

New Europe College GE-NEC Program

2004-2005

2005-2006

2006-2007



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ISSN 1584-0298

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PASSION ICONOGRAPHY AND NARRATIVE STRATEGIES IN THE MEDIEVAL FRESCOES DECORATING THE CHURCH IN MĂLÂNCRAV (ALMAKERÉK, MALMKROG) IN TRANSYLVANIA*

Introduction

After visiting Transylvania in the second half of the nineteenth century, around the year 1863, the English traveler Charles Boner wrote an extensive book detailing his impressions from his journey. The book, entitled *Transylvania: Its Products and Its People* (London, 1865), describes among other places the village and church of Mălâncrav (Malmkrog, Almakerék, now in county of Sibiu).¹

“There is a church here going fast to ruin, which, were it anywhere else than where it is, would be carefully preserved from dilapidation. [...] Over the altar are two good oil pictures on panel, of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century. They have been sadly treated; and the most curious fresco paintings, representing the Passion, of the vaulted ceiling and walls of the church, have been whitewashed over. But this has proved a protection, and if carefully removed, which would be an easy matter, a great part of the quaint old decoration might be preserved.”²

This description suggests that the church, found by the English visitor in a state of decay and destruction, had once been beautifully painted and

* This article could not have been written without the Getty-NEC scholarship which facilitated a research trip to Berlin (June-July 2005). I would like to express my special thanks to all those who helped in the realization of this project: Maria Crăciun, Ruxandra Demetrescu, Gerhard Jaritz, Béla Zsolt Szakács, Axel Azzola, Mariela Steinberg de Serpa and Guido Steinberg.

endowed with elaborate furnishings. Boner's mention of the content of the paintings – namely, the story of the Passion – introduces the subject of the present study.

It is important to note that, visiting in 1863, Boner only got to see the murals and the winged altarpiece used to decorate the sanctuary. Some fifty years later, extensive restoration of the church carried out in the period 1914-16 revealed various previously unknown frescoes on the north wall of the nave. These were first brought to scholarly attention in 1915 by Laszlo Éber.³ What is puzzling about them is that, though dated earlier on stylistic grounds, they, like the paintings in the sanctuary, include an extant depiction of the Passion.

Several questions arise as to why two identical narratives were chosen (one following the other) to decorate the same church: What are the similarities and the differences in these iconographic depictions? Which messages were addressed to the public and how were these transmitted? Is it possible to link the choice of iconography with specific influences (especially Franciscan) or were they already part of Late Medieval devotion and witnesses to a common culture, the "Period Eye" that allowed people to understand messages mediated by images?⁴

Proceeding from a particular case to a general situation might lead to a sharper perception of the larger devotional context of Hungary during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a period in which the level of 'popular' devotion is harder to trace.

Like the rest of the Christian world, in medieval Hungary the story of the Passion was one of the most frequently depicted narratives, especially during the Late Middle Ages. However, the quantity of preserved murals in this region is quite low.⁵ Besides the scarcity of images, however, the poverty of written sources (giving some idea of the messages spread by sermon literature and books) also represents an important obstacle to this inquiry.⁶

Although a selective overview of the content of these cycles appeared in the survey of medieval Art in Hungary published under the direction of Marosi in 1987,⁷ interest in a detailed study of the Passion cycles in this area is quite recent. In his research into the decorative scheme in the church at Poniky (Slovakia), Buran drew attention to the narrative style of the Passion cycle in the sanctuary,⁸ while Gerát tried to summarize the

way it was depicted in general in the churches of Slovakia.⁹ Consequently, this study is still lacking in thoroughly researched comparative material.

Despite these objective shortcomings, the analysis performed for other areas – for example, Germany, the Low Countries and Italy – constitutes valuable background knowledge highlighting the changes that occurred in the images depicting the Passion under the influence of Franciscan ideology¹⁰ and Late Medieval devotional literature.¹¹ Moreover, renewed interest in the study of sermon literature in general has attracted scholarly attention to this important additional source in the quest for a more complex historical analysis.¹²

When dealing with images we must bare in mind that these “offer us not a supplemental interpretative path, but one that is essentially different”, as Lee Palmer Wandel put it in response to the paths opened to such studies by Michael Baxandall, Svetlana Alpers, Andrée Hayum and Patricia Brown.¹³ In the case of medieval Hungary, sometimes the images are all we have: they are usually found in small country churches less affected by the radical change and destruction imposed by fashion (as was often the case in towns) or changed religious attitudes.

The fresco cycles in the church at Mălâncrav (one on the north wall of the nave, the other on the north and the north-east walls of the sanctuary) are quite rare among Transylvanian examples of medieval mural paintings in that the decorative scheme is preserved almost entirely through the whole church. The frescoes in the nave are dated in literature on stylistic grounds at around 1350 or the second half of the fourteenth century.¹⁴ The murals in the sanctuary are dated before 1405 thanks to the presence of some graffiti scratched into the surface of the frescoes on the south-east wall.¹⁵ Depicting what is essentially the same story, these two decorative phases were attributed to two distinct workshops practicing completely different styles.

As is generally the case with wall paintings, the artist’s main limitation was imposed by the church’s architectural framework.¹⁶ In the nave, the entire history of the salvation of the humanity is summarized on one wall: from the story of Creation¹⁷ to the Childhood of Christ,¹⁸ the Passion narrative and the Resurrection.¹⁹ The sequence finishes with several images of the Death of the Virgin.²⁰ On the lower area of the wall – in fact, the

upper part of the pillars separating the nave from the side aisles – there are various representations of the Saints.²¹

Compared with the decoration of the nave, the iconographic scheme in the sanctuary seems at first sight to be more complex, for it contains not only narrative cycles (depicting the Childhood of Christ, the Passion and the Resurrection), but also several devotional images, including the Man of Sorrows and the *Mater Misericordiae* alongside a large number of iconic representations of the Saints.²²

Significant differences occur in the formal arrangement of the cycles in the two architectural spaces. Therefore, a comparative analysis of the type of narrative and the formal strategies employed, as well as a study of the scenes to which emphasis is given, might produce some meaningful information about the messages for public consumption.

The gradual development of the Passion story in the nave cycle

Recent decades of art historical writing have been characterized by the firm opinion that the formal organization of paintings played an active role in the process of transmitting messages.²³ Analysis of the relationship between spatial location and content, combined with the function of framing, size, color scheme and the internal composition of the scenes, provides many indications of how a narrative is recomposed.²⁴ This approach allows us to identify the key-elements in a scheme.

In the nave, the pattern of formal arrangement follows what it is called the linear Boustrophedon. Paintings cover the entire north wall of the nave: the narrative begins in the upper left corner and finishes on the right side before continuing on the second row, now from right to left, and so on (Fig.1).²⁵ This same pattern was sometimes used in fourteenth century Italy, and, as Aronberg Lavin indicates, its purpose was to fit a more complex scheme of paintings into the limited space of a chapel.²⁶ In Mălâncrav, however, this can hardly be the reason for its use, since the north screen-wall (like the south wall of the nave) provides a relatively large pictorial surface. Consequently, explanation must be sought either in the painter's personal artistic experience or among the specific intentions behind the process of message transmission.²⁷

In order to identify the peculiarities of the Passion cycle in the nave it would be useful to analyze it in relation with the larger iconographic scheme on the north wall of the nave.

The painter in Mălâncrav used the boustrophedon style in order to adapt several cycles for display on one screen-wall.²⁸ All the stories develop in what is called a continuous narrative. The paintings look like comic strips, arranged in five registers separated by thin horizontal dark brown lines. They are crowded with characters that seem to fill the whole height of the register.²⁹ On closer inspection, we notice the formal differences between the two upper registers, which are wider than their lower counterparts.³⁰ The stages representing the Creation of the natural elements, as well as Adam and Eve, followed by the story of Christ's Childhood, are placed in neutral locations as suggested by a continuous white background. The scenes are large and contain few indications of three-dimensional space. It is the painter's visible intention to minimize as far as possible any disruption to the flow of the biblical stories. Individual scenes in the narratives are introduced by various separating devices. In the representation of the Creation, this role is given to the silhouette of God the Father or his messenger at the moment when Adam and Eve are cast out of Paradise. In the cycle for the Infancy of Christ, the same separating function is performed by simple architectural structures, such as an arched gate in the Visitation scene, the stable in the depiction of the Nativity and Herod's throne during his order for the Killing of the Innocents.

The viewer is told the 'order' of reading by means of compositional details, such as the orientation of the bodies of the actors in various scenes and their clear pointing gestures.

Step by step, a deconstruction of the compositional devices used in the nave reveals the variety of formal strategies employed by the master painter in depicting the stories of the Bible. A slightly different situation than in the first two registers can be observed on the third and fourth rows, where the Passion cycle is depicted.

Here the rhythm of the narrative becomes more dynamic. The separation between individual episodes is formally expressed by thin brown lines similar to those dividing the registers. Depth is suggested by a continuous ochre band showing the ground and a blue background indicating the sky. The only architectural forms that occur are the occasional thrones of Christ's judges in his trial. A typical feature of the paintings in this row is the size of the characters, who, almost equaling the height of a register,

appear to fill the entire pictorial area. It is also noticeable that the painter showed little concern for the internal compositional balance of individual scenes, which consist of clusters of characters, one above the other, shown in three-quarters view.

The Boustrophedon pattern has few parallels in the corpus of mural paintings in Medieval Hungary. To my knowledge, it occurs only in the Franciscan church dedicated to the Virgin in Keszthely (Hungary) on the north wall of the choir. Dated 1384-87 by Prokopp,³¹ the murals reveal a partially preserved cycle describing the ministry of Christ and the Passion.³²

Generally speaking, no other surviving contemporary Passion cycle contains such small scenes, one after the other, or a similar density of participating characters.³³ In the murals dated to the second half of the fourteenth century, individual episodes tended to be clearly delimited by means of visible framing devices (introduced by ornamental bands). Moreover, the internal composition of the scenes focused the viewer's attention on the center of the depiction. This can be seen clearly in some of the larger Passion cycles, such as that in the choir of St. Nicholas' Church in Ochtiná in Slovakia (dated by Togner at 1360-80)³⁴ and that in Kocelovce, again in Slovakia, in the church dedicated to St. Bartholomew (dated around the same time).³⁵ On the basis of their stylistic and iconographic similarities, both of these were attributed to the so-called Master of Choir Paintings in Ochtiná.³⁶

This peculiar strategy of condensed rows containing many scenes and many participants (sometimes also arranged in a Boustrophedon scheme) can be observed in regions outside medieval Hungary. For example, it also appears in several 'provincial'³⁷ churches in southern Germany and northern Switzerland in the area near Lake Constance.³⁸ The formal features of paintings in a number of churches in the aforementioned regions are quite similar to those in Mălâncrav. Their content is also very similar in that they also summarize the entire history of human redemption in one unitary pictorial space.³⁹ Therefore, it is possible that the peculiarity of the murals in the nave in Mălâncrav can be explained by the fact that the master painter charged with decorating this space brought his personal artistic vision with him from regions outside the territory of medieval Hungary.

