 November, 1447, *idem*, V, doc. 2605.
- 49 *Ibidem*, V, 2616.
- 50 *Ibidem*, V, 2662.
- 51 *Ibidem*, VI, pp. 219-220, doc. 3432. The document also mentions "our house with *piscina* ", a golden belt with a dragon-shaped buckle, a *missale* and a chalice, as donations for the church in Sibiu, "a *piscina* with a yard" for the friars from Cluj and half of his possessions in Albești (a house with a yard and a mill) for the friars of Sighișoara. For pilgrimages to the same sacred places, Laurencio Wermenser of Cluj and his wife Agnes also made gifts in 1458. *Idem*, VI, 3155. See also Ariès, *Omul*, I, p. 265.
- 52 *Ibidem*, VI, 3325.
- 53 *Ibidem*, III, p. 301, doc. 1494.
- 54 *Ibidem*, VI, p. 54, doc. 3180. The donation consists also of candle wax.
- 55 *Ibidem*, VI, p.166, doc. 3350.
- 56 *Ibidem*, VI, 3256.
- 57 Part of the documentary information called on in this context was published in Dana Jenei, "Pictura murală a Capelei *Corporis Christi* din Sânpetru, jud. Brașov", [The Mural Paintings of the *Corporis Christi* Chapel in Sânpetru, district of Brașov], in *Ars Transilvaniae*, V, 1995, pp. 93-108.
- 58 Ariès, *Essais*, pp. 30-33.
- 59 Duby, *op. cit.*, II, p. 122.
- 60 *Idem*, pp. 93-108.
- 61 Ariès, *Omul*, I, p. 133.
- 62 *Idem*, p. 252.
- 63 Katharina Lukachy left in her testament of 1471 money for the St Elisabeth and Holy Spirit hospitals in Cluj, in *Urkundenbuch*, VI, 3879.
- 64 Jacques Le Goff, *Imaginariul medieval* [The Medieval Imaginary], București, 1991, pp. 130-131.
- 65 Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 71, fig. 35.
- 66 Jacques Le Goff, *Nașterea Purgatoriului* [The Birth of the Purgatory], I, București, 1995, pp. 90-91.
- 67 *Idem, op. cit.*, I, p. 209 and Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 407.
- 68 This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.
- 69 Gervais Dumeiges, *Textes Doctrinaux du Magistère de l'Église de la Foi Catholique*, Paris, 1989, p. 506.
- 70 This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography. About the painter, see Gernot Nussbächer, „Künstlerische Interferenzen zwischen

- 71 Siebenbürgen und der Walachei zu Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts. Zum Werk des Hermannstädter Malers Vincentius", in *AusUrkunden und Chroniken. Beiträge zur Siebenbürgischen Heimatkunde*, Bukarest, 1990, pp. 23-26.
- 72 Vasile Drăguț, *Picturile murale ale Bisericii reformate din Mugeți* [The Wall Paintings of the Reformed Church in Mugeți], in *SCIA*, 1964, 2, pp. 307-320.
- 73 Le Goff, *Imaginariul*, pp. 130-131.
- 74 *Idem*, p. 133.
- 75 *Ibidem*, p. 181.
- 76 Eliade, *op. cit.*, III, p. 217.
- 77 *The Holy Bible* [King James Bible], Cambridge University Press, n.d., p. 221.
- In infernus non est redemptio* - St Augustine, *apud* Jacques de Voragine, *La légende dorée*, Paris, 1907, II, p. 332. This assertion is sometimes written on scrolls accompanying the images of Hell. See Richard Cavendish, *Visions of Heaven and Hell*, London, 1977.
- 78 Le Goff, *Nașterea*, I, p. 68.
- 79 *Idem*, pp. 69-70.
- 80 Dumeiges, *op. cit.*, p. 512.
- 81 E. Kirschbaum, *Lexicon der Christlichen Ikonographie*, II, 1970, pp. 16-20.
- 82 Le Goff, *Nașterea*, II, p. 321.
- 83 *Idem*, p. 322.
