

The Passion Cycle in the Sanctuaries of the Saxon Fortified Churches in Southern Transylvania

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Abstract: This paper aims to reconstitute the pictorial program of some medieval Saxon churches' sanctuaries, which are Mălâncrav, Curciu, Râşnov and Sibiu, with particular interest on the images regarding the Passion Cycle. The article will try to bring a stylistic and iconographic analysis of the Passion Cycle in the sanctuary, episodes that usually appear on the northern choir wall. Therefore, we aim to highlight the reasons why this Passion narrative was chosen to decorate this part of the sanctuary and what was its role both regarding the place that it occupies, that is near the most sacred place of the church, and also the role it had in the religious services. Given the complexity of the narrative programs and the strong link with the biblical texts, the paintings have a double role, both educational and devotional.

Keywords: Passion Cycles, mural painting, fortified churches, iconography

Rezumat: Lucrarea de faţă îşi propune reconstituirea programului pictural al sanctuarului câtorva biserici medievale săseşti, şi anume Mălâncrav, Curciu, Râşnov şi Sibiu, insistând asupra scenelor care ilustrează episoadele din Ciclul Patimilor. Ceea ce va încerca articolul de faţă va fi analiza stilistică şi iconografică a ciclului Patimilor din zona sanctuarului, episoade întâlnite deja de câteva ori în unele biserici, cu precădere pe pereţele nordic al corului. Astfel, dorim să subliniem motivele pentru care naraţiunea privitoare la Ciclul Patimilor a fost aleasă pentru a decora această zonă a sanctuarului şi ce rol avea aceasta atât în raport cu locul pe care îl ocupă, şi anume în vecinătatea celei mai sacre locaţii a bisericii, cât şi rolul pe care aceste scene îl aveau în cadrul slujbelor religioase. Datorită complexităţii programelor narative dar şi a legăturii strânse cu textul biblic, picturile au dublu rol, atât didactic, cât şi devoţional.

Cuvinte cheie: Ciclul Patimilor, pictură murală, biserici fortificate, iconografie

Many of the medieval churches in Transylvania have been decorated both at the interior and the exterior with mural paintings. One of them is the church in Mălâncrav (Malmkrog, Almakerék), patronized for centuries by

the noble Apafi family, stunning for the richness of its decorative program.¹ This church's sanctuary, entirely covered in paintings, raises a series of questions about the way in which this particular space in the church was decorated in general.

The chosen themes for the decoration of the sanctuary are quite diverse, highlighting The Virgin or other saints preferred by the church's patron, and last but not least, Jesus Christ. Between the scenes about Christ's life, we can see a preference towards the Passion Cycle. Thus, we may ask how often these cycles were depicted, if the episodes chosen are the same in all the churches and if all the compositions were similar regarding the structure and the pictorial conventions. Lastly, we cannot be indifferent to the messages that these pictorial programs sent and the functions that they had in this sacred space.

Starting from these questions, the purpose of this study is to discuss the Passion cycle from the iconographic point of view, reconstructing this pictorial program, analyzing its characteristics both narrative and spatial, decoding its messages and outlining its function. The approach involves both the identification of scenes and the analysis of the compositional schemes, as well as the identification of textual and visual references.²

Such research may be useful because in the previous literature, though abundant, with particular interest in the church of Mălâncrav, the subject has rarely been approached from an iconographic analysis perspective, according to earlier suggestions (Warburg, Panofsky) or later ones (Baschet).³

¹ Anca Gogăltan, 'The Holy Hungarian Kings, The Saint Bishop and The Saint King in The Sanctuary of The Church at Mălâncrav', *Ars Transsilvaniae*, XII-XIII (2002-2003): 103-121, 104.

² For the iconographic method see Erwin Panofsky, *Artă și semnificație* [Meaning in the Visual Arts] (București: Meridiane, 1980) and Jérôme Baschet, *L'iconographie médiévale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2008).