The cycles of paintings in Lügen and Waltensburg (Vuorz), for example, feature a Boustrophedon arrangement of narratives⁴⁰ similar to that in

Mălâncrav.⁴¹ The murals in the church dedicated to Saint George in Rhăzūns (end of the fourteenth century) were considered as an analogy by Lionnet.⁴² Arranged in three rows separated by visible bands, the murals decorate the entire architectural space of the nave and as such probably represent one of the richest iconographic schemes in this region. As in Mălâncrav, the collection of paintings features a Creation cycle, followed by a narrative of the Infancy of Christ, scenes from his ministry, the Passion and the Resurrection, the Death of the Virgin, the Last Judgment and representations of Saints.⁴³

The programmatic articulation of the Passion narrative in the sanctuary

When we look at the paintings in the sanctuary of the church, the impression we are left with is that of a disrupted narrative (Fig.2). The architectural framework – in this case the two-bay sanctuary with its tall Gothic windows occupying the east, south-east and south walls – provides a small number of large and continuous pictorial areas on the north and part of the south wall.⁴⁴

The decorative ensemble as a whole provides evidence of the existence of four horizontal registers surrounding the entire sanctuary (interrupted by the windows). From a visual point of view, the scenes are grouped into programmatic groups and arranged in a certain order on the architectural support.⁴⁵

Within the programmatic groups, the painter concentrates on disparate, individual scenes, rather than creating a flowing episodic continuity. This way of organizing the decorative space enhances the impression of a disjunctive narrative that, as Marcia Kupfer has put it, “privileges specific parts, each competing for the viewer’s attention, over the continuity between them”.⁴⁶

The cycle depicting the Passion (and the Resurrection) of Christ can be seen on the north and north-east walls. Although the same saturated blue background and yellow-ochre earth color appears in all the scenes, the general impression given is that of fragmentation. Visually, the flow of the pictorial field is interrupted by a powerful bordering system and the fact that in each image the participants are generally grouped in the center of the scene.

From a narrative point of view, the scenes of the Passion cycle appear very confused, but there is an obvious intention to highlight certain moments. The painter combined several formal procedures in order both to single out and to relate to each other the significant moments in Christ's suffering during the Passion. This explains why the representations of the Crowning with Thorns and the Flagellation⁴⁷ appear in the middle of the second row, whereas the Carrying of the Cross⁴⁸ and the Crucifixion⁴⁹ are situated far apart from each other, at opposite ends of this register. In a left to right order of reading, the Crucifixion is followed by two scenes referring to Judas: one showing him Returning the Money to the High Priests and another depicting his suicide. The presence of these two scenes near the Crucifixion is intentional; their connection is suggested by the thin borders between the scenes. Moreover, the negative connotation afforded to Judas's death is suggested by the dominance of saturated, gloomy hues.

A key element of the third register introduces extra meanings to the narrative found on the north wall. The episodic development of the Resurrection cycle (which appears after the Passion story on the third row) is interrupted by the occurrence of the Eucharistic *Vir Dolorum*⁵⁰ (between the scenes of the Resurrection and *Noli Me Tangere*). This is placed above a stone relief showing the Crucifixion (which lies over the niche of the tabernacle on the north wall). The formal relationship between sculpture and image is visually indicated by the fact that the borders of the *Vir Dolorum* (which is thinly framed) continue along a vertical line of the margins of the sculpted baldachin placed above the relief.

The Passion and Resurrection cycles surround and also enhance in a meaningful way the importance of the image of the Eucharistic *Vir Dolorum* and the entire composition formed by the tabernacle and the Crucifixion relief placed above it.

From a formal point of view, the two decorative ensembles in Mălâncrav are very different. The one in the nave depicts a chronological development of the events of the Passion, whereas the later one, in the sanctuary, contains a selection of scenes. This represents two different strategies of imagining the Passion: a historical one, depicting a gradual unfolding of events, and a didactic one, seeking to draw attention to particular aspects. Nevertheless, closer analysis of the first Passion cycle

reveals the repetition of several significant moments, and this might cast a different light on the interpretation of the messages contained in this cycle.

Historical narrative and meaningful moments in the nave frescoes

The story of the Passion in the nave is told in sixteen episodes. Due to the density of the scenes depicted and the multitude of participants, the viewer has quite a hard time in deciphering and recomposing the gradual evolution of events. In a left to right order, the first image is that of the Last Supper, followed by a damaged area (probably representing the Agony in the Garden), the Arrest of Christ, the Trial before Annas, Christ before Caiaphas, the Flagellation, Christ before Herod, the Crowning with Thorns, Christ before Pilate, the Carrying of the Cross, the Hammering of Christ to the Cross, the Raising of the Cross, the Crucifixion. On the fourth register from right to left there appears the Descent from the Cross, the Lamentation, and the Entombment.

The image of the Last Supper (badly damaged by a wooden hanger nailed to the wall) shows the participants gathered behind a rectangular table. The poor state of conservation means only some of the faces of the participants and details of the table arrangement are visible. Nevertheless, we are able to observe that the painter gave little thought to the spatial representation of the figures lined up behind the table. This type of image seems to have been fairly widespread in the churches of medieval Hungary, appearing in various locations, such as Ochtiná, Kocelovce,⁵¹ Žehra,⁵² and Ludrová, albeit in these cases the depictions concentrate more on the Apostles' animated response to Christ's announcement of pending betrayal (they are seated both behind and in front of the table and engaged in intense conversation).

The linear arrangement of the participants behind the rectangular table can be seen in several earlier murals in the region of Graubünden (Switzerland), such as those in Medel, Rhäzüns, and Waltensburg.⁵³ The depiction in Medel is significant in this case due to the linear disposition of the Apostles and the centrality of Christ and John asleep in his lap. Raimann observed that in this case communication is not shown within

the group and seems to be being directed from the painted characters towards the public.⁵⁴

This image is also larger and more spread out than those that follow in Mălâncrav. The next visible image, the scene of the Arrest (Fig.3) shows, in the middle of the group, Christ's silhouette, with Judas to his left and Malchus kneeling before him. Peter, the only one who tried to defend Christ at that moment, appears on the left hand side of the composition with a large sword in his hand.⁵⁵

Christ's serene poise, enduring the aggressive treatment of his captors and, at the same time, stretching out his right hand to repair the servant's ear, illustrates a favorite theme of the Franciscans: the depiction of Christ in total control of the situation, calmly enduring his fate at the moment of his Arrest.⁵⁶

It is interesting to observe that Malchus does not appear frequently in similar representations of this scene in medieval Hungary. The act of restoring the servant's ear during the Arrest can be seen in paintings (dated around 1375) in the Church of the Holy Spirit in Žehra in Slovakia (dated 1360-70). It is also depicted in the sanctuary paintings in Mălâncrav (dated prior to 1405), in the Slovenian rotunda in Sélo v Prekmurju (dated around 1410)⁵⁷ and then again in Mediaș in Romania (dated around 1420).⁵⁸ In northern Switzerland, the healing of Malchus's ear during the Arrest can be seen in the paintings of the Church of St. George in Rätzüns⁵⁹ and in Mon dated to the first half of the fourteenth century.⁶⁰

However, none of the above mentioned images show the aggressiveness of the soldiers as in the Mălâncrav Arrest scene,⁶¹ in which they not only seize Christ's body but also pull out his beard and hair.

One popular literary source for this episode of beard and hair pulling is a piece of writing held dear by the Franciscans entitled *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, which was written around 1300 by a Franciscan friar for a nun of the female branch of the order, the Poor Clares.⁶² The text says:

"It is to be read in a certain writing which the Lord revealed to one of His devoted ones that His head was shorn and His beard torn; but the Evangelists have not described everything. And indeed, I do not know how to prove by the Scriptures whether or not He was shorn, but the plucking of His beard can be proved. For Isaiah, in the person of the Lord says: I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them [Isaiah 50:6]." *Meditationes cap. LXXXII.*⁶³

This detail betrays the Late Medieval desire to increase the psychological and didactic impact of the Passion story. According to Marrow “narratives of epic length and moving detail came to replace the summary formulas of earlier centuries.”⁶⁴ Further events were introduced to the Passion story in order to illustrate the inhuman, physical and moral sufferings induced on Christ by an increasing number of tormentors. The depiction at Mălâncrav clearly illustrates this idea, the scene of the Arrest being crowded with a large number of different figures (around 19).

The plucking of the beard also occurs in the following two scenes, which show the trials of Christ before Annas and Caiaphas. The high priests are hard to identify by their clothes but their positioning on rich thrones decorated with baldachins indicates their official function. In both depictions, the tension is increased by the presence of figures mocking Christ, some of which are identified as Jews by their pointed hats.

At least three Jews are also depicted in the next representation, that of the Flagellation (Fig. 4). Although their presence appears quite normal during the trials, the insistence on the role played by the Jews in the Passion cycle in Mălâncrav is indicative of a strong anti-Semitic orientation.⁶⁵ Jews also appear elsewhere. For example, they are seen bringing Christ before Caiaphas and stripping him in the murals in Podolinec in Slovakia,⁶⁶ and again in the Passion cycle in the choir of the church in Poniky in Slovakia (dated around 1415). Jews are again seen in scenes showing Christ being tortured in the church in Waltensburg/Vuorz (dated around 1330) in the canton of Graubünden in Switzerland.⁶⁷ This may be an iconographic stereotype, adopted from existing models and linked with anti-Semitic sentiment already present in Franciscan ideology from the thirteenth century.⁶⁸

An important detail of the representation of the persecuted Christ is the rope with which his hands are bound, especially during the trials. St. Bonaventure, who dedicated a chapter to this matter in his *Vitis mystica* ('On the Tying of the Vine'), emphasized the significance of the binding of Christ's hands, considering it a further humiliation inflicted upon him during the Passion.⁶⁹ This became a common motif in a large number of representations of the trials and the Carrying of the Cross.

It is interesting to note that, of the 16 scenes in this cycle, four depict Christ being judged: twice by the Jewish priests, once by Herod, and once by Pilate. In this respect, the Passion cycle in Mălâncrav is quite unique in the region and without parallel among the remaining frescoes

of medieval Hungary. This is similar to the sequence of trials in the detailed Passion cycle of Duccio's *Maesta*, dated approximately half a century earlier (1308-11). According to Stubblebine, the motivation for this richness of narrative detail is to be found in Byzantine prototypes, namely in manuscript illumination.⁷⁰ The paintings in Mălâncrav have a lot in common with later panel paintings from German areas, such as that by a master from Cologne dated around 1400.⁷¹ The panel,⁷² presenting a detailed narrative of the Life and Passion of Christ, features four trial episodes besides the image of the Stripping of Christ and the Hammering to the Cross. As in Mălâncrav, the story finishes with the Resurrection and a scene depicting the Death of the Virgin.⁷³

The repetition of particular scenes – for example, the trials and the insistence on the physical suffering of Christ during the Crucifixion – were meant to stress the humanity of Christ. Such images were used as a way to arouse feelings of empathy and compassion among devotees. They were of central importance in the devotional trend of the Late Middle Ages, the so-called *devotio moderna*,⁷⁴ which emphasized the importance of personal identification with the sufferings of Christ as well as private responsibility for individual salvation.

The last trial scene in the nave cycle depicts Pilate (dressed in a fashionable tight tunic, tight trousers, and pointed shoes, and wearing a peculiar hat) sitting on a throne and washing his hands,⁷⁵ followed by the image of the Carrying of the Cross (Fig.5). In the center of this composition we see Christ carrying a visible, ochre-colored T-shaped cross. Simon of Cyrene, forced to help Christ carry the cross, holds it by the end. Christ is being led by a rope by a figure holding three big nails in his hand. The scene is crowded with soldiers but also includes the group of the three Marias, among whom features the Virgin.⁷⁶

The four episodes of the trials mentioned above correspond to an equal number of scenes in which Christ's body is placed on the Cross. These emphasize the physical suffering during the Crucifixion and depict the story from the moment of the actual Hammering to the Descent from the Cross.