- 84 Michel Vovelle, in *Les Âmes du Purgatoire ou le travail du deuil*, Paris, 1996, pp. 74-82, mentions the images of Purgatory from Notre-Dame-de-Benva, Celle Macra, the detail of Enquerrand Quarton's *Coronation of the Virgin*; see also those analyzed in Michelle Fournié's studies for the region of Midi-Pyrénées, and by Anca Bratu for Liguria. I must stress that, excepting The Mass of St Gregory and the images of the Liturgy of Souls present in the French illuminated manuscripts or in Spanish and German painting, such a display of the suffrages as in Sânpetru can be found only in south German painting: at Rothenburg - 1380, the closest to and relatively contemporaneous with the example under discussion, at Regensburg - 1480, at Augsburg - 1520 and in Austrian painting, at Pustertal - 1525.
- 85 Vovelle, *apud* Philippe Ariés, *Images de l'Homme*, p. 168.
- 86 Jenei, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-108.
- 87 Nicolaus, the dean of the Diocese of Brașov was priest in Sânpetru between 1395 and 1416, when the painting was probably made; see also Gernot Nussbächer, *Kapelle in der Kirchenburg. Mittelalterliche Wandmalerei in Petersberg*, in *Karpatenrundschau*, Kronstadt, 41/13 Oktober 1994.
- 88 The previous references to the murals in Sânpetru interpret the iconography of the scenes on the northern wall of the chapel differently, without specifying the existence of this coherent cycle of images of the sacrifices for the souls of the dead in Purgatory.

- 89 His theological oeuvre played a fundamental role in the elaboration of the
 future concept of Purgatory.
- 90 I have already mentioned that the books donated by Jacobus of Roderbach
 to the Benedictine monastery St. Peter and Paul in Braşov include St Gregory
 the Great's *Homilies and Dialogs*, that attest to the interest for this kind of
 literature in Transylvania; see *Urkundenbuch*, VI, 3256. Count Nicolaus
 Apa asked in his will for 30 masses to be officiated in three churches after his
 death; *Urkundenbuch*, V, 2605.
- 91 Michelle Fournié, "Deux représentations méridionales du Purgatoire: Flavin
 en Rouergue et Martignac en Quercy", in *Annales du Midi*, T. 98, 175,
 1986, p. 381.
- 92 Le Goff, *Naşterea*, I, p. 293.
- 93 In other representations of the Purgatory, the angels carry the gifts presented
 to the offertory of the liturgy for the dead: the bread, the wine and the candle,
 while St Michael is invoked for his power over the souls. See Picot, *op. cit.*,
 p. 422.
- 94 Duby, *op. cit.*, II, p. 92.
- 95 Vovelle, *op. cit.*, p. 71, fig. 22.
- 96 Two altars dedicated to the Archangel, dating from the first half of the fifteenth
 century, are preserved in Museo de Arta Cataluna in Barcelona and have as
 their central image, the *Mass for the Souls*. See Lamberto Font, Enrique
 Bague y Juan Petit, *La Eucaristia. El tema Eucarístico en el arte de España*,
 Barcelona, 1952, p. 125, fig. 56 and 57.
- 97 Fournié, *op. cit.*, pp. 363-385 and Marie-Pasquine Subes-Picot, "Les
 Peintures murales de Martignac à Puy l'Évêque", in *Congrès archéologique
 de France*, 1989, Quercy-Paris, 1993, pp. 404-428.
- 98 Martin Zlatohlávec, Jiří Fajt, Jan Royt, Milena Bartlová, Hana Hlaváèová,
The Bride in the Enclosed Garden, Prague, 1995.
- 99 Fournié, *op. cit.*, p. 380. Along with Martignac en Quercy and Enguerrand
 Quarton's painting, Sânpetru is another example of iconographic association
 between the themes of the Coronation of the Virgin and the souls in Purgatory,
 which would suggest the existence of a program in this sense. In this
 Transylvanian ensemble, Mary's intercession is emphasized by the presence
 of the *Deesis* under the image of the coronation.
- 100 Jean-Claude Schmidt, *Strigoii. Viii şi morţii în societatea medievală* [The
 Ghosts. The Quick and the Dead in Mediaeval Society], Bucureşti, 1998,
 p. 210.
- 101 Le Goff, *Naşterea*, II, p. 251.
- 102 Louis Réau, *L'Iconographie de l'Art Chrétienne*, Paris, 1907, tome III, II, p. 789.