³ Studies regarding the church in Mălâncrav:

Viktor Roth, 'Die Freskomalereien im Chor der Kirche zu Malmkrog', *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde*, 26 (1903): 49-53, 91-96, 109-119, 125-131, 141-144, Vasile Drăguț, 'Picturile murale din biserica evanghelică din Mălâncrav' [The Mural Paintings in the evangelical church in Mălâncrav], *Studii și cercetări de istoria artei*, 14 (1967): 79-93, Vasile Drăguț, 'Les peintures murales de l'église evangelique Mălâncrav', *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art*, V (1968): 61-71, Anca Gogăltan, 'The Architecture of The Church in Mălâncrav (Sibiu County)', *Ars Transsilvaniae*, VIII-IX (1998-1999): 125-143, Anca Gogăltan, 'The Church in Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog) Sibiu District. A Historiographic Overview', *Apulum*, 37/2 (2000): 305-313, Anca Gogăltan, Dóra Sallay, „The Church of Mălâncrav/Almakerék and the Holy Blood Chapel of Nicholas Apa”, *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania*, II (2002): 181-210, Anca Gogăltan, *Patronage and Artistic Production in Transylvania. The Apafis and the church in Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog), Sibiu County in Transylvania*, PhD Dissertation, Manuscript, Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University. Budapest, 2002, Anca Gogăltan, 'The Holy Hungarian Kings, The Saint Bishop and The Saint King in The Sanctuary of The Church at Mălâncrav', *Ars Transsilvaniae*, XII-XIII (2002-2003): 103-121, Anca Gogăltan, 'Passion

An inventory of the mural paintings in Transylvanian medieval churches suggests that the Passion cycle is present on the northern wall of the Mălâncrav sanctuary (paintings dated by most historians in 1404-1405, according to a graffiti on the painted surface⁴), on the northern wall of the sanctuary at Curciu (Kirtsch, Küküllökörös) (paintings dated generally in the fifteenth century⁵) and Râșnov (Rosenau, Barcarozsnyó), (dated in 1500⁶),

Iconography and Narrative Strategies in the Medieval Frescoes Decorating the Church in Mălâncrav (Almakerék, Malmkrog) in Transylvania', *New Europe College, GE-NEC Program, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007* (2010): 101-152, Doina Elena Crăciun, 'L'image politique comme manifeste? Considérations sur la fresque des saints rois dans l'église (luthérienne) de Mălâncrav (XVe siècle)', *Bulletin du centre d'études médiévales d'Auxerre (BUCEMA)*, 19/2 (2015): 1-19, Dana Jenei, „Les peintures murales de l'église de Mălâncrav. Notes avant la Restauration”, *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art, Série Beaux-Arts, Tome LII*, (2015): 47-76.

⁴ This dating is very discussed in literature. Drăguț in his article 'Picturile murale', p. 79 mentions the dating of Radocsay Dénes, between the last quarter of the 4th century and the beginning of the 15th century, and then that of Vătășianu, from the end of the 14th century. Drăguț restricts even more this interval, dating the choir paintings between the end of the 14th century and the year 1404, according to the graffiti on the south-eastern wall of the sanctuary (p. 93). Gogâltan in her study 'The Holy Hungarian Kings', p. 117, based on the same graffiti, dates the paintings between 1390 and 1405, according to the historical, architectonic and iconographic features of space. In another article, 'Passion Iconography', p. 105, Gogâltan mentions again the dating 1405 according to the famous graffiti, while Crăciun in 'L'image politique', p. 11, mentions the same years of 1404/1405, stating that she agrees with this dating. Lastly, Jenei in 'Les peintures murales', p. 59, mentions the same graffiti that dates the paintings of the sanctuary between 1404/1405, thus abandoning her previous hypothesis in which the paintings date from around the peak of Nicholas Apa's career. We also believe that the most accurate dating of the sanctuary paintings would be the years suggested by the graffiti, namely 1404/1405.

⁵ We still do not have a precise dating for the paintings in Curciu. Vasile Drăguț in his book *Arta gotică în România* [Gothic Art in Romania] (București: Meridiane, 1979), p. 246 mentions the paintings in Curciu between many other painted churches that date from the end of the 15th century. Kiss Lóránd mentioned them in his article 'Falképek kutatása és helyreállítása az erdélyi száz év evangélikus templomokban', *Certamen*, I (2013): 385-389, stating that they date from the second half of the 15th century (p. 387). Dana Jenei, in her study 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection Murals Painted inside St. Matthias Church in Râșnov', *Studii și cercetări de Istoria Artei, Artă Plastică*, 4/48 (2014): 9-27, especially p. 11, declares that they date from the first decades of the 15th century.

