

Résumé: L'article analyse en première les peintures murales de l'église fortifiée Notre Dame de Ighișu Nou, signalées en 1934, mises en évidence en 2012 et restaurées en 2014. Les spécialistes ont prélevé d'importants fragments dans le chœur, qui relèvent le programme iconographique originaire, similaire avec le sanctuaire de l'église de Mălâncrav (c. 1400), composé par des Docteurs de l'Église Catholique, avec les symboles apocalyptiques des Évangélistes (St. Jérôme avec l'aigle de Jean et le bœuf de Luc, qui était représenté, après les canons, avec Augustine, qui a la figure difficilement visible à cause des dégradations), des Saintes-Vierges (Catherine et Barbe ?), les prophètes Iona et Jeremias. Deux scènes de la Vie de Notre Dame (la Rencontre à la Porte d'Or et la Naissance de Marie), sont préservées sur le tympan nord et le registre médian conserve des fragments de la Passion de Jésus Christ et le Vir dolorum. Autour de l'arc de triomphe les scènes du Jugement dernier sont peintes en trois registres, tandis que sur le mur nord de la nave, les vies des saints Ladislav, Catherine et Margaret sont peintes. L'ensemble mis en valeur à Ighișu Nou est d'une majeure importance pour l'art médiéval, le répertoire de la peinture murale de Transylvanie de l'Europe Centrale étant enrichi par des représentations inédites, caractérisées par des scènes uniques et typologies originales. D'une égale importance est le fait que cette découverte confirme l'existence d'un atelier conduit par le Maître du sanctuaire de Mălâncrav, un des plus importants peintres du "gothique international" de cette partie de l'Europe, dont le style unique a été identifié encore dans les peintures extraites du chœur de l'église de Dârjiu. À Ighiș, sont réitérées des typologies, des éléments de décor, des vêtements, des armures, des scénographies de Mălâncrav, mais des différences notables résident dans l'absence du bleu azurite, qui prive ces peintures du

THE NEWLY DISCOVERED MURALS INSIDE THE CHURCH OF VIRGIN MARY IN IGIȘU NOU, SIBIU COUNTY

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caractère spectaculaire de l'ensemble des nobles Apași, et dans la simplification de certaines représentations, due à la contribution massive de l'atelier.

Keywords: Transylvania, Ighișu Nou, Mălâncrav, mural painting, iconography, style.

The existence of the murals inside the fortified church from Ighișu Nou (Eibesdorf, Szászivánfalva), a village that belongs today to the Mediaș municipality, is known since 1934, evidenced in 2012 and restored in 2014 (Fig. 1). Ever since their discovery, the connection to the paintings of the Mălâncrav sanctuary (c. 1400)¹, known as a major landmark of the "international Gothic style" in Transylvania and Eastern Central Europe was noticed.

The historical data are relevant in this respect. The first mention of the settlement, from 1305, is linked to the division of the nobleman Apa's estate (the common ancestor of Apași and Bethlen families), among his successors. Ighișu Nou was inherited by Gregorius, Mălâncrav went to Gregorius filius Nicolai (his homonym nephew, mentioned mostly as Gegus in the later documents), and the third legatee was Jacobus².



Fig. 1 – The Virgin Mary church in Ighișu Nou (Sibiu county). Inner view of the fragmentary ensemble of mural paintings discovered in the choir, on the triumphal arch and on the northern wall of the church.

The next documents concerning Ighiș date from 1359 and mention Count *Valterus* and the village elders – *seniores de Isontelke*, which means that at *Gregorius*' death, who had no heirs, the village was bought by the community, becoming a free settlement of Mediaș Seat³. Later sources from 1391, 1392 and 1394, recorded Count *Johannes*, son of *Johannes de villa Isopiswas*⁴.

In the years 1414 and 1415, the charters refer to the church dedicated to Virgin Mary – *ecclesia beatae virginis de villa Ysopis*, led by the provost *Johannes*, who was one of Șeica Chapter priests, who turned against the bishop from Alba Iulia⁵. The latter document was issued on February 18th 1415, by Pope John XXIII in Konstanz, where the Ecumenical Council that ended the schism of the Catholic Church took place.

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The Gothic one nave church in Ighișu Nou was built in late fourteenth century, seemingly, on the place of an older building of which the sacristy with a small

Romanesque window and, at least, the lower part of the choir walls are preserved. The church was fortified in the fifteenth century, with a defensive floor on the altered apse, a massive tower to the west, and a precinct reinforced with towers and bastions, which was successively developed.

According to the study published by the architect Paul Niedermaier in 1969, after eleven years of research, the choir and the nave were erected in two distinct phases, with the site stopped and resumed after a short break, by a different workshop, in simpler forms. The differences between the two parts of the church, both built in stonemasonry, are spatial, technical and formal⁶.

The present polygonal apse is covered by a Gothic vault on stone ribs, with the key decorated with a stylized carved wild rose, while the walls, supported by buttresses outside, are pierced by high, narrow, pointed windows, with double stone frames, tracery and the old colored round stained glasses partially preserved, to the north and northeast.