- 103 Le Goff, "Les Limbes", in *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, 34, 1986,
 pp.151-166.
- 104 Le Goff, *Naşterea*, II, p. 78.
- 105 Le Goff, "Les Limbes", p. 166.
- 106 Vovelle, *op. cit.*, p. 80, fig. 26.

- ¹⁰⁷ This scene was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.
- ¹⁰⁸ I kindly thank my colleague János Mihály for this observation. Graffiti of the *Hic fuit* type are preserved everywhere inside the medieval churches of Transylvania, the oldest being those from Mălâncrav (1404/1405) and Sânpetru (1462). See also Jenei, *op. cit.*, p. 44, and Gernot Nussbächer, *Kapelle in der Kirchenburg. Mittelalterliche Wandmalerei in Petersberg, in Karpatenrundschau*, Kronstadt, 41/13 Oktober 1994.
- ¹⁰⁹ Dana Jenei, "Tema Credo în pictura murală din Transilvania medievală" [The Theme of the Creed in the Medieval Murals from Transylvania], in *Ars Transsilvaniae*, Cluj-Napoca, 2000-2001.
- ¹¹⁰ Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Age*, pp. 217-218.
- ¹¹¹ Dana Jenei, "Sântana de Mureș. Pictura murală a Bisericii Reformate" [Sântana de Mureș. The Murals of the Reformed Church], in *In memoriam Radu Popa*, Bistrița, 2003.
- ¹¹² *Anna, radix uberrima, Arbor tu salutifera, Virgas producens triplices/Septem onusta fructibus*. The late Western visual imagery preserves literal representations of Anna from whom grows, as from a tree of Jesse, a trunk with three branches – the three Maries, and seven fruits – Jesus with six of the apostles. The late images from around 1500 also show St. Joachim, Cleophas, Salomas, Zebedee, Alpheus, Joseph; see Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age*, pp. 217-218. Such an image is preserved on the central panel of the Transylvanian Renaissance altar in Șaeș (1520); see Gisela und Otmar Richter, *Siebenbürgische Flügelaltäre*, Thaur bei Innsbruck, 1992, plate LXII.
- ¹¹³ Vlasta Dvořáčová, "La Légende de St. Ladislav découverte dans L'Église de Velká Lomnica. Iconographie, style et circonstances de la diffusion de cette légende", in *BMI*, 4, 1972.
- ¹¹⁴ Vasile Drăguț, *Legenda "eroului de frontieră" în pictura medievală din Transilvania* [The legend of the "frontier hero" in the medieval painting in Transylvania], in *MIA*, 2, 1974. László Gyula: *A Szent László-legenda középkori falképei*, Budapest, 1993.
- ¹¹⁵ Baxandall, *op. cit.*, fig. 140. This image shows at the same time the power of the prayer of the Rosary. In the Mass composed by Pope Clement VI in 1348 during the plague, the Holy Virgin is expressly called on to intercede; see Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Age*, p. 201. C. Reitter, in his *Mortilogus* (1508), implores: "Open your haven to the miserables, o Mother! Under your wings we the uncaring hide, safe from the black plague and its poisoned arrows". Delumeau, *op. cit.*, I, p. 238. The same text of the *Mater Misericordiae* panel is preserved in the Cathedral in Munich (1510): "*Tu que sola potes aeterni numinis iram flectere, Virgine, O, nos protege diva sinu*".
- ¹¹⁶ Martin Schongauer, p. 202.
- ¹¹⁷ Il nous garde de mort subite/Et quiconque le requiert/De bon cœur, il a ce qu'il quiet. *Livres d'Heures*, 1395-1400, in Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age*, p. 185 ; or, *Cristophori faciem dia quacumque tueris/illa nempe die mala morte non moris* (Buxheim, 1423), *Per te serena datur, morbi*

- genus omne fugatur/ Atra fames, pestis Christi Christophore testis* (Worms), in Paul Clemen, *Die gotischen Monumentalmalerei in der Rheinlande*, Düsseldorf, 1930, p. 107.
- 118 Måle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 189.
- 119 Le Goff, *Nașterea*, II, p. 95.
- 120 *Idem*, p. 121.