⁶ At the church in Râșnov the dating is certain because of the inscription on the scene *The Resurrection*, which is the year 1500. This date is mentioned in the literature by all the authors who have discussed or have mentioned these paintings: Virgil Vătășianu, *Istoria artei feudale în Țările Române: Arta în perioada de dezvoltare a feudalismului* [Feudal Art History in Romanian Countries. The Art in the Period of the Development of Feudalism] (București: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare România, 1959), p. 774, Vasile Drăguț, 'Picturi murale exterioare în Transilvania medievală' [Exterior Mural Paintings in Medieval Transylvania], *Studii și Cercetări de Istoria Artei, Artă Plastică*, 12/1 (1965): 91, in another article by Vasile Drăguț, 'Considerații asupra iconografiei picturilor murale gotice din Transilvania' [Considerations about the Iconography of the Mural Paintings in Transylvania], *Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice*, XXXIX/3 (1970): 22, Hermann Fabini, *Universul cetăților bisericești din Transilvania* [The Universe of the Church Fortresses in Transylvania]

while at Sibiu (Hermannstadt, Nagyszeben), (paintings dated 1445⁷) there is only one episode from the Passion but in a very large size, that is the scene of the Crucifixion.

The first step of this analysis is to reconstruct the visual program of the northern wall of the sanctuary where the images of the Passion cycle are displayed. Taking into account the adaptation to the architectural space, we are led to ask what is the articulation of the visual narrative, what are the episodes chosen to be represented, what is their sequence and the meaning of the narrative, and whether there are constants in the manner in which the scenes are composed.

The reconstruction of the Mălâncrav program is easier because the paintings were restored at the beginning of the twentieth century and there is a substantial literature that discussed the identification of the scenes.⁸ On the northern wall of the choir, the paintings are displayed in three horizontal tiers, the total number of the episodes being 14 (Figure 1). There are four scenes in the upper tier, five are visible in the middle one, and in the lower tier to the right only two scenes on the right are visible now, while the left side was completely lost. The four top scenes are *The Last Supper*, *The Washing of the Feet*, *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane* along with *The Arrest of Jesus*, and those below are *The Crucifixion*, *Judas Returning the Money*, *Judas Dead by Hanging*,

(Sibiu: Monumenta, 2012), p. 235, Dana Jenei, 'Mural paintings around 1500 in Mediaș', *Ars Transsilvaniae*, XXII (2012): 56, Dana Jenei, 'Thèmes iconographiques et images dévotionnelles dans la peinture murale médiévale tardive de Transylvanie (Deuxième partie du XV^e siècle-premier quart du XVI^e siècle)', *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire d'Art*, Série Beaux-Arts, LI (2014): 29 and Jenei, 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection', p. 9.

⁷ As in Râșnov's case, the dating is marked by an inscription on the wall with the year 1445 written above the image of *Vir Dolorum*: Drăguț, 'Considerații asupra iconografiei', p. 22, Dana Jenei, 'Art and Mentality in the Late Middle Ages Transylvania', *New Europe College, GE-NEC Program, 2000-2001, 2001-2002* (2004): 16, Maria Crăciun, 'Polipticul și devoțiunea euharistică în Transilvania Evului Mediu Târziu' [The Polyptich and the Eucharistic Devotion in Late Medieval Transylvania], *Caiete de antropologie istorică. Sărbătoare, celebrare, comemorare*, 1/7 (2005): 62, Ciprian Firea, 'Pictura murală Crucificarea din biserica evanghelică din Sibiu' [The Crucifixion Mural Painting from the Evangelical Church in Sibiu], in Daniela Dâmboiu – Iulia Mesea (eds), *Confluențe. Repere europene în arta transilvăneană. Catalog de expoziție* (Sibiu: Muzeul Național Brukenthal, 2007), p. 29, Ciprian Firea, 'Blazonul breslei pictorilor și urme ale folosirii sale în Transilvania (sec. XV-XVI)' [The Coat of Arms of the Painters' Guild and Traces of its Use in Transylvania (15th and 16th centuries)], *Ars Transsilvaniae*, XXI (2011): 71, Jenei, 'Thèmes iconographiques', p. 30.