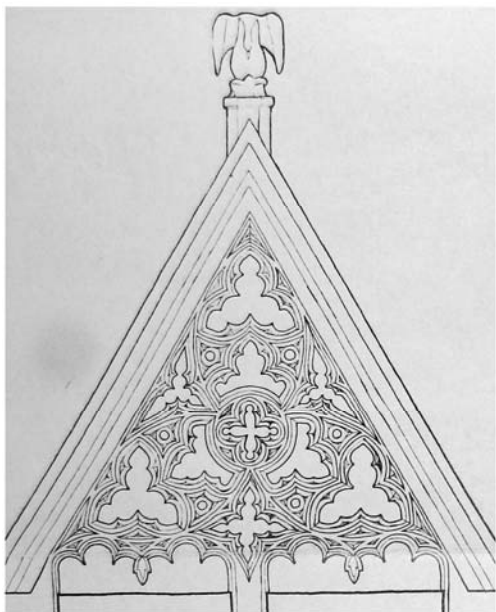


Fig. 2 – The carved stone sedilia on the southern part of the choir: Paul Niedermaier, *Biserica cetate din Ighișu Nou*, in *Muzeul Brukenthal, Studii și Cercetări*, 1969, Plate IX a.

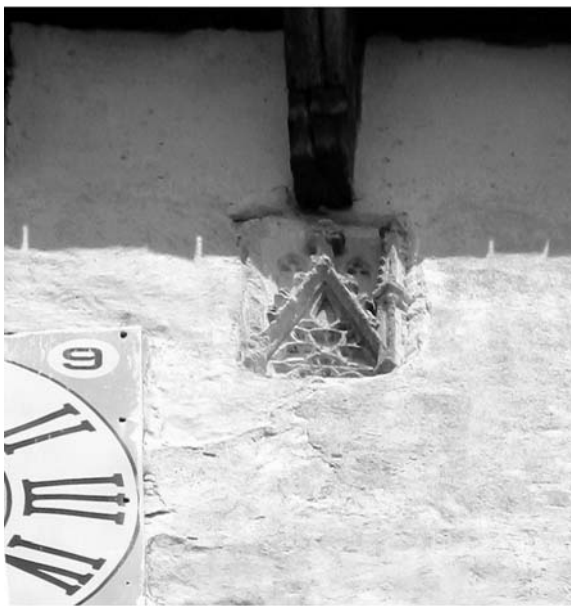


Fig. 3 – The pinion of the old tabernacle, dismantled and built in the upper part of the west tower.

The triumphal pointed arch is also built in profiled carved stone, while the nave is covered with a simple ceiling and provided with three entrances to the west, south and north, the latter being walled up.

The main western door, with the portal richly decorated with moldings in retreat and a frieze of capitals with vegetal motives, was later protected by a portcullis, whose guide grooves are still preserved in the adjacent buttresses.

One aspect that retained the scholars' attention is the typology of the windows in the apse, with the upper tracery delimited by a horizontal baguette, also identified in other several churches of the Târnava Mare Valley, from Șaroș⁷, Curciu and Mălâncrav⁸.

The stone decoration of the choir includes human and animal figures that adorn the architecture. On the windows ledges are disposed a stylized lion head with a grotesque expression and a small seated figure with three hands, keeping the globe and a scroll, an original produce of the medieval imaginary that probably symbolizes the Holy Trinity. Other carved human heads are apparently randomly

disposed in the upper part, outside. Inside, the stone sedilia, with a triangular tympanum decorated with a pretentious tracery, is crowned by the pelican feeding its young, this consecrated symbol of Christ replacing the regular fleuron (Fig. 2). The gable of the old tabernacle, dismantled in the late fifteenth century was built in the upper part of the west tower masonry, beneath the watch gallery (Fig. 3). These valuable items of decorative sculpture are comparable with the pieces in the church choir of Curciu, where they are preserved *in situ*⁹. The new tabernacle from Ighiș, adorned with the figure of *Vir dolorum* in relief bears the date 1491 and is the first known piece of a series of similar items, which are preserved today at Bazna, Valea Viilor (1504), Cislădioara (1504), Târgu (1504), Dupuș (1511) and Boian¹⁰.

The defensive arrangements of the church, begun around 1420 with the oval irregular precinct and the old gate tower, were continued after the first Turkish incursion on the Târnava Mare Valley in 1435, with a defensive floor in masonry added to the choir. In 1494, the massive

western tower of the same width as the nave and a bell from 1496 was built in brick atop the older walls of the church, being reinforced with buttresses of the same material¹¹.

The works were continued in the first decades of the next century, when the north octagonal stair case of the nave was erected, with the year 1526 and the Mediaș Seat coat of arms represented on its door with a wooden frame, as well. The round bastion was added to the earlier surrounding fortification, with the upper part of the façade decorated in brick, in a similar form in which the towers of the City of Sibiu were rebuilt¹². The ensemble was developed later, with a rectangular court to the north, *zwinger* to the south and the rooms of the community attached to the wall inside, today preserved only on the southern side, the rest of them having been demolished.

The northern door of the nave was closed and on its masonry a religious inscriptions in Latin was written, similar to the line preserved at the same height on the entire adjacent wall¹³, a small fragment being also found in the choir, near the sacristy entrance. The later inscription in different characters was discovered by the restorers inside a niche: *Johannes Sterner / 1751*¹⁴.