The Cross itself is given particular emphasis by the presence of an additional representation, namely the Hammering of Christ's body to the Cross (Fig.6). The textual source for this image is to be found in late medieval Passion Tracts. Its iconographic origin lies in the famous medieval writing called *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*.⁷⁷ In *Speculum*,

the nailing of Christ to the Cross is juxtaposed with a scene of hammering on anvils in a blacksmith's workshop. Typologically it is related to the story of Jubal and Tubalcain, the inventors of music and forging according to Genesis 4: 21-22.⁷⁸

In the murals of medieval Hungary, this episode features only in a limited number of Passion cycles dating to the final decades of the fourteenth century and the fifteenth century. There are a number of examples in murals in Slovakia, such as in the sanctuary of the church in Podolinec (dated 1360, 1380),⁷⁹ and the nave of the church in Sliáč in Slovakia (dated around 1370, 1390).⁸⁰ It also features in Švábovce in Slovakia (dated 1390, 1400)⁸¹ and later in Košice (paintings dated around 1440).⁸² In Transylvania there are two cases, the murals in Chilieni in Romania (dating to the end of the fourteenth century)⁸³ and a less visible image (dated 1420 by Drăguț)⁸⁴ in fragmentary form on the northern wall of the central nave of the church of St. Margaret in Mediaș in Romania.

The Hammering already existed in eleventh to twelfth century manuscript illustrations based on Byzantine models.⁸⁵ This representation became very fashionable, especially in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and was a widespread phenomenon in northern art. In the fifteenth century, it was frequently represented on altarpieces featuring Passion scenes, especially in German areas.⁸⁶

If the scene of the Hammering was inspired by the widely known illuminated manuscripts of the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, a peculiar representation in the Passion cycle in Mălâncrav can be linked with another important writing of the fourteenth century. At first sight the representation seems to be a Crucifixion, but it in fact depicts the moment of the Raising of the Cross (Fig.7).

The depiction shows the crucified Christ on the Cross (already in a vertical position) which is being embraced/held vertical by three characters on each side. The whole group is framed by two soldiers who are pointing to the Cross. To the left of the composition we see the three Maries together with John, whose grief is indicated by his praying hands.

The visual source of this scene is found in a medieval illuminated manuscript, namely the *Concordantiae Caritatis*, a typological work written around 1351 by a certain Ulrich of the Cistercian monastery of Lilienfeld in Austria. In this codex, on fol. 92 v, in a medallion in the upper part of the page, we see an image of Christ Crucified while his Cross is being raised by three figures. This image is similar to that in the church at Rhäzüns

(Switzerland),⁸⁷ in which the Cross, not yet fully erect, is being raised with a rope by a soldier, while several other figures are seen hammering Christ to the Cross.⁸⁸ With its symmetrical and static composition, the scene in Mălâncrav appears to have gone one step further. The depiction has lost its narrative content. It almost looks like a devotional representation of the Crucified Christ, whose body is embraced by an equal number of figures on either side of the Cross.

It is difficult to trace the source of this representation in Mălâncrav at this stage of the research. It should be noted, however, that there is no similar image remaining throughout all of Medieval Hungary. We may suppose, therefore, that its iconographic origins can be found either in the manuscript illumination of the fourteenth century, produced somewhere in the German areas, or in mural paintings like the aforementioned cases in Rhäzüns in Northern Switzerland.

The last scene on this row is the actual Crucifixion showing Longinus and his spear. He is pointing at his eyes, visually indicating his miraculous healing. It is interesting to note how, although Longinus can be seen in the painting of the Crucifixion in Šivetice in Slovakia as early as around 1300,⁸⁹ he does not seem to have been very popular in Medieval Hungary⁹⁰ during the fourteenth century.⁹¹ Longinus appears in the Crucifixion scene in Waltensburg (dated around 1330) and Lügen in Switzerland (dated to the fourteenth century).⁹²

The Descent from the Cross, situated under the Crucifixion, is hard to see due to its being almost entirely covered by the baldachin above the pulpit (Fig. 8). The Passion cycle ends with the scene of the Lamentation, a Pietà-like representation given its depiction of the grieving Virgin holding in her arms the stiff, dead body of her son. The (partly preserved) scene of the Deposition concludes the Passion cycle that is followed by the Resurrection and the Apparitions of Christ.

Disjunctive narrative and significant images in the sanctuary murals

From the Passion cycle in the sanctuary, only 11 scenes have been preserved.⁹³ The narrative begins in the upper register of the northern wall with the Last Supper, in which Christ and his disciples are shown sitting

around a circular table.⁹⁴ In the middle of the table, there is a large plateau of fish,⁹⁵ a plate, two pieces of knot-shaped bread and a knife.

The round composition permitted the painter in Mălâncrav to create a scene in which all participants are entirely visible from below.⁹⁶ In the Central European area, similar examples are less numerous. The round composition appears in the Passion cycle in the church in Keszthely in Hungary mentioned earlier (1384-87) and on the northern wall of the sanctuary in Stitnik in Slovakia (also dating from around the end of the fourteenth century).⁹⁷ It appears again later on panel paintings – for example, on a Bohemian winged altar in South Tyrol dating to 1410.⁹⁸

This scene is followed by the Washing of the Feet, which depicts the Apostles grouped together in the background and assisting Christ in washing Peter's feet. Peter is stretching one foot towards the round tub while pointing to his head with his left hand.⁹⁹ In the foreground, Christ is kneeling down to perform the ritual with a towel hanging over his shoulder. Behind him, one of the Apostles is reading a book.

This is followed by a representation of the Praying on the Olive Mountain and the Arrest. Although framed together, these moments are visually separated by the thick line formed by the rocky hill (suggesting the Olive Mountain) on which Christ is praying (Fig. 9). From the right hand side, in the upper corner, the Holy Father is seen between the clouds blessing his son. On a lower level, we see three Apostles asleep behind a wattle fence.¹⁰⁰

The scene of the Arrest of Christ occupies the right corner of this bay. The main characters in this scene – Christ, Judas and Malchus – are positioned in front of the group of soldiers.¹⁰¹ Christ is offering his cheek to Judas (standing to the right) while at the same time his eyes are turned towards Malchus, in the foreground, on the left of the scene.

The servant kneels while Christ touches his ear. Behind Christ there is a crowd of soldiers ready to fulfill their task. One of these, behind Judas, even tries to speed up matters by grabbing him. The painter in Mălâncrav depicts Christ as being fully in control of the situation, accepting Judas's kiss and healing the servant's ear. Peter is marginalized, standing to the right of the crowd and held by one of the soldiers who has turned his back to the main figures.

The next scene retells the events of the Jewish Trial. With his hands tied, Christ is brought by soldiers before the high priests, who are sitting together on the same throne under a narrow baldachin. Annas raises his

hands while discussing with Christ and Caiaphas rips open his garment, condemning the blasphemy by this gesture.¹⁰²

The preference for this type of representation, one stressing the role of the high priests in the condemnation of Christ, is again reminiscent of Derbes's comment on the anti-Semitic orientation of Franciscan ideology during the thirteenth century.¹⁰³

The story continues in the middle of the second row, in the northeastern bay, with the Crowning with Thorns. Christ is placed in the center of the composition, seated on a semicircular throne. Dressed in a long robe with geometric patterns, he is supporting his head with his right hand, in an indication of his physical suffering and exhaustion,¹⁰⁴ while with his left hand he takes the rod handed to him by one of his tormentors.

Two other figures, situated to the sides of the throne, are pressing the crown onto Christ's head, two staves arranged crosswise on top of the crown. In similar, albeit simplified image of that found in Mălâncrav is that in Kocelovce in Slovakia showing Christ with his head bent to the left and the crossed staves being pressed by four tormentors, one at each end.¹⁰⁵ Four tormentors and the staves can also be seen in Ochtiná in Slovakia (dated 1375-85),¹⁰⁶ where, on the northern wall and on the third row, we find a frontal view of Christ, his hands tied in front of him. His rigid position and lack of expression is further enhanced by the symmetry of the overall composition.¹⁰⁷

The Crowning with Thorns is followed by the scene of the Flagellation. Christ, tied and facing the column, is seen in the middle of an architectural structure that frames and highlights the entire composition. Christ's position is twisted and appears quite clumsy, placed as he is behind the column.¹⁰⁸ The effort made by the painter to depict naturalistic details is clear, especially in the case of Christ's body, which, full of wounds, provides an illustration of Isaiah's prophecy that he would be whipped so cruelly until nothing remained whole and he became covered with wounds '*a planta pedis*' [Isaiah, 1,6].¹⁰⁹

In the next composition, which shows the Carrying of the Cross, we see Christ holding a T-shaped cross over his shoulder. A peculiarly dressed Simon of Cyrene, forced to help Christ carry the cross, holds it by the beam (Fig. 10).¹¹⁰

The rope is again emphasized: Christ's neck is tied with a rope and he is being led by an older figure who is holding up a hammer in his left hand. A cluster of soldiers clad in fourteenth century armour resembling kettle

hats (*bassinets* and *aventails*) and some other people are accompanying Christ, while a soldier behind him raises his hand as if to hit Him. Two men appear in the middle of the group accompanying Christ: the two thieves who are to be crucified together with Christ.¹¹¹

The depiction of the two thieves in such a prominent position in the scene is not matter of chance. Indeed, this was a common motif in many Franciscan writings. As Derbes points out, “Bonaventure and especially Pseudo-Bonaventure stressed the thieves, considering Christ’s association with criminals still another humiliation.”¹¹²

The thieves were inserted into Passion narratives produced for the Order in Italy.¹¹³ They also appear in several representations in Slovakia – for example, in front of Christ during the Carrying of the Cross in the sanctuary of the church in Ochtiná (third row, north wall of the sanctuary), in Kocelovce in Slovakia (third row, north wall of the sanctuary),¹¹⁴ as well as in Ludrová in Slovakia (dated around 1420, on the bottom row of the north wall in the sanctuary). (Fig. 11.)¹¹⁵

The Passion story finishes with the Crucifixion – that is, the first scene in the second (and third) register of the north wall in the sanctuary (Fig.12). It shows Christ on the cross between the two crucified thieves. The cross is Tau-shaped and bears the inscription at the top of I.N.R.I. On the left we see the good thief and an angel (waiting to take his soul to heaven). On the right, we see the bad thief whose soul, depicted as a small nude child coming out of his mouth, has already been taken away by a devil piercing the clouds in the right corner of the scene.