⁸ Regarding the interventions and the restoration works see Gogâltan, 'The Architecture of The Church in Mălâncrav', pp. 49-77 and Jenei, 'Les peintures murales', pp. 47-76. For the reconstitution of the pictorial program, Drăguț has a schematic proposal in 'Picturile murale din biserica evanghelică din Mălâncrav', pp. 79-92.

The Coronation with Thorns, and *The Mocking of Christ*. In the lower register, on the right, only *The Resurrection* and *Noli me Tangere* are preserved.⁹

The Passion cycle episodes also extend on the north-eastern wall of the sanctuary, where we have in the upper tier *Jesus in front of Ana and Caiaphas*, in the median tier *The Carrying of the Cross*, and in the lower tier *The Ascension*.¹⁰

As mentioned above, we can see that the narration stretches on the north-eastern wall of the apse too, not just on the northern choir wall. The layout of the scenes is more difficult to determine because it is only apparently linear, progressing from left to right, beginning with the upper left scene, *The Last Supper*, and ending with the lower right episode, *The Ascension*. In fact, on the left side in the middle tier there is a group of scenes that include *The Crucifixion* near the two Judas scenes that match the chronological sequence of events. On the right side the episodes are following the chronology of the events and the layout is always left-right. Anca Gogâltan in her PhD thesis uses Marcia Kupfer's method and formally analyzes the painting: she discusses the decorative stripes that delimit the scenes, the composition of the episodes and the chromatics. Regarding the northern wall, she says that it is a general impression of narrative discontinuity in which the physical suffering of Jesus is emphasized and the scenes *The Carrying of the Cross* and *The Crucifixion* are particularly highlighted, the latter being present once again as a relief just above the tabernacle.¹¹

But if we carefully look at how the narrative is adapted to space, we notice that the scenes towards the nave are forming a narrative unit, while the scenes towards the apse form a second narrative unit. Visually there is a feeling that we have two associated programs, rather than a single program that decorates the entire northern wall.

Finally, it should be noted that between the scene of *The Resurrection* and *Noli me Tangere* appears a *Vir Dolorum* whose wound from the right side bleeds into a cup in which the host is also visible, an image decorating the baldaquin from above the niche in which the sacrament was kept. This type of *Vir Dolorum* was named by Dóra Sallay as an Eucharistic *Vir Dolorum*¹² because both the species of the Sacrament, the host and the cup with wine that

⁹ *The Resurrection* and *Noli Me Tangere*: Drăguț, 'Picturile murale din biserica evanghelică din Mălâncrav', p. 87, Jenei, 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection', p. 110, Jenei, 'Les peintures murales', p. 67.

¹⁰ Both the episodes in the nave and the sanctuary have been fully identified by Drăguț in 'Picturile murale din biserica evanghelică din Mălâncrav', pp. 79-92 and by Jenei, 'Les peintures murales', pp. 47-76.

¹¹ Gogâltan, 'Patronage and Artistic Production', pp. 112-125.

¹² Dóra Sallay, 'The Eucharistic Man of Sorrows in Late Medieval Art', *Annual of Medieval Studies at Central European University*, 6 (2000): 45-80.

became the body and blood of Jesus during the Liturgy, appear. This iconographic type was particularly widespread in Central Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the images being mainly found in the tabernacle area,¹³ as we see in the church of Mălâncrav. Also, the author associates this type of image with the cult of the Holy Blood relics,¹⁴ the sanctuary of the Mălâncrav church, according to Anca Gogâltan and Dóra Sallay, kept such relics in the niche of the eastern wall of the apse, placed right under another image of *Vir Dolorum*, the sanctuary thus gaining the role of a Holy Blood chapel.¹⁵

Regarding the church in Curciu, the Passion cycle is also represented on the northern wall of the sanctuary (Figure 2). The pictorial program is distributed in three horizontal tiers, of which only 12 recognisable episodes are still visible today.¹⁶