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The wall paintings of Ighișu Nou were mentioned in 1934¹⁵, but the first concrete information is due once more to Paul Niedermeier, who noticed the traces of color outside the north-eastern wall of the choir and on the western portal where "small characteristic Gothic motives in white, black, red and yellow, applied on a thin layer of plaster" could be observed. The scholar also published the telegraphic note of the Lutheran priest in the village chronicle of 1951, according to which, figures and inscriptions had appeared "in the nave (to the left, at 2.5 m beneath the ceiling) and also, behind the altar, when the walls were washed. In the nave, beautiful and clear icons with the inscription *Jeremiah*, in Gothic letters. Same as, behind the altar. Here, the word *pastor* and the date 1628 had occurred¹⁶".

The fragmentary ensemble of murals researched in 2012 was fully brought to light, conserved and restored in 2014 by a team coordinated by Péter Pál and Kiss Loránd. Important mural fragments were found in the choir and nave, where only the north wall and the eastern one, around the triumphal arch were decorated. The surface of the paintings was fully hammered in order to receive the new plaster that covered it until recently.

In the apse, the painting is preserved mainly on top, but other fragments existing in various parts, although discontinuous, allow the assumption that the walls were originally decorated in three horizontal rows of figurative representations, to which the draperies register was added in the lower part.

Besides the dominant layer of painting, two earlier representations were evidenced by the restorers: a small Crucifixion scratched in the plaster on the south wall of the choir, near the sedilia, and the image of *Vir dolorum*, with Jesus in the tomb, framed by flying angels with torches, near the tabernacle, on the northeastern wall of the apse.

The iconography of the upper part of the choir, partially follows the program of the Mălâncrav sanctuary, with Doctors of the Catholic Church in association with the apocalyptic symbols of the Evangelists, Virgins-Martyrs on the vault and figures of Prophets in the tympanums of the walls.

Among the Doctors of the Catholic Church, there are better preserved the figures of St. Jerome with the eagle, symbol of John the Evangelist (Fig. 4), and the bull, symbol of Luke, which was canonically represented with Augustine, whose silhouette is hardly legible because of the degradations of the paintings, to the south. We may presume that Gregory the Great with John's angel, respectively Ambrose with Mark's lion were symmetrically represented on the north segment of the vault. To the east, only two figures of the four *Virgines Capiales* were recovered: Catherine with the wheel and, probably, Barbara with the tower of which just a small fragment seems to be preserved¹⁷.



Fig. 4 – St. Jerome, Doctor of the Catholic Church, with the eagle, symbol of John the Evangelist. Mălâncrav, St. Gregory the Great, with the angel, symbol of Mathew the Evangelist.

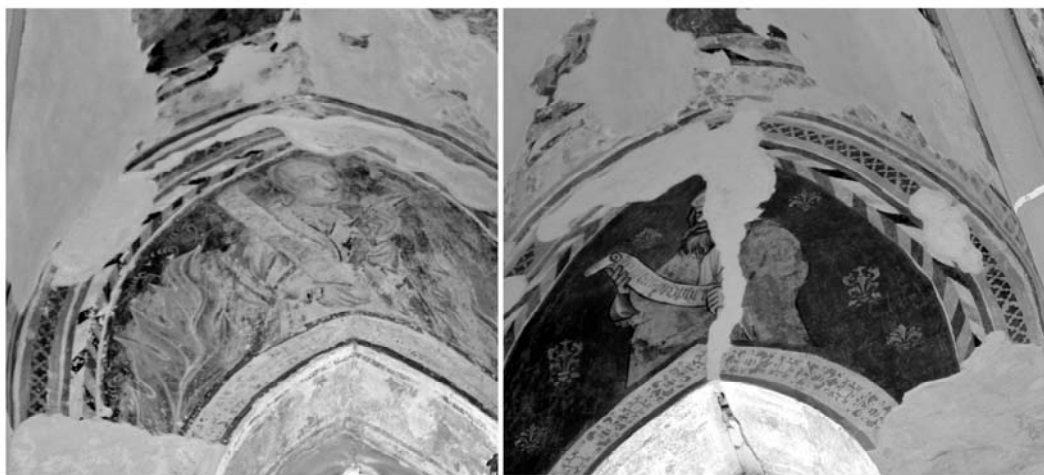


Fig. 5 – *Iona propheta* and *Jeremias propheta*, painted on the northeastern and southeastern tympana of the apse.

On the northeastern and southeastern tympanums of the apse, the busts of *Iona propheta* (recognizable after his bald head and sea monster from the Old Testament, held as an attribute) and *Jeremias propheta*, both their names inscribed on the scrolls that they support, are painted (Fig. 5)¹⁸.

Two scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary, the patron saint of the church, decorate

the tympanum of the north wall, while on the opposite side the painting was lost. The meeting at the Golden Gate shows Joachim and Anna embraced in front of the City of Nazareth in Galilee, with the buildings conventionally painted on a smaller scale in the background. Nearby, the Nativity of Our Lady is rendered as a veritable genre scene in which Saint Anna holds the baby Mary, while

a maid brings the food, holding a spoon and a bowl (Fig. 6). The novelty of the composition, which differs from the current representations of the scenes derived from the Italian *Trecento*¹⁹, the elements of material culture, unique in the Transylvanian medieval painting and the original scenography made of wooden frames and curtains are worth mentioning.