The centrally positioned body of the crucified Christ attracts the attention of the viewer. He is depicted as *Christus Patiens*, with his head bent to the left and his eyes closed. The sight of his transparent loincloth barely covering his nudity was a common allusion to his poverty, as Derbes has emphasized.¹¹⁶ This was one of the most significant motifs in Franciscan spirituality, especially during the thirteenth century, one which “validated the vow upon which Francis founded the Order.”¹¹⁷

Unfortunately, only half of this image has been preserved, but, based on the quality of the remaining upper half (where we see the remains of the sponge, the lance and a flag), this must have been a very beautiful example of the historiated type of Crucifixion following the Italian tradition. Similar examples can also be found in other churches of Medieval Hungary. One such example is that in Stitník in Slovakia on the east wall of the north aisle (dating from the beginning of fifteenth century),¹¹⁸ in Kocelovce¹¹⁹

and Ludrová in Slovakia, and, albeit only in fragments (only the upper part of the scene, the angel and the devil taking the souls of the thief, is visible), in the Slovenian rotunda in Sélo (dated around 1410).¹²⁰

The Crucifixion is followed by the depiction of Judas's repentance and his Suicide (Fig. 13).¹²¹ The proximity of the two scenes to the Crucifixion once again resembles Franciscan texts: namely, Bonaventure's commentary on the Passion. In *Lignum vitae* he stresses that: "The first thing that occurs to the mind of anyone who would contend contemplate devoutly the Passion of Christ is the perfidy of the traitor."¹²²

Thus, it is not by chance that the Suicide of Judas is depicted in the Church of San Francesco in Assisi, the most important church of the Franciscan Order in Italy, where we see a terrifying picture of the traitor as a warning to all who would follow Judas's example of treason.¹²³ Both episodes, Judas returning the money and his death, were included in the Passion cycle in the church in Ludrová (second row on the north wall of the sanctuary)¹²⁴ that also features some other iconographic similarities with the sanctuary cycle in Mălâncrav.¹²⁵

'Diffused' Franciscan influence in the mural paintings in Mălâncrav

Our analysis of the two Passion cycles in the church in Mălâncrav has shed light on a number of Late Medieval devotional trends. Many of these seem to have been inspired by the popular mysticism of the mendicant orders, especially the Franciscan one. The images contain important motifs not only of Franciscan spirituality (e.g. poverty, humility and the bodily suffering of Christ) but also the important writings (e.g. the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*) that sought to explain them.¹²⁶

The iconographic scheme in the nave was also inspired by other popular illuminated manuscripts, such as *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*¹²⁷ and *Concordantiae Caritatis*,¹²⁸ both of which circulated widely at the time¹²⁹ and therefore well known. The existence in Mălâncrav of images like the Hammering of Christ, which derives from *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, is also indicative of Franciscan devotional patterns. Thomas argued that *Speculum* was itself based on a theological source originating from Franciscan circles.¹³⁰

However, the problem is that despite the widespread presence of Franciscans in Medieval Hungary,¹³¹ monuments illustrating their presence in this region¹³² or information about their preaching activity is either extremely rare or dates from later periods.¹³³

In terms of the images of the Franciscan saints, Lanc arrived at the conclusion that they seem to have been less popular outside Italy, although the Order was nonetheless extremely successful throughout Europe and England.¹³⁴ In Central Europe, representations of the most important Saints promoted by the Order can only be found in churches whose dedication was directly linked with the ideology of the Order¹³⁵ or in those belonging to Franciscan cloisters (many of them built by nobles). One such case is the church in Keszthely in Hungary, which was built around 1386 for the Franciscans by Stephen Lacki, Palatine of King Sigismund of Luxemburg.¹³⁶

It was the support of nobles that convinced the Franciscans to settle outside towns, and this illustrates one of the particularities of Franciscan activity in this region.¹³⁷ The Franciscan monastery dedicated to the Virgin in the village of Tileagd in Romania was founded in 1329 by the local owner, the Telegdi family, the members of which were prominent figures in the church hierarchy. Another case, dating from the end of the fourteenth century, is that of the monastery dedicated to the Virgin in Sălard in Romania, whose benefactor was Nicholas Csaki, a nobleman who received the village through royal donation in 1395.¹³⁸ However, the remaining visual material for all these monuments is not sufficient to allow for a better understanding of the iconographic choices favored by the Franciscans in their churches.

Recent research, such as that by Buran on the mural paintings in the church in Poniky in Slovakia¹³⁹ or by Lionnet into representations of the Virgin in the murals of Medieval Hungary, have refined our understanding of the Franciscan influence on the images of this region. Lionnet argued that there was a certain “diffused influence” of Franciscan spirituality in many mural paintings in the churches of Medieval Hungary.¹⁴⁰

This diffused influence is visible in both cycles of paintings in Mălâncrav and might explain several iconographic choices as well as the obvious insistence (in both cycles) on depicting the physical and moral suffering of Christ during the Passion, as well as his humiliation, poverty and sacrifice. This was connected with the western idea of Redemption through contemplation and emphatic devotion.¹⁴¹

The theory of diffused influence is also favored by the lack of historical documents. The patronage of the church in Mălâncrav by its local owners, the Apafi family, is an acknowledged fact. However, nothing is known about their possible relationship with the Franciscans during the fourteenth century and first half of the fifteenth century.¹⁴²

The decoration of the sanctuary appears to be more elaborate from a theological point of view. It has an obvious didactic message and insists on the Eucharistic significance of Christ's sacrifice (the iconographic scheme in the sanctuary contains two representations of Christ *Vir Dolorum*).¹⁴³ This iconographic theme is highly favored by the Franciscans while already part of the larger stream of Late Medieval piety.

Late medieval spirituality and the circulation of images

Finally, it is interesting to note how, despite the fact that the paintings in Mălâncrav depict the same story in two different ways and in murals that were dated (on stylistic grounds) at least 20-30 years apart, they nonetheless seem to underline similar ideas: namely the humanity of Christ. One rendering of the story achieves its goal through repetition, the other by means of structural and formal visual strategies.

Why, then, was the same theme chosen for both cycles – that in the nave and that in the sanctuary?

The simple answer could be that the paintings exist in two distinct spaces (the nave and the sanctuary), each designed for a different public. On the other hand, being a family church (whose interest in embellishment is documented until later in the sixteenth century),¹⁴⁴ it could be argued that the paintings were commissioned by two generations of donors and therefore represent two distinct donations.

Concerning the iconographic choices, although it is possible to find correspondences with other examples from Medieval Hungary, it is clear that, especially in the case of the nave cycle, there are no close iconographic and stylistic parallels in the region. In general, we see a preference for certain scenes preparatory to the Passion, such as the Last Supper, Praying on the Olive Mountain, and the Arrest. While the majority of the cycles more often than not depict the Trial before Pilate, the Flagellation, the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion, and the Deposition, the cycle in the nave in Mălâncrav

is highly detailed and includes four trials of Christ and four moments connected with the Crucifixion.

Two mural cycles in what is today Slovakia – that in Podolinec¹⁴⁵ and that in Sliache¹⁴⁶ – appear to provide some similarity in terms of chosen scenes, such as the Hammering of Christ to the Cross. However, in terms of composition and form, these paintings contain many differences. For example, none of the Slovakian examples feature the Boustrophedon arrangement. Instead, the narratives are clearly divided into separate scenes which are visually composed in order to be ‘seen’ separately.

That related iconographic patterns can also be found in churches in other regions – for example, Switzerland and Germany – tells us once again that painters and images were in wide circulation.¹⁴⁷ The iconographic choices reflect the trends of Late Medieval spirituality in general. This can explain decorative schemes, like that in the nave, which was probably the work of an itinerant artist from southern Germany or northern Switzerland.¹⁴⁸

Although the murals in the sanctuary feature some of the generally preferred scenes of the Passion, the meaningful articulation of the iconographic scheme (enhancing the significance of the image of the *Vir Dolorum*) is also quite unusual in comparison with other Passion cycles found in the region (Fig.14). These paintings were compared (from a stylistic and iconographic point of view) with those found in the church in Ludrová, even if the latter cycle is much more narrative than that in Mălâncrav. In both cases, the social and historical background is similar, both being the family churches of nobles.

We can now turn our thoughts to questions concerning aspects of popular devotion (already being familiar with the idea of salvation through empathy with the sufferings of Christ), the circulation of iconographic patterns and the relationship between the donor, the master painter and the community to which the images were addressed (in this particular case a family church in Medieval Transylvania). Last but not least, we can address different questions concerning concepts such as center and periphery, especially when looking at patterns of devotion characteristic of Late Medieval spirituality in general and Transylvania in particular.

Place names

| Present-day names | Hungarian names | German names | Country |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Chilieni | Sepsikilyén | Kilön | Romania |
| Kocelovce | Gecelfalva | – | Slovakia |
| Košice | Kassa | Kaschau | Slovakia |
| Ludrová | Ludrofalva | – | Slovakia |
| Mălâncrav | Almakerék | Malmkrog | Romania |
| Mediaş | Medyes | Mediasch | Romania |
| Ochtiná | Ochtiná | – | Slovakia |
| Podolinec | Podolin | Pudlein | Slovakia |
| Poniky | Pónik | – | Slovakia |
| Rimavská Baňá | Rimabánya | | Slovakia |
| Sălard | Szalárd | | Romania |
| Šivetice | Süvete | | Slovakia |
| Sliače | Szliacs | | Slovakia |
| Stitník | Csetnek | – | Slovakia |
| Švábovce | Svábfalva | Schwabsdorf | Slovakia |
| Tileagd | Mezőtelegd | – | Romania |
| Žehra | Zsegra | – | Slovakia |

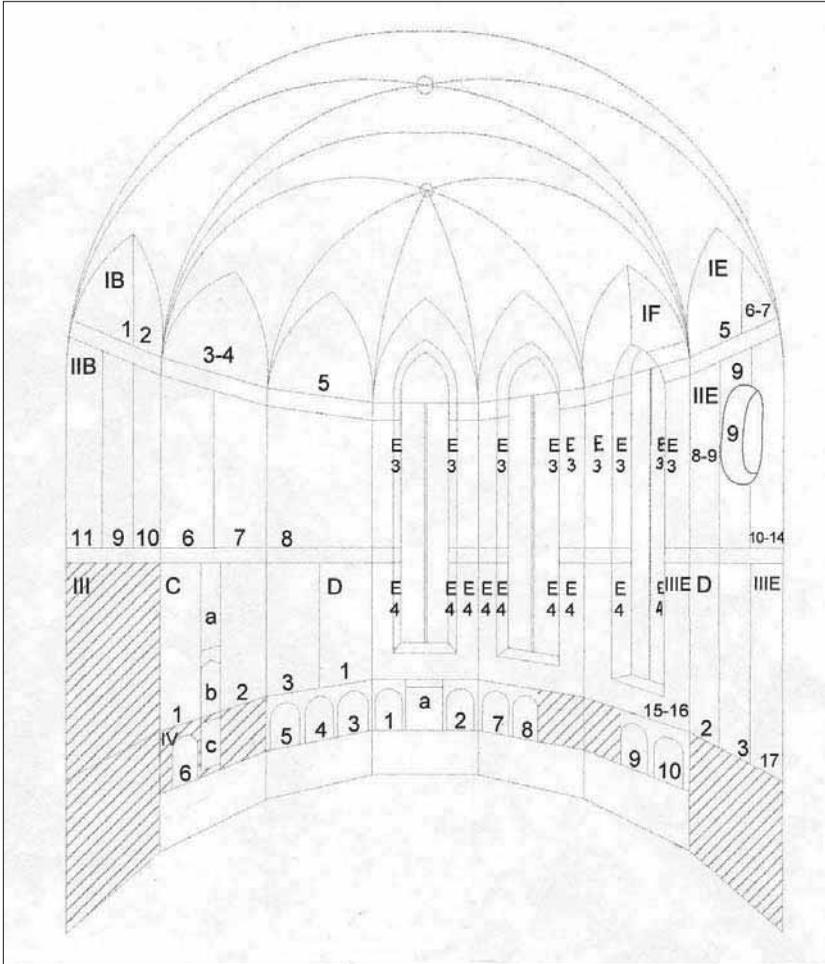


Fig. 1 Scheme of the murals



Fig. 2 The Arrest



Fig. 3 The Flagellation



Fig. 4 The Carrying of the Cross



Fig. 5 The Hammering of Christ on the Cross



Fig. 6 The Raising of the Cross



Fig. 7 The Raising of the Cross, the Crucifixion, the Descent from the Cross and the Lamentation