Three scenes can be seen in the upper tier: *The Entrance into Jerusalem*, *The Last Supper* and *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane*, and only five scenes out of eight are visible in the middle register. From the left to the right are *The Arrest of Jesus*, *Christ in Front of Pilate*, *The Mocking of Christ* and *The Crowning with Thorns*, following with three very damaged scenes where we suppose that it was *Christ Carrying the Cross*, *The Ascent on the Cross* and *The Crucifixion*, the tier ending with *The Deposition*. In the lower tier, there are only three recognisable scenes on the left side, namely *The Entombment*, *The Resurrection* and *The Harrowing of Hell*, following three completely missing scenes. The tier ends with two fragmentary images, the first being *The Saints Cosmas and Damian* and the latter being almost completely lost and that has not been yet identified. The large number of selected episodes suggests a detailed approach of the Passion cycle in a narrative manner, following the chronology of the events.

Unlike Mălâncrav, the layout of the program is much easier to decipher. The images can be read from the left to the right for each tier, starting with the scene from the top left, *The Entrance into Jerusalem* and ending with *The Harrowing of Hell* in the lower tier, that is the last visible scene. The layout of the scenes in the architectural space suggests that the last images, mostly damaged today, may have been included in this extended cycle and may have

¹³ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 62.

¹⁵ Anca Gogâltan, Dóra Sallay, 'The Church of Mălâncrav/Almakerék and the Holy Blood Chapel of Nicholas Apa', *Arhitectura religioasă medievală din Transilvania*, 2 (2002): 197.

¹⁶ There are a few studies that discuss the mural paintings from Curciu because for decades there were only a few fragments visible: Kiss, 'Falképek kutatása', Dana Jenei, *Goticul în Transilvania. Pictura (c. 1300-1500)* [The Gothic in Transylvania. The Painting (c. 1300-1500)] (București: Oscar Print, 2016), Raluca Georgiana Cobuz, 'The Mural Paintings of the Fortified Church in Curciu', *Brukenthal Acta Mosei*, XIII/2, (2018): 209-225.

depicted other episodes about the appearances of Jesus after the Resurrection and perhaps ending with *The Ascension* or even with *The Pentecost*. This discussion may develop in future research, as graphic models must be considered, the Passion cycle being a common theme in the northern Alps at the beginning of the sixteenth century¹⁷ (Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Cranach) and also the Italian mural paintings from the Franciscan ambiance.

The church in Râșnov also keeps some episodes from the Passion cycle on the northern wall of the choir, but in a much more modest number (Figure 3). Laid in three horizontal tiers, the scenes are much larger in size than those mentioned in the other churches. In the upper tier, *The Last Supper* and *The Crucifixion* are visible, in the median tier the first scene is highly damaged but it is most likely *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane* or *The Arrest of Jesus*, although the latter has generally more characters, which are not visible in this instance due to the high state of damage. Then there is a fragmentary scene that is probably *The Trial of Christ* (at Ana, Caiaphas, or Pilate, we can not know for sure because of the poor state of conservation), then *The Carrying of the Cross* and *The Deposition*. In the lower tier, the first two episodes are still covered with plaster, the cycle being concluded on the right side with *The Entombment* and *The Resurrection*.¹⁸

The layout of these episodes is a little different, as it follows a more winding course. It starts from the upper register with *The Last Supper*, descends to the middle tier at *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane*, and continues with *The Trial of Christ*. Continuing to the lower tier, the two episodes that are still covered by plaster would be *The Mocking of Christ* and *The Crowning with Thorns*, as we can see in Mălâncrav and Curciu. This hypothesis is also supported by the spatial organization of the program according to the architectural framework. In the right part of the ensemble, the narration continues with *The Carrying of the Cross*, then it goes back to the upper tier at *The Crucifixion*, descends again into the median tier at *The Descent from the Cross*, and finally moves to the lower left tier, at *The Entombment* and ends with *The Resurrection*.¹⁹

¹⁷ Angela Haas, 'Two Devotional Manuals by Albrecht Dürer: The "Small Passion" and the "Engraved Passion"'. *Iconography, Context and Spirituality*, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 63/2 (2000): 169-170.