In the median register of the walls, full-figured saints frame the windows, from which just one is preserved in its entirety, wearing a red mantle coated with ermine, as a sign of royalty, but the color layer is extremely faded and the details are lost. From the other figures in this row, only small lower fragments are kept, of two

wearing tights and one in a brownish vestment, holding a T cane and a fish, which allow him to be hypothetically identified, as Saint Antony of Padua. The fragments preserved in the third register, at the junction of the north-eastern and eastern walls of the apse show that the Passion Cycle was painted. The Judgement at Annas and Caiaphas can be noticed, with Jesus having a rope tied round his neck (an element of Franciscan iconography), brought by the soldiers in front of the two high priests, who share the same throne, same as in Mălâncrav (Fig. 7). Another fragment preserves only the heads of a group of soldiers with pointed helmets.



Fig. 6 – The Meeting at the Golden Gate and the Nativity of Our Lady, painted on the northern tympanum of the choir.



Fig. 7 – The Judgement at Annas and Caiaphas painted in the median register, at the junction of the northeastern and eastern walls of the apse.



Fig. 8 – *Vir Dolorum* Eucharistic painted over the earliest representation of the common variant of the same motive, on the northeastern wall of the apse.



Fig. 9 – St. Oswald painted at the intrados of the triumphal arch.

On the same row of the northeastern wall, near the tabernacle and covering the earliest *Vir dolorum*, the same motive was painted, but in the Eucharistic variant of the theme, with full-figured Jesus and His Blessed Blood pouring out into the Chalice. The Savior is wearing a *perizonum* and is depicted under an aedicule (Fig. 8).

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The saints painted at the intrados of the triumphal arch were represented in a similar way, under aedicules with trilobed arcades and triangular gables, and they were arranged in two registers, on each part. Oswald, with his royal mantle lined with ermine and his characteristic attribute, the raven with a ring in his beak, is the only

figure preserved on the north lateral side (Fig. 9), while beneath him, the striate halo of a lost saint is still visible in the thickness of the plaster. The Holy King of Northumbria, also revered on the continent in Germany, Carinthia and Styria, where he patronizes many towns and churches was considered in the alpine lands, as one of the Holy Fourteen Helpers and a protector against the plague²⁰. In Transylvania he was also painted at Sic, on the face of a pillar which divides the southern collateral of the central nave.

The Last Judgement was displayed around the triumphal arch of the church, in three horizontal registers. This extremely visible area was favorite for the representation of the theme, as it is preserved in the Transylvanian

churches from Sic, Tileagd, Bădești²¹ and Mediaș, which was almost completely lost when the old sanctuary was demolished²². Same as the aforementioned examples (excepting Sic), the tribunal of the apostles was depicted in the upper register, which is fragmentary in Ighiș, with the top part covered by the later reparation plaster of the nave ceiling.

In the second register, the Heaven and Hell are symmetrically painted, framing the opening of the triumphal arch, above the third register, where angels are blowing the trumpets for the Resurrection of the dead (Fig. 10). The chosen are represented in

prayer, while the damned try to hide back in their tombs, terrified by the divine wrath. The backgrounds of the scenes, blue in Paradise and red in Hell, suggest by way of color the different spiritual substance of the two places of the "world beyond", also characterized by the iconographic conventional features. The Heaven is shown as a church whose gate is open by St. Peter, followed by a Pope, clergy and laity, while the damned in chains are banished by a flying angel, sword raised, in the mouth of the Leviathan. Some souls astray, outside the group, are carried by demons towards the place of torment²³.



Fig. 10 – The Last Judgement painted on the walls of the triumphal arch.
The tribunal of apostles and the Hell, the Resurrection of the dead.

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The ensemble of the north wall of the nave is also divided in three horizontal figurative registers that represent hagiographic cycles. Same as the rest of the ensemble, part of the painting is lost and the preserved surfaces were wholly hammered.

The lives of three popular saints in Transylvanian murals are illustrated: Ladislaus of Hungary, Catherine of Alexandria and Margaret of Antioch.

The upper register is canonically dedicated to the history of St. Ladislaus, an extremely widespread theme in the churches from this part of Europe, including Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and Austria. The number of ensembles known today in Transylvania is of 30, chronologically situated between Cricău (before 1300)²⁴ and Dârjiu (1419), the most famous representation in the whole kingdom, painted during the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg. The other examples, near Ighişu Nou are Mugeni, Ghelinta, Crăciunel, Daia-Secuiască, Drăuşeni (under the lime), Sighişoara (fragments discovered in the archeological excavations), Chilieni, Aţel, Remetea, Chichiş, Ocland, Panticeu, Saciova, Mihăileni, Feliceni, Armăşeni, Biborţeni, Pădureni (small fragments), Misentea and Gidfalău, recently discovered by the same restorers. At Mărtiniş, the paintings similar in style with Ghelinta and Crăciunel²⁵, known only from József Huszka's copies, are to be mentioned among the other lost ensembles from Oradea, Fizeşu Gherlii, Filia, Moacşa, Dej and a second earlier example at Pădureni. The life of the king-hero, patron saint of Hungary, was conceived in the theological milieu of the Bishopric in Oradea, founded by the king himself, where he was miraculously buried and where the first representations of his life were painted. The first example shows that the earliest representations of *vita Ladislai* painted in churches date back from the Arpadians' age, before the Angevins, to whom the exaltation of his cult has been exclusively attributed in the previous scientific literature.