Fig. 8 The Arrest, sanctuary



Fig. 9 The Carrying of the Cross, sanctuary



Fig. 10 The Carrying of the Cross in Ludrová, Slovakia



Fig. 11 The Crucifixion, sanctuary

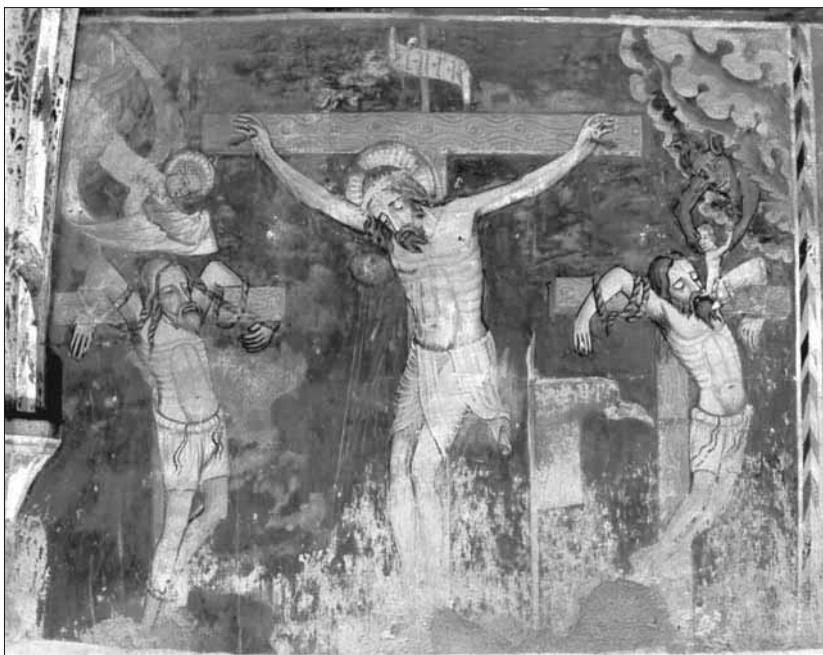


Fig. 12 Judas's suicide, sanctuary



Fig. 13 The second bay in the north wall of the sanctuary

NOTES

- ¹ During the Middle Ages and later, in the modern period, the church and the property of Mălâncrav belonged to a Hungarian family of nobles named Apafi. The members of this family were responsible for the construction of the church and its interior decoration. The history of the Apafi family, as well as the various phases in the construction of the church and identification of donors to the interior decoration, formed the subject of my PhD thesis, *Patronage and Artistic Production in Transylvania. The Apafi Family and the church in Mălâncrav (fourteenth-fifteenth centuries)*, which I defended at the Central European University in Budapest. Unable to connect any donor with the murals in the nave, I paid little attention to these fascinating paintings. Recently, however, the depictions of the Virgin Mary in Mălâncrav aroused the interest of the French scholar Marie Lionnet, who included them in her doctoral thesis *Les peintures murales en Hongrie a la fin du Moyen Age (v. 1300-v.1475)*, Universite Paris-Nanterre-U.F.R. d'Histoire de l'art, 2004. I would like to thank Professor Gabor Klaniczay of the CEU, Budapest, for allowing me to consult this work. On the donor of the murals in the sanctuary, see Gogăltan A., Sallay D., "The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel of Nicholas Apa" in Rusu A.A., Szócs P.L. eds., *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania* [Medieval Religious Architecture in Transylvania], Ed. Muz. Sătmărean, Satu Mare, 2002, vol. II, 181-210.
- ² Boner Ch., *Transylvania: Its Products and Its People*, Longmans Green Reader & Dyer, London, 1865, 361. It should be noted that as early as 1855 the church was listed as one of the most valuable monuments in Transylvania, when Friedrich Müller described it for the "Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale" in Vienna. Müller's notes appear in the Archives of the Committee for the Conservation of Monuments in Budapest (copies were made some years later by Imre Henszlmann) [OMVH, no. K. 859]. On this issue, see Mezey A. D., Szentesi E., "Az állami műemlékvédelem kezdetei Magyarországon. A Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale magyarországi működése (1853-1860)," [The beginnings of state monument conservation in Hungary. The activity of the Central-Commission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale in Hungary (1853-1860)] in Bardoly I., Haris A. eds., *A magyar műemlékvédelem korszakai. Tanulmányok* [Research on stages in Hungarian monument protection], Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal, Budapest, 1996, 47-67.
- ³ See Éber, L., "Tanulmányok Magyarország középkori falfestményeiről." [Studies of Hungarian wall paintings of the Middle Ages], in *Magyarország műemlékei*, Forster Gy. ed., Budapest, 1915, vol. 4, 71-86.

- ⁴ Baxandal M., *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*, Oxford Univ. Press., London, Oxford, New York, 1972, 29-103.
- ⁵ We count approximately 25 cycles (i.e. narrative cycles) including more than 4 scenes. The majority of these are in churches in present day Slovakia and Romania.
- ⁶ In Hungary, interest in the study of these sources arose only more recently. See the works of András Vizkelety and Edit Madas; Vizkelety A., 'I "sermonaria" domenicani in Ungheria nei secoli XIII-XIV' in Graciotti S., Vasoli C. eds., *Spiritualità e lettere nella cultura ungherese del basso medioevo*, Olschki, Florence, 1995, 29-39; Madas E., *A középkori magyarországi prédikáció-irodalom forrásai (XII-XIV század)* [The sources of medieval Hungarian sermon literature, twelfth to fourteenth centuries] Dissertation Cand. Sci., Ms, Budapest, 1992; and idem, 'Coepit verbum Dei disseminari in Ungaria'. *Prédikációirodalom a középkori Magyarországon* [Sermon literature in medieval Hungary] Doctoral dissertation, Ms., Budapest, 2000; and idem, "'Species Priami digna este imperio". Les enseignements d'un sermon du Xlle siècle', *Acta Antiqua* 40 (2000), 311-19.
- ⁷ See Wehli T., "Passió-ciklusok" in Marosi E. ed., *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül* [Hungarian art between ca. 1300-1470], Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1987, vol. 1, 186-88; vol.2, figs. 1282, 1292, 1363-64, 1374, 223.
- ⁸ Buran D, *Studien zur Wandmalerei um 1400 in der Slowakei. Die Pfarrkirche St. Jakob in Leutschau und die Pfarrkirche St. Franziskus Seraphicus in Poniky*, Weimar, 2002, 154-61.
- ⁹ Gerát I., *Stredoveké obrazové témy na Slovensku : osoby i príbehy* [Medieval Iconography in Slovakia: characters and history], VEDA, Bratislava, 2001, 210-30.
- ¹⁰ See, for example, Russo D., "Saint François, les franciscains et les représentations du Christ sur la croix en Ombrie au XIIIe siècle. Recherches sur la formation d'une image et sur une sensibilité esthétique au Moyen Âge" in *Mélanges de l'école Française de Rome. Moyen Age. Temps Modernes*, 1984, Tom 96/2, 647-717; Derbes, A., *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy. Narrative Painting, Franciscan Ideologies, and the Levant*, Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, 1996, passim.
- ¹¹ Marrow, J. H., *Passion Iconography in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance*, Van Ghemert Publ.Comp., Brussels, 1979, passim. See also Wachinger B., "Die Passion Christi und die Literatur. Beobachtungen an den Rändern der Passionsliteratur," in Haug W., Wachinger B. eds., *Die Passion Christi in Literatur und Kunst des Spätmittelalters*, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, 1993, 1-20.
- ¹² Klaniczay listed some representative studies on sermon literature in general and also in Hungary. See Klaniczay G., *Holy rulers and blessed princesses:*

- dynastic cults in medieval Central Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, 404-406.
- 13 Palmer Wandel L., "Envisioning God: Image and liturgy in Reformation Zurich" in *Sixteenth Century Journal* XXIV/1 (1993), 21-40 (esp. 21). I am indebted to Maria Crăciun for providing me with this article.
- 14 For further bibliography see Gogâltan, Sallay, "The church of Mălâncrav" p. 187, footnote 33. See also Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol.2, p. 5.
- 15 On the opinions surrounding the dating of the frescoes in the nave, see Drăguț V., "Picturile murale din biserica evanghelică din Mălîncrav." [Mural paintings in the Evangelic church in Mălîncrav]. *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei* 14 (1967), 79-93, (esp. 80); idem, "Les peintures murales de l'église evangelique Mălîncrav." *Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art* 5 (1968), 61-71. See also Gogâltan A., "The Church in Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog) Sibiu District. A Historiographic Overview" in *Apulum* 38 (2001), 305-13.
- 16 The relation between architecture and painting was pointed out by Demus. Detaching the painting from the architecture destroys the harmony of the whole. See Demus O., *La peinture murale romane*, Flammarion, Paris, 1970, 28.
- 17 The Creation cycle located in the upper area of the wall contains 12 scenes; namely: 1) the Creation of the Sky, Stars and Moon, 2) the Creation of the Vegetation and Trees, 3) the Creation of the Fishes, Birds and Animals, 4) the Creation of Eve, 5) Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, 6) The Mortal Sin, 7) Expulsion from Paradise, 8) Adam and Eve leaving Paradise, 9) Adam and Eve on Earth, 10) The sacrifice of Cain, 11) Cain Killing Abel, 12) Destroyed area.
- 18 1) God the Father sending Gabriel to Mary, 2) The Annunciation, 3) The Visitation, 4) The Nativity of Christ, 5) The Annunciation to the Shepherds, 6) The Adoration of the Magi, 7) Herod orders the Slaughter of the Innocents, 8) The Slaughter of the Innocents, 9) Flight into Egypt, 10) Presentation to the Temple, 11) Destroyed area (12-year-old Jesus in the temple).
- 19 The Resurrection cycle contains the scenes of the 1) Resurrection, 2) *Noli me tangere*, 3) Incredulity of Saint Thomas, 4) Ascension of Christ.
- 20 The left end of the lower register is occupied by a cycle dedicated to the Virgin: 1) The Dormition, 2) The funerals of the Virgin, 3) The Assumption, 4) Saint Thomas receiving the Virgin's Girdle?
- 21 The representations on the upper parts of the pillars show an unidentifiable saint (considered by Éber to be St. John the Evangelist), a saintly hermit and a crowned woman (Lionnet suggested the temptation of Saint Anthony, see Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, 393), Saint John the Baptist, Saint Katherine's martyrdom (?) and under it a Saintly monk, and a badly preserved representation of an angel (?) in a tower-like construction. In close proximity to the triumphal arch, this scene is currently covered by the pulpit.

- 22 On the importance of the representation of the Man of Sorrows in the cycle of paintings in the sanctuary, see Gogâltan, Sallay, "The Church of Mălâncrav," 194-98.
- 23 Marcia Kupfer notes that "the aim of painters to depict sacred history on church walls governed how they organize the decorative field, exploit color, configure backgrounds, and even manipulate their personal painterly 'handwriting'. From this perspective, formal decisions can no longer be considered in purely aesthetic terms as an autonomous dimension of painted decoration. On the contrary, they are already conventional narrative strategies implemented to recount events from Scripture and the lives of the saints." Kupfer M., *Romanesque Wall Painting in Central France. The Politics of Narrative*, Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 1993, 13.
- 24 The term narrative is restricted to its nominative form referring to a story as a total entity. Cycle means a number of scenes representing different moments in a story. They are placed in relation to one another and connected in a common theme which progresses from a beginning to an end, undergoing a development. Individual episodes or scenes are defined as representing separate actions in the plot taking place in localized settings. Apud Kupfer, *Romanesque Wall Painting*, 11-12.
- 25 The term "boustrophedon", borrowed from epigraphy, describes this back-and-forth movement and means "turning like oxen in ploughing". See Aronberg Lavin M., *The Place of Narrative. Mural Decoration in Italian Churches, 431-1600*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, London, 1990, 53. For further reading see Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 1, 394, footnote 1540.
- 26 For Italy see Aronberg Lavin, *The Place of Narrative*, 1990, 53 sqq.
- 27 Lionnet notes several typological relations between specific scenes that appear on different registers in the nave cycle. Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 1, 396-97. An interesting analysis on typological correspondences appears at Orly F., "Halbbiblische und Außerbiblische Typologie" in idem, *Schriften zur Mittelalterlichen Bedeutschforschung*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1977, 361-400.
- 28 There is no trace of painting on the south wall, albeit to my knowledge, no thorough research is mentioned in the literature. The north wall of the nave receives the most light thanks to the four southern windows of the clerestory.
- 29 Michler argued that this type of arrangement of frescoes on a screen-wall, showing the cycles of the Childhood of Christ and the Passion one after the other, characterizes church decoration in the area of Lake Constance and also some churches in southern Germany. See Michler J., *Gotische Wandmalerei am Bodensee*, Friedrichshafen, 1992, 34. Idea mentioned by Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 398.