¹⁸ For studies that mention the paintings in Râșnov see Drăguț, 'Picturi murale exterioare', p. 91, Drăguț, 'Considerații asupra iconografiei', pp. 22, 172, Vasile Drăguț, 'Iconografia picturilor murale gotice din Transilvania', *Pagini de veche artă românească*, II, (1972): 69, Dana Jenei, *Pictura murală gotică din Transilvania* [Gothic Mural Painting in Transylvania] (București: Editura Noi Media Print, 2007), pp. 116-119, Jenei, 'Picturi murale din jurul anului 1500', p. 56, Jenei, 'Thèmes iconographiques', pp. 11, 29 and Jenei, 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection'.

¹⁹ The layout of the episodes in Râșnov has been briefly discussed by Jenei in 'Pictura murală gotică din Transilvania', p. 118 and in 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection', p. 11, works in

The last case study we are referring to is the now evangelical church in Sibiu, where we have a monumental image of *The Crucifixion* on the northern wall of the choir. Even though it is not part of a Passion cycle, this representation of *The Crucifixion* is also to be considered.

A comparison between the visual narratives dedicated to the Passion in the three churches discussed, Mălâncrav, Curciu and Râșnov highlights the recurrence of some episodes such as *The Last Supper*, *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane*, *The Arrest*, *The Trial of Christ*, *The Carrying of the Cross*, *The Crucifixion* and *The Resurrection*.

The layout of the scenes and their evolution plead for a narrative treatment of the Passion subject which follows the chronology of the events described in the canonical Gospels (Matthew chapters 21-28, Mark chapters 11-16, Luke chapters 19-24 and John chapters 12-20). However, these chapters are not identical; they have a few differences regarding the episodes discussed. Most of them are mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew, in a total number of 18, Luke's gospel has 16 episodes, Mark's gospel has 14 episodes, and finally John with 11 episodes (Figure 4).

In general, all four gospels discuss the same events, but with a few differences. For example, the scene of *The Washing of the Feet* is only found in the Gospel of John, and so is the moment in which Jesus, at the dinner, gives Judas a piece of bread (John 13: 21-26). Also, in the Gospel of John, there is no mention of the moment in which Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross on the way to Golgotha (Matthew 27:32, Mark 15:21, Luke 23:26). In these paintings we see that only the most important and the most suggestive scenes are selected, most likely due to the limited space of the church sanctuary. One way we can identify what are the most important scenes that are chosen is the frequency of their appearance in the churches where the Passion cycle is displayed, but there may be other clues such as their location in the church, their number or size, as we shall see in the following.

Most of the time these images correspond to the events written in the Gospels, with representations of some key moments such as *The Last Supper*, when Jesus gives Judas the bread, an image that can be interpreted as the moment of the revealing of the traitor (John 13: 21-26, at Mălâncrav), *The Trial of Christ* with the moment in which Caiaphas is tearing his clothes apart when he heard Jesus (Matthew 26: 63-65, Mark 14: 61-63, at Mălâncrav), or *The Carrying of the Cross*, when Simon of Cyrene carries the cross of Jesus (Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:21, Luke 23:26, a detail that does not appear in the Gospel of John). The main difference, however, between the texts and the frescoes is the

which she does not offer many details, stating just that the placement of *The Last Supper* and *The Crucifixion* highlights the Eucharistic meaning between these two events.

insistence on Jesus's suffering. In Matthew's Gospel, for example, in chapter 27, between the 26nd and 35th verses, there are mentioned the moments from the flagellation to the crucifixion, without necessarily emphasizing the way in which Jesus was mistreated, tortured and humiliated. The paintings come here to complete the biblical text, amplifying the violent character of the events, especially in *The Flagellation*, the *Crowning with Thorns* and the *Carrying of the Cross*. Anne Derbes in her book *Picturing Passion in Late Medieval Italy*, an extensive study in which she is analyzing each scene of the Passion, starting with *The Arrest* to the *Nailing on the Cross*, discusses the appearance and evolution of each scene over time. As an example, she mentions Coppo di Marcovaldo's own interpretation of these episodes in the images depicted on the cross in San Gimignano. On the cross there is a crucified Jesus surrounded by small images with different episodes from the Passion cycle, enriched with elements and details that emphasize the torment and suffering Jesus has endured.²⁰ Derbes states that the insistence of the Franciscans upon the physical suffering of the Savior is due to the *imitatio christi* practice, meaning the imitation of the life of Jesus, and in particular of the Passion, especially the moments of suffering and humiliation.²¹