At Ighişu Nou, only four canonical episodes in the history of Ladislaus are fragmentarily preserved: the Cuman's chase (with the king depicted as the emblematic

figure of the Hungarian knight, carrying a target bouched for the lance, in the red-silver stripes of the kingdom coat of arms), the duel (the kidnapped girl helps Ladislaus and hurts the Cuman with an axe) and his defeat (the kidnapped girl gives him the coup de grace with a sword). Ladislaus' rest, a typical image of the medieval "courtly love", closes the cycle (Fig. 11). From this cycle, the blessing of the Bishop of Oradea is missing, scene preserved at Ghelinta, Crăciunel, Mugeni, Chilieni and Dârjiu (recently discovered). The battle of Chiraleş, the most spectacular episode of the story is also lost at Ighiş. Just as the other representations of the theme, the gaps between the scenes are scarcely marked, fact that gives to the representations the appearance of a frieze and the dynamism of a cartoon.

Catherine and Margaret belong to the four Capital Virgins²⁶, to the group of the seven Holy Martyrs mentioned in the canon of the Catholic Mass, and to the Fourteen Holy Helpers²⁷.

The first two episodes of St. Catherine's life, Christ's mystical bride, are missing. The scene of the saint converting from prison Empress *Faustina* and *Porphyrius*, the captain of the guard (Fig. 12), was preceded by the arrest, from which a fragment in the right lower corner is preserved, with the feet of a soldier wearing tights²⁸. There follow the execution of the queen in the presence of her husband, the tyrant *Maximianus*, the debate with the 50 philosophers of Alexandria, their martyrdom by burning at the stake, and the miracle of the wheel, in which Catherine kneels praying, while an angel shatters the instrument of torture with a sword and a hammer, "killing four thousands pagans". It is worth mentioning that the scene with Catherine, *Faustina* and *Porphyrius* is unique in Transylvania, besides the rest of the representations encountered in the known illustrations of the saint's life: the dispute with the philosophers appears in the ensembles of Ghelinta, Drăuşeni and Şmig, the martyrdom of the queen and of the converted philosophers is shown at Drăuşeni and Şmig, while the most widely spread episode, the miracle of the wheel, is present at Drăuşeni, Şmig, Floreşti and Mălâncrav²⁹. Catherine's beheading appears in Şmig and

Florești, and the final scene of the cycle, in which the angels carry her body on Mount Sinai is preserved only at Ghelintă, in

fragments. I do not mention in this context the representations in Dârlos, much later and radically different in style and iconography³⁰.



Fig. 11 – The history of King Ladislav: the Cuman's chase, the duel, his defeat and the king's rest. In the second register, scenes from St. Catherine's life: the Execution of the 50 philosophers burned at the stake and the Miracle of the wheel.



Fig. 12 – St. Catherine converting Empress *Faustina* and *Porphyrius*.

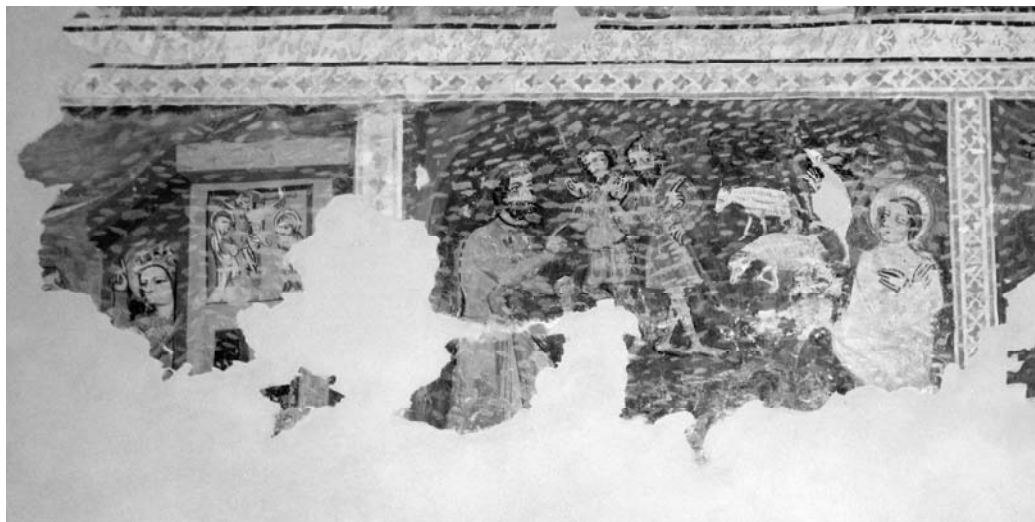


Fig. 13 – St. Margaret defending her faith and meeting the prefect *Olibrius*.