- ³⁰ It should be noted that, being further from the viewer, the upper rows had to be made more visible by increasing the height of the registers.
- ³¹ For a short presentation of various dating hypotheses, see the catalogue entry no. 52 in Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 2, 48-50 (esp. 49, bibliography on p. 50).
- ³² For more on the paintings in Keszthely see Végh J., "Az olaszal keveredő csek hatás a 14 és 15 század fordulóján," [Italian mixed with Czech influence from the turn of the fifteenth century] in *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül*. [Hungarian art between 1300-1470], Marosi E. ed., Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1987, vol. 1, 606-07, 609; Marosi ed., *Magyarországi művészet*, vol. 2, 697-700, 1268-1274. For more on the frescoes in Keszthely see Prokopp M., "A Keszthelyi plebániatemplom gótikus falképei," [The Gothic mural paintings in the parish church in Keszthely] in *Művészet* 4 (1978), 24-29; idem, "A Keszthelyi plebániatemplom gótikus falképei," [The Gothic mural paintings in the parish church in Keszthely] in *Építés-Építészettudomány* 12 (1980), 367-85; idem, "Freskenschmuck der Pfarrkirche (ehem. Franziskanerkirche) zu Kesthely. Ungarn, zwischen 1380 und 1390," in *Die Parler und der Schöne Stil 1350-1400 Europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern*, Anton Legner, Cologne, 1978, vol. 2, 457. See also Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 2, 49.
- ³³ We might think of earlier cycles, such as that in the nave of the church in Ghelița (Gelence, Romania, dated around 1300 by Jékely), but this is quite a small cycle influenced by Italian, Franciscan models. See Jékely Zs., "Krisztus Passiója a Gelencei (Ghelița, Románia) Szent Imre-Templom Közékkori Freskóciklusán" [The Passion Cycle in the Medieval Parish Church of Gelence (Ghelița, Romania)] in *Tanulmányok Tóth Sándor 60. Születésnapjára*, Budapest, 2000, 115-131. I would like to thank Jékely Zsombor for providing me his article. An exceptional example is given by the later cycle in the choir of the church in Ludrová (Ludrofalva, Slovakia, dated around 1415). These mural paintings contain a large number of Passion scenes that are similarly crowded with many figures. See Dvořáková V., Krása J., Stejskal K., *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku* [Medieval wall paintings in Slovakia], Odeon, Tatran, Prague, 1978., fig. 145; Biathová K., *Maliarske prejavy stredovekého Liptova* [Painting in the medieval Liptó district] Tatran, Bratislava, 1983, 61, figs. 42, 43. Búran D. "Prispevok k charakteru nástennej mal'by na prelome 14. a 15. storočia na Slovensku Nástenné mal'by v Ponikách" [Study on the characteristics of the mural painting at the turn of the fifteenth century in Slovakia: the paintings in Poniky] in *Ars* 1994/1, 1-47, (esp. 30-32); idem, *Studien zur Wandmalerei um 1400 in der Slowakei. Die Pfarrkirche St. Jakob in Leutschau und die Pfarrkirche St. Franziskus Seraphicus in Poniky*, VDG, Weimar, 2002, 202-07.

- 34 Togner M., *Středověká Nástenná Mal'ba V Gemi* [Medieval wall paintings in the Gemer region] Tatran, Bratislava, 1989, 19-21, 96-103, 177-78. See also the bibliography and presentation of the frescoes in the catalogue by Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 2, 80-81.
- 35 Togner, *Středověká Nástenná Mal'ba V Gemi*, 22-25, 104-111, 173-74; Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 2, 32-33.
- 36 Togner, *Středověká Nástenná Mal'ba V Gemi*, 177-78.
- 37 In Klein's repertory of painting from Baden-Württemberg and Northern Switzerland, the term 'provincial' is understood in a geographical sense meaning all the works that were made (in the fourteenth-fifteenth century) in an area outside a known artistic center of South-western Germany (such as Konstanz, Basel-Freiburg, Ulm, Gmünd). See Klein M., *Schöpfungsdarstellungen mittelalterlicher Wandmalereien in Baden-Württemberg und in der Nordschweiz. Bestandaufnahme mit kritischem Befund*, HochschulVerlag, Freiburg, 1982, 187, (endnote 15).
- 38 Lionnet found similarities with the murals in the chapel in Oberstammheim (1320-30), Lantsch (1400), and Schlans (turn of the fifteenth century) and Saint George at Rhäzüns (end of the fourteenth century). See Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 1, 398 (footnote 1555); See also Jäklin D., *Geschichte der Kirche St. Georg bei Rähzüns un ihre Wandgemälde*, Chur und Winterthur, 1880, 6-7.
- 39 Dated to the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries, these murals, besides the narrative of the Creation, also contain a larger or a shorter depiction of the Passion of Christ as well as scenes showing his public life and moments from the life of the Virgin as well as individual saints. Klein listed and described around 37 such cycles of paintings. See Klein, *Schöpfungsdarstellungen*, passim.
- 40 It should also be noted that in all these cases the paintings are located in the nave, the public space dedicated to the lay community. This distinction is not clear in the case of the church in Lüen, which is a rectangular construction and provides no separate architectural space for the choir. For plans of both aforementioned churches, see Raimann A., *Gotische Wandmalereien in Graubünden. Die Werke des 14 Jahrhunderts im nördlichen Teil Graubündens und im Engadin*, Desertina Verlag, Mustér, 1985, 265, 409.
- 41 Together with the mural paintings at Rhäzüns, these decorative schemes were attributed to the so-called Master of Waltensburg along with 13 other examples located in the Graubünden region.. See Raimann A., *Gotische Wandmalereien in Graubünden*, 31-32, 265-71, 315-51, 409-25.
- 42 Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 1, 398 (footnote 1555).
- 43 The historical background is also quite similar, with the church being a family foundation of the lords of Rhäzüns. Jäklin, *Geschichte*, 6-7; Raimann A., *Gotische Wandmalereien in Graubünden*, 315.

44 For more on the architecture of the church, see Gogâltan A., “The Architecture of the Church in Mălâncrav (Sibiu County)” in *Ars Transilvaniae* VIII-IX (1998-1999), 125-43.

45 At first sight each wall of the sanctuary in Mălâncrav seems to be independent of the other. The north wall concentrates on a narrative cycle (picturing the Passion and Resurrection of Christ) while the south wall is more dedicated to representations of hagiographic and glorification themes as well as the saints. The disrupted pictorial space on the east and southeast walls (the space between the windows and their embrasures) is occupied by iconic images of saints, each separated by structural framing devices (displaying Gothic trilobe arches). The only continuous composition, the painted architectural niches surrounding the entire sanctuary, are located in the lower register under the level of the windows. The niches contain the image of the *Vir Dolorum* in the middle as well as saints and other characters (probably donors?). The vaults appear to be structured into three thematic areas. On the eastern side, numerous female saints appear in a fan-like arrangement around the keystone with the Apafi coat-of-arms. On the western side, the vaults in the first bay are divided diagonally into two pictorial areas: the north-western area containing scenes from the Childhood of Christ, and the south-eastern area occupied by the Church Fathers and symbols of the Evangelists. The eastern side of the triumphal arch offers another limited but central pictorial surface dedicated to the Virgin of the Protective Mantle and framed by Saint Peter and Saint Paul

46 Kupfer, *Romanesque Wall Painting*, 63.

47 That these are crucial moments in the narrative of the Passion, the Crowning and the Flagellation is shown by the strong border framing the scenes. Between the depictions we see a thin division: this kind of border, which appears in other cases as well, is meant to separate two scenes that are related in terms of their symbolic content. Both of the aforementioned representations are also emphasized through their composition. The Crowning with Thorns focuses the attention of the viewer on the center of the image, where the large throne on which Christ is sitting is placed. This is evidenced not only by its elegant, semicircular shape but also by the saturated blue background and ochre surface on which it appears. The Flagellation, with the depiction of the column of torture in the center, permitted the painter to introduce an architectural structure which functions as an extra framing device and focuses attention on this representation. Importantly, compared with previously mentioned depictions, both these scenes involve very few (three or four) participants. This also helps make the paintings more visually striking.

48 The next moment in the story is the Carrying of the Cross, an image that stands out, by means of its position, framing and composition, as one of the most significant in the entire Passion cycle. Its location, on the northeast

- wall, as well as the natural light it receives through the tall Gothic windows of the sanctuary, make it clearly visible from the nave. The representation is separated by strong framing bands and attracts attention through the clustered grouping of the participants as well as by the position of the Cross in the foreground.
- 49 The play between spatial location and the intention of emphasizing a specific image is also evident in the case of the Crucifixion. This is situated in the first part of the register on the north-western side. This location meant a larger pictorial area and therefore a more impressive image. Although only the upper half remains, the Crucifixion was double the size of the rest of the scenes. Some iconographic details, such as the presence of the upper part of a flag on the right hand side of the image, and the remaining traces of the sponge to the left, near the right side of the Crucified Christ, indicate the presence of characters at the bottom of the Cross now no longer visible. It therefore spread over two registers (the second and the third). Moreover, the composition with the three ochre-colored crosses appearing on the saturated blue of the background is strongly emphasized. We can only imagine the effect this large and powerful image would have had on the public at the time.
- 50 On *Vir Dolorum* and further literature focusing on this representation, see Sallay D., "A budai Szent Zsigmond-prépostság Fájdalmas Krisztus-szobrának ikonográfiája" [The iconography of the statue of the Man of Sorrows from the Saint Sigismund Collegiate church of Buda], in *Budapest Régiségei* 33 (1999), 123-39; idem, "The Eucharistic Man of Sorrows in late medieval art." *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 6, 45-80. Budapest: CEU, 2000, 45-80. See also Jenei D., "Art and Mentality in the Late Medieval Transylvania" in Vainovski I. ed., *New Europe College, GE-NEC Program, 2000-2001, 2001-2002*, New Europe College, Bucharest, 2004, 13-71 (esp. 41, 45).
- 51 Dvořáková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, fig. 96.
- 52 Ibidem, fig. 75.
- 53 Raimann, *Gotische Wandmalereien in Graubünden*, 108, 294, 336, 412.
- 54 Ibidem, 108-09.
- 55 This sword is large and heavy and has an acutely pointed blade and a short grip suitable for holding it with one hand and a round pommel. These swords were common during the fourteenth century and beginning of the fifteenth century and therefore are hard to use as a dating element. See Oakeshott E., *The sword in the age of chivalry*, The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 1994, (first edition 1964), 59-60.
- 56 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, 1996, 91-92.
- 57 Stelè F., *Ars Sloveniae. Gotsko stensko slikarstvo* [Art in Slovenia. Gothic mural painting] Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana, 1972, LVIV; See also the catalogue *Gotik in Slovenien* Narodna Galerija, Ljubljana, 1995, 245-46, fig. 135b. In Rimavská Baná (Slovakia, dated around 1380) and Poniky