Sometimes even the visual narratives underline an evolution over time. One may notice the difference between the paintings in Mălâncrav (1405) and in Râșnov (1500) churches. In the first case (Figure 5), in the *Carrying of the Cross* scene, Jesus is standing up, carrying the cross with the help of Simon of Cyrene. This image appears in Italy at the end of the twelfth century and is encountered until the beginning of the next century, when Jesus will carry his cross alone, Simon not being present in the picture anymore.²² Two similar examples are the work of the Master of Coloswar in 1427, today at the Christian Museum in Esztergom²³ and the scene of *The Carrying of the Cross* by Giacomo Jaquerio in 1430 from the abbey Sant'Antonio di Ranverso in Buttigliera Alta.²⁴ Unlike the image of Mălâncrav, at Râșnov (Figure 6), Jesus collapses under the weight of the cross, as we can see in the work of Hieronimus Bosch, *The Carrying of the Cross* from 1480, today at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna,²⁵ in the work of Master of the House Book *The Carrying of the Cross* from around 1480, preserved at the

²⁰ Anne Derbes, *Picturing Passion in Late Medieval Italy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 97.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 122.

²³ The image can be seen at <https://www.wga.hu/art/m/master/thomas/3garam.jpg> (last access: 13.10.2019).

²⁴ <https://www.wga.hu/art/j/jaquerio/carrying.jpg> (last access: 13.10.2019).

²⁵ <https://www.wga.hu/art/b/bosch/1early/12carry.jpg> (last access: 13.10.2019).

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam²⁶ and in the work of Derick Baegert's from 1490, today at the Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster.²⁷ In all these images we see the dramatic interpretation of *The Carrying of the Cross* episode, a moment that is not much described in the Gospels but for the Franciscans had a major significance.

This insistence of the Franciscans upon the violence and torment of Jesus has its origins in several devotional writings such as *Meditationes Vitae Christi* written by Pseudo Bonaventura, which Hans Belting says is a Bible retelling, enriched with details designed to emotionally touch the viewer and further inviting to empathize and participate emotionally in the episodes represented.²⁸ Other sources are also mentioned by Anne Derbes, such as the *Office of Passion* of St. Francis, and also writings by Bonaventura: *Lignum Vitae*, *Apologia pauperum*, *Vitis Mystica seu tractatus de passione Domini*, *Meditatione pauperis in solitudine* and *De perfectione vitae ad sorores*, or the work attributed to Anselm *Dialogus Beatae Mariae et Anselmi de Passione Domini* and *Meditatione Passionis Christi per septemymia horas libellus* attributed to Bede.²⁹ In addition to those mentioned above, Maria Crăciun adds *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* of Bonaventura and *Vita Christi* of Ludwig of Saxony.³⁰ Derbes states that these texts of the Franciscans are directly related to the new narrative programs on the Passion of Jesus, in both cases being highlighted Jesus's human suffering, but also his modesty, poverty and charity.³¹ As a result, we can observe an enrichment of the information from the biblical texts with suggestions from the Franciscan literature, an intervention meant to strengthen the didactic and the emotional role that these images had on the public.

As we have discussed, when the Gospel text was put into images, for the Transylvanian case, a selection was made for each of these churches, keeping in mind that at that time some of the Passion cycles were more detailed. Some such examples are Giotto's frescoes in the Arena Chapel in Padua (about 1305), where there are 12 episodes starting with *The Entrance into Jerusalem* and ending with *The Resurrection*, on Duccio's *Maestà* altarpiece (1308-1311) containing 30 Panels with the Passion and Appearances of Jesus' after the resurrection, this being one of the most extensive cycles in Italy or the panel of Hans Memling from 1470-1471, *Scenes from the Passion of Christ*, kept

²⁶ <https://www.wga.hu/art/m/master/hausbuch/carrying.jpg> (last access: 13.10.2019).