The third register on the northern wall of the church from Ighiş is dedicated to Margaret of Antioch's life, the daughter of the pagan priest *Aedesius* from Pisidia, converted to Christianity. The first image of the cycle is missing and the second one is unusual, presenting Margaret in the doorframe of a house, with the Crucifixion painted on the wall revealing the subject of the debate with a figure which threatens her with a sword, while she defends her faith in the "God hanged and raised on the Cross",

through a typical gestual argumentation. The next episode depicts Margaret meeting *Olibrius*, the prefect of the Roman Eastern Diocese and a Christians' prosecutor, who fell in love with the shepherdess (Fig. 13).

Refused by Margaret, who declared herself as *sponsa Christi*, the prefect orders her to be imprisoned, tortured and executed. The scenes of her passion are difficult to follow, as the painting layer is blurred and destroyed in a significant proportion: the saint is brutally grabbed by a soldier, then put into

the "darkest and worst of the dungeons", scene that is almost completely lost, excepting few fragments that show it takes place indoors. The most famous episode of Margaret's iconography, with her getting out of the dragon's belly through the sign of the Cross might be represented here. The scene that was also painted at Mărtiniș (where the ensemble is known only from József Huska's copies)³¹, is preserved at Mugeni (nave) and Sic (choir, fragments), where Margaret defeating the devil was also represented. The torture scenes are visible at Mugeni, Sic and Remetea.

At Ighiș there follows the sentence to death pronounced by angry Olibrius, whose

enthroned figure is hardly visible in the scene, and then her beheading by *Malcus*, the soldier who fell dead after the execution. The cycle ends with the saint's funerals, as recounted by *Teochimus*, the narrator of the story, "one of God's servants, instructed in God's law", who placed Margaret's "beautiful body" in a "stone coffin in the house of her grandmother" (Fig. 14). The scene from Ighișu Nou presents *Theoteinus* (as Voragine names him)³², as the bishop who conducts the funeral mass, with three priests, in front of an impressive basilica, painted in detail (Fig. 15).



Fig. 14 – St. Margaret sentenced to death by *Olibrius*, her execution and funerals. Beneath, the stylized drapery register and a frieze of a regular wooden structure with a spiral motive in its upper part.



Fig. 15 – St. Margaret's funerals officiated by *Teochimus* and three priests.

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The lower part of the church walls from Ighișu Nou is decorated, both in the nave and apse, in wide vertical stripes, differently colored, which represent a stylized replica of the draperies register, as shown in the case of the paintings in the Mălâncrav sanctuary, where the model of Mary Chapel from Karlstein Castle was mentioned, to which I add the example from Remetea, where the shape of the curtains is more explicit. Between the figurative representations and the decorative row, a frieze of a regular wooden structure, with a spiral motive in its upper part is rendered, replacing the consoles painted in perspective. In the eastern part, an inscription in Gothic letters on white background is illegible today.

The striate halos of the saints, the thrones, aedicules and buildings rich in details, with double pointed windows and quatrelobe rosettes, the cracked and rocky soil are also similar to the Mălâncrav paintings. The armors and costumes belong to the same model: the pointed helmets of soldiers, Ladislas' targe, the frilled veil – *kruseler*, worn by women, the male clothing with tights and pourpoint, and some decorative patterns: the double bands with diagonal converged lines and illusionist effect, the floral stylized motives made with the template, which imitate the brocade fabrics from the garments, backgrounds and stripes. "The vegetal patterns, freely painted, with the virtuosity and elegance of a vignette, in subtle tones of beige and light green on sienna background, outlined with white", inspired by the contemporary miniature from the Prague's court of Vaclav IV are also present in the apse, near the bust of Jonah, but the degradation of the painting doesn't permit the observation of the main painter's virtuosity, which seems to attest his possible miniaturist training³³.

The ensemble is less spectacular than the Mălâncrav sanctuary, whose unmistakable marks are missing at Ighiș. The "cloud

bands" painted in degrade are replaced by common motives derived from Gothic quatrelobs and vegetal motives, while the extremely expensive azurite pigment, used for the backgrounds of the Apafi nobles' ensemble, was not used, the murals being chromatically dominated by blue-grey, sienna-brown and cinnabar-red.

Only a part of the figures from Ighiș can be attributed to the Master of the Mălâncrav sanctuary, whose style characterized by a highly decorative stereotypical stylization of the figures was also identified in the fragments of painting, extracted from the choir of Dârjiu, and preserved in Budapest (Szépművészeti Múzeum) (Fig. 16)³⁴. At Ighiș the typologies are much diversified, the physiognomies are rounded and the garments are decorated by small tinfoil rhombs, replacing the buttons, as the restorers observed.

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Comparing to the solemn and highly decorative aspect of the Mălâncrav sanctuary, the general impression of the paintings of the Virgin Mary church in Ighișu Nou is simplified and even superficial in execution, due to the predominant involvement of the workshop, beside the main master. The different pigments led to different chromatic results, the decorative motives that delimit the scenes and highlight the architectural elements are less elaborate and, in terms of style, the contours of the paintings are, in most cases, thick, imprecise and less accurate.

Beyond these considerations, the discovery of this extremely valuable ensemble constitutes a recovery of a major importance for the medieval art, which enrich the repertoire of the murals in Transylvania and Central Europe with rare or unique scenes and original typologies. Of an equal importance is the fact that the retrieval of the paintings in Ighișu Nou confirms the existence of a workshop led by the Master of the Mălâncrav sanctuary, one of the most representative painters of the "international Gothic", also present at Dârjiu.