- (Slovakia, dated around 1415), the painter depicted the moment when Peter cuts off the servant's ear (in the background on the right side of the Arrest scene) and not the moment when Christ heals the servant's ear. On Rimavská Baná, see the image in Dvořáková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, fig. 86. For Poniky, see Buran, *Studien zur Wandmalerei*, 155-56, 319, fig. 100.
- 58 Drăguț, V., "Picturile murale de la Mediaș; o importantă recuperare pentru istoria artei transilvănene." [The mural paintings in Mediaș; an important recovery for Transylvanian art history] in *Monumente de Istoria Artei 2* (1976), 11-22, fig. 16.
- 59 Klein, *Schöpfungsdarstellungen* 349-68, fig. 210..
- 60 Ibidem, fig. 211, Raimann, *Gotische Wandmalereien in Graubünden*, 134, 299.
- 61 Generally, the soldiers wear fourteenth century armor, short, tight tunics and tight trousers, pointed shoes, basinets and kettle hats to which, in some cases, were attached aventails. See Edge D., Paddock J.M., *Arms and Armor of the Medieval knight. An illustrated history of weaponry in the Middle Ages*, Crescent Books, New York, Avenel, New Jersey, 1988, 73, 183, 186.
- 62 Ragusa I., Green R. B. ed., *Meditations on the Life of Christ. An Illustrated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1961), passim. See also Marrow, *Passion iconography*, 68-76.
- 63 Marrow, *Passion iconography*, 69.
- 64 Ibidem, 1.
- 65 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, 91-92.
- 66 See the images in the Krems internet database no. 012219, 012221. See also Gerát, *Stredoveké obrazové témy na Slovensku*, fig. 80.
- 67 Raimann, *Gotische Wandmalereien in Graubünden*, 413,
- 68 See the image in the database of the Krems Institute no. 012219.
- 69 Derbes A., *Picturing the Passion*, 92.
- 70 Stubblebine argued that manuscripts such as the Mt. Athos, Ivron 5 were most likely known by the artist. See Stubblebine J.H., "Byzantine Sources for the Iconography of Duccio's Maesta," in *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 57, no. 2, 1975, 176-85. For this article I am indebted to Maria Crăciun.
- 71 Kirschbaum E., ed. *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, Herder, Rome, Freiburg, Basel, Vienna, 1971, vol. 3, 77-78. See also a canvas dated around 1430 with the Life of Christ in 31 scenes from the former Charterhouse in Cologne. See Corley, E., *Painting and Patronage in Cologne. 1300-1500*, Harvey Millwe Publ., Turnhout, 2000, 114, fig. 88.
- 72 This was probably a donation by a rich family, the members of which appear in the lower right corner of the painting.

- 73 Lionnet draws attention to the representation of the Death of the Virgin shown in the nave cycle in Mălâncrav in three separate scenes. These insist on the fact that the Virgin ascended, body and soul, to Paradise. The ascension of the body and soul of the Virgin was another theological doctrine promoted by the Franciscans. See Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol.1, 398, (esp. footnote 1556).
- 74 The literature on *devotio moderna* is too extensive to be included here. A good introduction can be found in Van Os H., *The Art of Devotion in the late Middle Ages in Europe 1300-1500*, Merrell Holberton Publishers Ltd, London, 1994, *passim*.
- 75 An amusing detail is given by the tall character in a tight green outfit and hood (probably representing a fool) seen behind the throne.
- 76 She is identified by her light, ochre-colored veil covering her blue dress. The presence of Mary in all the stages of the carrying of the Cross is a repeated theme. Lionnet draws attention to the several instances in the decorative scheme on the north wall of the nave of the figure of Mary. She is presented as the New Eve, the mother of God and the main actor in the process of redemption as the incarnation of the Church. Moreover, the images showing the death of the Virgin correspond on a vertical axis with those of the Creation of Eve until her expulsion from Paradise. See Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 1, 395-96.
- 77 This widespread manuscript was written in 1324, probably in Strasbourg, by the Dominican friar Ludolf of Saxony (+1378).
- 78 Niesner drew attention to the moral purpose of the *Exempla* introduced by the *Speculum*. In this context, the images play an important role, although their meanings are not always easily understood. Durandus' advice to view the images not only as a memory aid but also as a model of desirable behavior [*ad representandum mala vitanda, et bona imitanda*] is therefore considered relevant by Niesner to understanding the role of such images. See Niesner M., *Das Speculum Humanae Salvationis der Stiftsbibliothek Kremsmünster*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln, Weimar, Wien, 1995, 338-39.
- 79 Dvořáková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, 129, fig. 52; Marosi E. ed., *Magyarországi művészet*, vol.2 , fig. 690.
- 80 Dvořáková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, 141-42, figs. 164-69. It should be noted that in the aforementioned cases of Podolinec and Sliače in Slovakia, this episode comes after a depiction of high significance for Franciscan spirituality, namely the Stripping of Christ. The Stripping of Christ is mentioned in Matthew's Gospel (after the Flagellation, Mt. 27, 27) and is also described in the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodimus in the story of Pilate. The same episode was also mentioned in the psalms read out during Holy Week (Ps. 22, 19) and described symbolically by the covering and uncovering of the altar (*denudatio altarium*). It was used as an allusion to the poverty of Christ and is mentioned in the Meditations on the Life of Christ

- and in St. Brigitt's legend. See Schiller G., *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, Gerd Mohn Verlaghaus Gütersloh, 1968, vol. 2/1, 93. The same sequence of scenes appears in St. Gallus Church in Oberstammheim in northern Switzerland. Klein, *Schöpfungsdarstellungen*, 317-47 (esp. 321), fig. 186. The Stripping is missing in the other cases, like that in Svabovce, Kosice, Chilieni and Mălâncrav
- 81 See Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, 106; Dvořáková, V., *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, figs. 136.
- 82 Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol.2, 46-47
- 83 Ibidem, vol. 2, 98-99 (with bibliography).
- 84 Drăguț, "Picturile murale de la Medias", 11-22.
- 85 One good example is the Barberini Psalter in Rome (dated to the turn of the twelfth century), in which Christ (dressed in a *Colobium*) is shown at the moment 4 soldiers nail him to the Cross. Schiller G., *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, Gerd Mohn Verlaghaus Gütersloh, 1968, vol. 2/2, fig. 299.
- 86 In Italy, the preferred representation shows Christ climbing the ladder in order to be crucified. Schiller only mentions a later example of the nailing in Italy, in a fresco in the Dome of Cremona attributed to Pordenone and dated around 1530. Schiller, *Ikongraphie*, 94-95. For earlier examples see Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, 147-49.
- 87 Klein, *Schöpfungsdarstellungen*, p. 353.
- 88 A drawing after this image in the church in Rhäzüns can be seen in Jäklin, *Geschichte der Kirche St. Georg*, fig. 51.
- 89 Dvořáková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, 87; Gerát, *Stredoveké obrazové témy*, fig. 92.
- 90 Although the historiated Crucifixions are encountered fairly frequently in the murals of Medieval Hungary, Longinus is less often represented, with more emphasis being placed on the figure of the grieving Virgin with the other two Maries and John. Longinus only seems to appear in Plešivec (Slovakia, dated around 1350). See Togner., *Středověká Nástěnná Mal'ba V Gemeri*, 14; Gerát, *Stredoveké obrazové témy*, 226-28. In Transylvania, in the 29 representations of the Crucifixion listed by Drăguț in his repertory he is only mentioned in the case of Mălâncrav. See Drăguț V., "Iconografia picturilor murale gotice din Transilvania. Considerații generale și repertoriu de teme" in *Pagini de veche artă românească*. [Iconography of the Gothic mural paintings in Transylvania. General ideas and theme repertory], Editura Academiei, Bucharest, 1972, 72.
- 91 Longinus is given an important place in 15th century representations of the Crucifixion, such as in the panel painting of the altarpiece in Hronski Beňadick (Garamszentbenedek, Slovakia, dated around 1427) attributed to Thomas of Cluj (Kolozsvár, Klausenburg), which is found today in the Christian Museum in Esztergom (Hungary), or in the murals by Johannes of

- Rosenaw in the former Saint Mary's Church in Sibiu (Szeben, Hermannstadt, Romania) dated to 1445. See Gerát, *Stredoveké obrazové témy*, **218**, fig. 86; Vătăşianu V., *Istoria artei feudale în Țările Române* [The History of Medieval Art in Romanian historical countries], Ed. Academiei, Bucharest, 1959, 434, fig. 394.
- ⁹² Raimann, *Gotische Wandmalereien in Graubünden*, 268, 414.
- ⁹³ The dimensions of the damaged space indicate that only one or two scenes are missing.
- ⁹⁴ The Last Supper showing the participants gathered round a circular table is not unusual. It was first introduced in the West around the tenth century and was adopted by Byzantine art in the eleventh century. See Millet G., *L'Iconographie de l'évangile aux XIVe, XVe, XVIe siècles d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macedoine et du Mont-Athos*, De Boccard, Paris, 1960, 298. It became popular in Florentine Trecento art. Later, through Giotto's work, it spread to Padua and Rimini as well as Emilian and Lombard painting. Laurence B. Kanter, *Painting and Illumination in Early Renaissance Florence 1300-1450* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts, 1994), 176.
- ⁹⁵ Despite the fact that by the fourteenth century lamb had replaced fish in most representations of the Last Supper, the painter in Mălâncrav preferred the latter. See Rigaux D., *A la table du Seigneur. L'Eucharistie chez les Primitifs italiens 1250-1497*, Cerf, Paris, 1989, 228-231.
- ⁹⁶ He placed Christ on top, with John sleeping at his bosom. Peter, sitting on the right side of Christ, turns towards Christ and makes an inquisitive gesture. Ignoring Peter's astonishment, Christ is stretching his right hand out towards Judas. The latter is standing next to Peter and is identifiable by the fact that his halo is missing. There is a visual link between the sleeping John and Judas: both appear on a lower level than the rest of the disciples, who are sitting round the table. On the parallels between John and Judas, see Rigaux, *A la table*, 45-50.
- ⁹⁷ *Umění na Slovensku* [Art in Slovakia] Melantrich, 1938, fig.261; Dvoráková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, 155.
- ⁹⁸ I would like to thank Prof. Gerhard Jaritz for mentioning and providing me with images of this altarpiece. The apostles are arranged around a circular table in the middle of which we see a fish, with [knives and plates] and a chalice nearby. Christ, at the top of the gathering, is raising in his right hand a Host (situated in the same visual line with the chalice), thereby indicating the meaning of the scene: namely, the Establishment of the Eucharist.
- ⁹⁹ This gesture also indicates his demand that his head also be washed.
- ¹⁰⁰ A similar appearance of God the Father is found in a scene on the second row of the north wall in the sanctuary of the church in Kocelovce (Slovakia, dated around 1380-90), where, besides God the Father blessing his Son,