- 121 *Ibidem*, p. 252 and John Bossy, *Creștinismul în Occident. 1400-1700* [Christianity in the West. 1400-1700], București 1998.
- 122 Hațegan, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
- 123 *Urkundenbuch*, V, p. 190, 2571.
- 124 *Idem*, VI, 3343.
- 125 In the letter of indulgence addressed to St Michael's Cathedral in Alba Iulia, Pius II remembers the atrocities committed by the "barbarian" Turks in Constantinople and in numerous other Christian places; *ibidem*, VI, 3281.
- 126 In 1439, King Albert of Habsburg, allowed the citizens of Brașov to use the indulgence funds accorded by the Council in Basel for the fortification of the town; *ibidem*, V, 2332.
- 127 *Ibidem*, V, 2709.
- 128 *Ibidem*, V, 2976.
- 129 *Ibidem*, V, p. 334, 2761. A similar content is also found in Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformation Sourcebook*, Boston, 2000, the documents *Unigenitus Dei Filius*, 1343, 1.10, p. 11 and *Salvator noster*, 1476, 1.11, pp. 11-12.
- 130 Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
- 131 *Urkundenbuch*, V, p. 334, 2761. Jacob, bishop of Vidin grants 40 days of indulgence to those who visit with devotion the *Corpus Christi* altar in the parish church of Brașov.
- 132 Le Goff, *Nașterea*, II, p. 87.
- 133 Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 208.
- 134 Victor Adrian, *Biserica Neagră* [The Black Church], București, 1968, p. 13.
- 135 Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
- 136 Mária Prokopp, *Italian Trecento Influence on Murals in East-Central Europe, Particularly Hungary*, Budapest, 1983, p. 68.
- 137 Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
- 138 Adrian Rusu (coordinator), *Dicționarul mănăstirilor din Transilvania, Banat Crișana și Maramureș* [The Dictionary of the Monasteries in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș], Cluj-Napoca, 2000, p. 173.
- 139 DUBY, *op. cit.*, II, p. 116.
- 140 The figure of the crucified Christ from Deal Frumos, preserved today at the Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu, was attributed to the artistic milieu of Veit Stoss; see Vasile Drăguț, *Dicționar enciclopedic de artă medievală românească* [Encyclopedic Dictionary of Romanian Mediaeval Art], București, 1976, p. 78.

- 141 A *Crucifixion* from Bologna dated 1362, in spite of serious damage to the color layer, seems to contain in its lower part naked figures in flames, most probably penitent souls awaiting their salvation.
- 142 This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.
- 143 Viorica Marica, *Biserica Sf. Mihail din Cluj* [St Michael's Church in Cluj], București, 1967, p. 7.
- 144 Mâle shows that the *Prayer in the Ghetsemani Garden* was an image represented "without end" on the German tombstones and in graveyards.
- 145 Probably originally placed in the same place on the outer wall of the church, now inside.
- 146 Gheorghe Arion, *Sculptura gotică din Transilvania* [The Gothic Sculpture in Transylvania] Cluj, 1974, p. 114.
- 147 Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 100.
- 148 *Idem*, p. 101.
- 149 *Ibidem*, p. 99.
- 150 *Ibidem*, p. 127.
- 151 *Ibidem*, p. 103.
- 152 Arion, *op. cit.*, p. 115.
- 153 Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 104.
- 154 Richter, *op. cit.*, plate LXI.
- 155 Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 104.
- 156 This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography. The Master E.S. is, for instance, one of the artists who created the so-called *Passion Coats of Arms – Passionswappen*, devotional images in which on the surface of a shield all these elements are displayed.
- 157 Keith Moxey, "Seeing through Schongauer, in *Le Beau Martin, Études et mises au point*. Actes du colloque. Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar, 1991. In the spreading of this devotion, but also connected to certain images of the Virgin Mary, an important role was played by the brotherhoods of the Rosary; see also Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
- 158 The doctrine accepted by the Council of Basel in 1439, promoted by Pope Sixt IV in 1476, was proclaimed as a dogma at Sorbonne in 1496; see Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 209.
- 159 Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
- 160 This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.
- 161 Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, pp. 213-214.
- 162 *Idem*, p. 58.
- 163 Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 103.