Fig. 16 – Portraits: a) Mălâncrav, apse; b) Dârjiu, choir (Budapest, Szépművészeti Múzeum); c) Mălâncrav, choir; d) Ighiș, nave; e) Mălâncrav, choir vault; f) Ighiș, nave. Dana Jenei, *Les peintures murales de l'église de Mălâncrav. Notes avant la restauration*, in *Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art*, 2015, Fig. 23.

Notes

¹ Victor Roth, *Die Frescomalereien im Chor der Kirche zu Malmkrog*, in *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins*, Hermannstadt, 26/1903, published a sgraffito on the painting in the apse, with the year 1404 or 1405.

² Franz Zimmermann und Carl Werner, *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, I, Hermannstadt, 1892, doc. 302, pp. 229-230. *Gregorio comiti filio Apa terrae seu villae Bethlend, Fighe, Malom, Totesdi, Ujfal, Baromlak et Isontelke, Keresd et Földsintelke*. About the Apa family in the Middle Age, Nagy Iván, *Magyarország Családai*, Pest, 1857, I, pp. 48-52; Gernot Nussbächer, "Runder Apfelwald" oder "Halber Kragen". *Zur ältesten Ortsgeschichte von Malmkrog*, in *Karpaten Rundschau*, 30 (2409), 26 Juli 1997, Kronstadt.

³ *Ub.* II, doc. 743, p. 158. The documents from 1315 and 1318 show that Ighișu Nou belonged to Șeica Chapter.

⁴ *Ub.* III, doc. 1735, pp. 599-600.

⁵ *Ub.* III, doc 1738, pp. 600; doc. 1764, pp. 646-646; doc. 1765, pp. 646-651.

⁶ Paul Niedermaier, *Biserica cetate din Ighișu Nou*, in *Muzeul Brukenthal, Studii și Cercetări*, 1969, pp. 185-220. The plasters, mortars, masonry and coherence of the profiles between the choir and nave have been analyzed. The previous studies do not mention the Romanesque phase.

⁷ Marosi Ernő (ed), *Magyarországi művészet 1300-1470 körül*, Budapest, 1987, II, p. 295.

⁸ Anca Gogăltan, *The Architecture of the Church in Mălâncrav (Sibiu County)*, in *Ars Transilvaniae*, VIII-XIX, 1998-1999, pp. 131-132; Anca Gogăltan – Dóra Sallay, *The Church of Mălâncrav and the Holy Blood Chapel of Nicholas Apa*, in *Arhitectura religioasă din Transilvania*, Satu Mare, II, 2002, p. 189.

⁹ The carved stone sculpture in the area, coming from a common supposedly worksite, deserves a thorough scientific research.

¹⁰ Victor Roth, *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte Siebenbürgens*, 1914, p. 99-100; Iuliana Fabritius Dancu, *Sächsishe Kirchenburgen in Siebenbürgen*, Sibiu, 1983, p. 54.

¹¹ Paul Niedermaier, *Biserica cetate*, p. 189-190. The year 1494 is written on the tribune of the tower which is covered by a star vault on ceramic ribs.

¹² Virgil Vătăşianu, *Istoria artei feudale din România*, Bucureşti, 1952, p. 582; Hermann Fabini, *Atlas der siebenbürgisch-sächsischen Kirchenburgen und Dorfkirchen*, Hermannstadt-Heidelberg, I, 1998, p. 101

¹³ [TUNC I]USTI FULGEBUNT SICUT SOL IN REGNO PATRIS. SAP. V (Mathew 13, 43). Lateral: [IN OMNIBUS TUIS] MEMORARE NOVISSIMA ET IN AETERNUM NON PECCA[BIS. ECCL]ES. VII [40], verse usually associated with *Memento mori*. Crosses of consecration were found on this side from before and after the painting.

¹⁴ In the eighteenth century a porch open on three sides was added to the southern door (1715) and the altarpiece was replaced (1754). Paul Niedermaier, *Biserica cetate*, p. 191.

¹⁵ Otto Szőnyi, *Régi magyar templomok*, Budapest, 1934.

¹⁶ Paul Niedermaier, *Biserica cetate*, p. 205.

¹⁷ On the apse vault in Mălâncrav, ten Virgins seated on thrones are represented: Apollonia (keeps a tooth in her hand, an angel offers her the tongs), Dorothy (Child Jesus offers her the flowers basket), Ursula (an angel offers her an arrow), Catherine (with the wheel and an angel offering her a sword), Angela (an angel offers her a lily), Margaret (keeps a little dragon), Barbara (keeps a little tower, an angel offers her a host), Agnes (with the lamb), *Lucia vi(r)go* (with an angel carrying a scroll with her name), *Agata* (keeps a palm leave, with her name written on the throne). Vasile Drăguţ, *Picturile murale din biserica evanghelică din Mălâncrav*, in *SCIA* 1967, Fig. 5.

¹⁸ The latter figure was mentioned in 1951 by the Lutheran priest, as being in the nave.