- there is a chalice on the rock in front of Christ, a symbol of his Passion. See the image in the Krems database n0. 012513.
- 101 Generally, the soldiers wear fourteenth century armor, short, tight tunics and tight trousers, pointed shoes, basinet and kettle hats to which, in some cases, were attached aventails. The Basinet, also called bascinet or basnet, was an open-faced helmet with a globular or conical skull enclosing the sides of the face and neck. It was usually worn with an aventail and occasionally a visor. The Kettle hat, or chapel de fer, is an open-faced helmet consisting of a bowl with a broad brim, resembling the 'tin hat' of the British Army in the period 1914-48. It was very popular with the poorer knights being cheap and easy to produce. From 1320 onwards it is depicted with a tall conical skull like the contemporary basinet, made of one or two, and only rarely three, pieces. An aventail is a curtain of mail attached by means of staples (vervelles) around the base of a helmet (especially the basinet) and covering the shoulders. It is also called camail (a French term). See David Edge, John Miles Paddock, *Arms and Armor of the Medieval knight. An illustrated history of weaponry in the Middle Ages* (New York, Avenel, New Jersey: Crescent Books, 1988), 73, 183, 186.
- 102 One unusual detail is the head that appears behind the throne and between the priests. Although barely visible, it can be observed with the help of the computer and scanned images.
- 103 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, 91-92.
- 104 It is interesting to note that the image of Christ supporting his head with his hand normally appears in images of Christ in Distress. I owe this idea to Emese Sarkadi. See also Von der Osten G., "Job and Christ. The Development of a Devotional Image" in *Journal of the Warburg and Courland Institutes* 16, 1953, 154.
- 105 Depiction of the third row on the north wall. See Dvoráková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, 100-103, fig. 96; Prokopp M., *Italian Trecento influence on murals in east central Europe particularly Hungary*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1983, 152.
- 106 Togner M., *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba v Gemberi*, fig. 19. Image from Krems database, no. 012491
- 107 The Passion cycle on the north wall of the nave in Mediaș (dated around 1420, by Drăguț) also contains a similar representation of the Crowning with Thorns. See Drăguț, "Picturile murale de la Mediaș", fig. 17.
- 108 Christ's left foot is stepping forwards, whereas his right foot is stepping backwards. His head is turned to his left.
- 109 Marrow, *Passion iconography*, 47, 134-35.
- 110 Drăguț said of the representation of Simon of Cyrene that it resembles the style of dress of a Romanian peasant. Drăguț V., "Picturile murale din biserica evanghelică din Mălîncrav" [Mural paintings in the Evangelical church in Mălîncrav] in *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei* 14 (1967), 82.

- 111 One of these, situated behind Christ, is an older man with white hair, beard and moustache. He is followed by a younger man with similar features but in dark colors. They do not look like soldiers because they are dressed in shirts from the knees up and both are barefoot. Their hands are crossed in front of them, probably indicating that they have been tied.
- 112 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, 134-35, 153-54, 235, note 71.
- 113 For example, in the Ascent of the Cross at Santa Maria Donnaregina in Naples (school of Pietro Cavallini, early fourteenth century) or the Way to Calvary by Pietro Lorenzetti in the Lower Church of San Francesco in Assisi (c. 1316-19). *Ibidem*, 154, fig. 74.
- 114 Bakoš J., *Dejiny a koncepcie stredovekého umenia na Slovensku* [History and conception of medieval art in Slovakia] Tatran, Bratislava, 1984, figs. 18, 19.
- 115 Dvoráková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, fig. 145; Biathová K., *Maliarske prejavy stredovekého Liptova* [Painting in the medieval Liptov district] Tatran, Bratislava, 1983, 61, figs. 42, 43.
- 116 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, 31
- 117 *Ibidem*, 7.
- 118 Marosi ed., *Magyarországi művészet*, vol. 2, 221, fig. 708.
- 119 *Ibidem*, 415, fig. 1339.
- 120 Image from the Krems database no. 10954.
- 121 Very often the artists were not content only showing Judas being hanged and also presented the picture of a horrifying disemboweled corpse while insisting on bodily details, such as his intestines coming out of his stomach. See the representation in relief on the tympanum of the western portal in Freiburg Münster [dated around 1300]. Here the greed of Judas and the price of treason are symbolized by the presence of the thirty silver coins falling from his hand. Kirschbaum, *Lexikon*, vol. 2, 446. See also Monstadt B., *Judas beim Abendmahl. Figurenkonstellation und Bedeutung in Dartstellungen von Giotto bis Andrea del Sarto*, Scaneg Verlag, Munich, 1995, 28-36.
- 122 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion*, 70.
- 123 *Ibidem*, 71.
- 124 Dvoráková, *Středověká nástěnná mal'ba na Slovensku*, 122; Biathová, *Maliarske prejavy*, 193, 195
- 125 Also mentioned by Drägut, "Picturile murale," 92.
- 126 The Franciscans promoted certain iconographic types: for example, the image of *Christus Patiens*, that of the Virgin of the Mantle and the Resurrection (body and soul) of the Virgin. See, for example, Belting-Ihm Ch., "Sub matris tutela" *Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte der Schutzmantelmadonna*, Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, Heidelberg, 1976, 70. See also Egger H., "Franziskanischer Geist in mittelalterlichen Bildvorstellungen. Versuch einer franziskanischen Ikonographie." in *800 Jahre Franz von Assisi*.

- Franziskanische Kunst und Kultur des Mittelalters*, Ferdinand Berger & Söhne Vienna, 1982, 471-505.
- 127 Niesner, *Das Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, passim.
- 128 See Muncheck H., *Die Concordantiae caritatis des Ulrich von Lilienfeld. Untersuchungen zu Inhalt, Quellen und Verbreitung, mit einer Paraphrasierung von Temporale, Sanktorale und Commune*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Wien, 2000, passim.
- 129 *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* is mentioned, for example, in the library in Körmöczbánya (Slovakia). See Ipolyi A., “Egy középkori Magyar plébanos könyvtára” [The medieval library of a Hungarian priest] in *Magyar Könyvszemle* 1876, 229-41 (esp. 236).
- 130 Thomas M., “Lo Speculum Humanae Salvationis e l’idea occidentale della Redenzione” in *Nuova Rivista Storica* LVIII, 1974, 394.
- 131 See, for example, the classic work of Karácsonyi J., *Szent Ferencz rendjének története mgyarországon 1711-ig* [The history of the Franciscan order in Hungary until 1711], A Magyar Tud. Akadémia Kiadása, Budapest, 1922, 2 vols., passim. For further reading, see in Hervay F., “Geschichte der Franziskaner in Ungarn* bis zum Beginn der Reformation”, in *800 Jahre Franz von Assisi. Franziskanische Kunst und Kultur des Mittelalters*, Ferdinand Berger & Söhne, Vienna, 1982, 312-17.
- 132 And even if the remaining buildings give us an idea about the architectural principles of construction and organization, the scarce quantity of wall paintings provides little information about the iconographic patterns promoted by the Franciscans in this region.
- 133 The most important collections of sermons in Medieval Hungary date from the beginning of the 16th century and are attributed to Perbart of Timișoara (Temesvar, + 1504) and to Orwald of Lasko (+ 1511). See Klaniczay G., Madas E., “Offices liturgiques et Légendiers” in Philippart G., *Hagiographies. La Hongrie*, Brepols-Turnhout, 1996, 144-45.
- 134 See various studies on the activity of the order in various regions in the exhibition catalogue *800 Jahre Franz von Assisi. Franziskanische Kunst und Kultur des Mittelalters*, Ferdinand Berger & Söhne, Vienna, 1982, passim.
- 135 This would explain (besides the low quantity of remaining medieval wall paintings in general) the small number of remaining representations showing the most popular saints of the Order. Lanc has suggested that the long history of the established traditional saints probably left little room for the assimilation of the Franciscan ones in the regions discussed. Lanc E., “Zu franziskanischen Darstellungen in der mittelalterlichen Wandmalerei ausserhalb Italiens” in *800 Jahre Franz von Assisi*, 506.
- 136 One of the keystones in the church contains Lackfi’s coat of arms. Marosi ed., *Magyarországi művészet*, vol. 1, 127, vol. 2, 398, figs. 458, 1281. See

- also Prokopp M., "A Keszthelyi", 24-29; idem, "A Keszthelyi falképei," (1980), 367-85; idem, "Freskenschmuck," in *Die Parler*, vol. 2, 457.
- 137 In Italy, for example, the Franciscans preferred to settle in towns. The fact that in Central Europe the Order also had monasteries in rural regions shows that they were trying to adapt to local political and social demands. See Fügedi, E., "La formation des villes et les ordres mendiants en Hongrie" in Fügedi E., *Kings, bishops, nobles and burghers in medieval Hungary*, Bak J.M. ed., Variorum Reprints, London, 1986, 968-87.
- 138 See Borzási Gy., Emödi T., *Szalárd református templom* [The Reformed Church at Sălard] Cluj, 1996. See also Rusu A. A., *Dicționarul mănăstirilor din Transilvania, Banat, Crișana și Maramureș*, [The Dictionary of Monasteries in the Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureș regions], Presa Universitară, Cluj, 2000, 222-24.
- 139 See the subchapter "Der franziskanische Bezug im Programm des Ausmalung" in Buran D, *Studien zur Wandmalerei*, 178-181.
- 140 Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 1, 358-424.
- 141 Thomas M., "Lo Speculum Humanae Salvationis", 379-97.
- 142 During the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries this relationship is suggested only by influences traced to images such as the presence of two Franciscan saints appearing on the murals on the south wall of the sanctuary (dated before 1405). In the second half of the fifteenth century, during the reign of Michael Apafi, the preference for the Franciscans is expressed clearly. Not only was one of his sons named Francis, but Michael Apafi was also a benefactor of the Franciscan friary in Târgu Mureș. He requested that prayers be said for the salvation of his soul by his son Nicholas and the community of the Franciscans from the aforementioned friary. Fragments of a tombstone considered to be Michael Apafi's funerary monument (based on the coat of arms), dated on stylistic grounds to some time around 1470, were found near the Franciscan church in Târgu Mureș. See Gogâltan, *Patronage and Artistic Production*, 84-86, 139.
- 143 Apparently this image had attached to it an indulgence by Pope Martin V on March 28, 1424. See Gogâltan, Sallay, "The Church of Mălâncrav," 181. See also Jenei, "Art and Mentality" 37-43.
- 144 Roth V., "Az almakeréki templom és műkincsei" [The church in Mălâncrav and its treasures] in *Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Érem és Régiségtárából*, (Cluj, 1912), 128-184.
- 145 The paintings in the church at Podolinec (Slovakia) have 8 remaining scenes. An equal number of scenes can be found in the St. Philip and James church in Švábovce. See Lionnet, *Les peintures murales*, vol. 2, 90, 106.
- 146 This cycle includes approximately 10 of the scenes found in Mălâncrav but with one meaningful addition – the depiction of the Undressing is placed in front of the image of the Hammering of Christ on to the Cross. The frescoes are currently located under the roof in the nave of the church. Togner M.,

Středověká nástenná mal'ba na Slovensku: addenda et corrigenda [Medieval wall paintings in Slovakia: addenda et corrigenda] Tatran, Bratislava, 1988, 92. See also Gerát, *Stredoveké obrazové témy na Slovensku*, 222-23.

¹⁴⁷ See in particular Scheller, R. W., *Exemplum. Model-book drawings and the practice of artistic transmission in the Middle Ages (ca. 900- ca. 1470)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995), passim.

¹⁴⁸ A stylistic analysis of the murals in the nave goes beyond the remit of this short text. We may note, however, that the paintings in Mälänčrav feature many similarities with the linear style of the murals attributed to the so-called Master of Waltensburg whose activity is documented through the 16 cycles of paintings in the churches of the Graubünden region of Switzerland. These frescoes are much earlier (dating from around 1330-50), we can only assume the presence in Mälänčrav of a painter trained in this region.