¹⁹ One of the most well-known cycles dedicated to Virgin Mary's life in the fourteenth century is attributed to Tadeo Gaddi (1328-1330) and preserved in Florence, in Capella Baroncelli of the church Santa Croce. It comprises 18 scenes, among which Joachim in the Temple, the Nativity and the Crowning of the Virgin, respectively the Tree of Jesse. Scene from the life of the Virgin, others than those represented at Ighiş, are preserved in Transylvania, in the choirs of the churches from Sic and Alţâna. Anna Kónya, *Iconográfiai összefüggések az alcinai templom falképein*, în *Kóstoni a szép-tudományaba*, Budapest, 2014, pp. 45-60.

²⁰ Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien. Iconographie des saints*, III / III, Paris, 1958, p. 1013.

²¹ Jékely Zsombor – Kiss Lóránd, *Középkori falképek Erdélyben. Értékmérés a Teleki László Alapítvány támogatásával*, Budapest, 2008, p. 21-23.

²² Dana Jenei, *Picturi murale din jurul anului 1500 la Mediaş*, in *Ars Transsylvaniae*, Cluj-Napoca,

XXII/2012, p. 50. Later representations of the theme on the triumphal arch at Hărman (St. Nicolas Church, traces above the vault reconstructed after the fire from 1595 and chapel, around the entrance) and Sighişoara (the Church on the Hill, lateral, on the north side of the opening). Idem, *Thèmes iconographiques et images dévotionnelles dans la peinture murale médiévale tardive de Transylvanie (deuxième partie du XVe siècle-premier quart du XVIe siècle)*, in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art. Série Beaux Arts*, Tome LI, Bucarest, 2014, p. 14-17.

²³ A prayer of the "Brüdergemeinde" was written on the whitewash that covers the upper part of the scene of Paradise, repainted and altered later.

²⁴ Szabó Tekla Katalin, *Boroskrakkó újonnan előkerült freskótörödékei*, in *A szórvány emlékei*, Tibor Kollár (Ed.), Budapest, 2013, p. 74.

²⁵ Dana Jenei, *Gothic Mural Painting in Transylvania*, Bucureşti, 2007, pp. 48 and 49. László Gyula, in *A Szent László-legenda középkori falképei*, Budapest, 1993, counted 23 years ago 48 representations of the theme in the whole Hungarian Kingdom (part of them known only by older copies or being under the lime) from which, 22 in Transylvania, including Haţeg and Cristuru Secuiesc, with no further data preserved.

²⁶ *Passienbüchlein von den vier Hauptjungfrauen* was dedicated to them and a mass was composed in their honor. Their purity made them all Christs' mystical brides and powerful intercessors: Stanley E. Weed, *Venerating the Virgin Martyrs: the Cult of the Virgines Capitales in Art, Literature and Popular Piety*, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, XLI/4, 2010, p. 1605 and the followings.

²⁷ The *Vierzehn Nothelfer* / *Quatordecim Auxiliatorum*, revered since the ninth century in Southern Germany, are different in compentence from one region to the other, and generally comprise Catherine, Barbara, Margaret, Dorothy, George, Leonard, Nicholas, Sebastian, Egidius, Vitus, Christopher, Achatius, Blasius, Cyriacus, Erasmus, Eustachius, Dyonysius, Anthony, Laurence, Stephan, Rochus, Wolfgang, Pantaleon and others. Anne Simon, *The Cult of Saint Katherine in Late-Medieval Nuremberg. Saint and the City*, Farnham, 2012.

²⁸ The regular opening scenes of the cycle are Catherine's birth, her conversion by a hermit and her mystical betrothal. Louis Réau, *Iconographie III / I*, Paris, 1958, p. 267-268.

²⁹ Éber László, *Tanulmányok magyarországi középkori falfestményeiről műemlékei*, Budapest, 1915, p. 74; Dana Jenei, *The Church of Virgin Mary in Malancrav*, 2001, <http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/images/content/Virgin%20Mary%20Church%20Malancrav.pdf>; idem, *Les peintures murales de l'église de Mălâncrav. Notes avant la restauration*, in *Revue Roumaine d'histoire de l'art*, 2015, p. 56.

³⁰ Gábor Gaylhoffer-Kovács, *Alexandriai Szent Katalin legendája három szászöldi freskón*, in *A szórvány emlékei*, Tibor Kollár (Ed.), Budapest, 2013, pp. 294-322.

³¹ János Mihály, *Színek és legendák - Tanulmányok az erdélyi falfestmények kutatástörténetéhez*, Budapest, 2008, Fig. 47-48. Margaret's complex cycle from Mărtiniș was painted on the northern wall of the nave in association with Ladislav's *vita* above, same as at Mugeni, but different in style, while at Remetea the themes were represented on the northern and southern opposite sides.

³² Voragine's version of St. Margaret's story corresponds to the manuscripts from early thirteenth

century: MS Bodley 34 and MS Royal 17 AXVII. Thomas F. Head, *Medieval Hagiography: An Anthology*, 2001, New York – London, p. 675-708; <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/goldenlegend/GoldenLegend-Volume7.asp>.

<http://sites.broadviewpress.com/bablonline/files/2012/05/Vol-1-Web-Life-of-Saint-Margaret2.pdf>.

³³ Dana Jenei, *Les peintures murales de l'église de Mălâncrav*, p. 73.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 74.