²⁷ <https://www.wga.hu/art/b/baegert/bearing.jpg> (last access: 13.10.2019).

²⁸ Hans Belting, 'The New Role of Narrative in Public Painting of the Trecento: *Historia* and *Allegory*', *Studies in the History of Art. Symposium Papers IV: Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, 16 (1985): 152.

²⁹ Derbes, 'Picturing Passion', p. 22.

³⁰ Maria Crăciun, 'Attitudes to Religious Art and the Confessional Identity of the Saxon Community', *New Europe College, GE-NEC Program, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007* (2010): 27.

³¹ Derbes, 'Picturing Passion', p. 22.

at the Sabauda Gallery in Turin, in which 23 episodes are visible, starting with *The Entrance into Jerusalem* and ending with some Appearances after the resurrection. In Transylvania, as we have seen, there are 10 episodes in Râșnov, 14 (or 17 if we consider the lost images) episodes in Curciu and 14 episodes in Mălâncrav. That being said, it makes us wonder why only certain episodes were selected to be depicted on the northern wall of the sanctuary.

An inventory of the selected scenes leads us to the conclusion that they were chosen to visually represent the events between *The Entry into Jerusalem* or *The Last Supper* and *The Resurrection*, meaning the events that took place in the Week of the Passion. This draws attention to the adjustment of these representations according to, not just the text of the Gospels but also to the liturgical calendar. The images depict events that took place in a specific time range commemorated annually, beginning with the Palm Sunday and ending on the Easter Sunday. As Maria Crăciun demonstrates in a study dedicated to this kind of representations in Transylvanian altarpieces, the narration coincides with a specific liturgical moment, the *Triduum* office, which takes place in the Passion week, between Thursday and Saturday.³² This highlights the connection between the pictorial program and the liturgy that took place at the main altar in this well-defined period of the liturgical year. If we read the scenes included in these visual narratives in accordance with the liturgy, we find that at Râșnov the two scenes arranged in the upper register are visually marking the two moments that liturgically delimit the selected time segment, the establishment of the sacrament at *The Last Supper* and *The Resurrection* on Easter Sunday. Dana Jenei emphasizes the Eucharistic character of these two scenes, especially the *Supper*, noting that this is the foundation of the most important mystery of the Church.³³ Although in the Râșnov image these elements can no longer be recognized because of the poor state of conservation, the two species of the sacrament were most likely present on the table: the bread, symbolizing the body of the Savior, and the cup of wine, symbol of his blood. In some cases, such as in Curciu, there may also be on a plate a miniature lamb, symbolizing the sacrifice of Jesus as *Agnus Dei* who will die for the salvation of men. Jenei also identifies an additional element that emphasizes the Eucharistic character of the image, namely the red carpet behind Jesus, its color recalling the Lord's blood, highlighting Jesus, who is placed at the center of the image.³⁴ *The Resurrection* episode represents the successful fulfilment of the mission, namely the salvation of humanity through his sacrifice. The scenes between these two events, meaning the

³² Crăciun, 'Attitudes to Religious Art', p. 29.

³³ Jenei, 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection', p. 11.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

events that happened from Thursday to Sunday, usually vary from case to case. For example, in the Mălâncrav church there is the *Washing of the Feet* episode or the two scenes with Judas, while at Curciu it probably is *The Elevation of the Cross* (now almost entirely destroyed), *The Deposition* and *The Entombment*. The other episodes remain the same, but we always see the scenes of *The Supper* and *The Resurrection* when it comes to the Passion Cycle. Here, from a formal point of view, the similarity regarding the arrangement of these scenes is remarkable, as they are ordered in a manner similar to the visual narratives in the closed position of Transylvanian altarpieces, where the Passion cycle is often reduced to eight episodes.³⁵

The display of the episodes at Mălâncrav is also suggestive. We have already noticed a layout adjusted to the architectural context. A closer look leads us to the conclusion that some of the scenes on the northern wall along with the episodes depicted on the northeastern wall form a liturgical unit, marking the same temporal segment of the Passion. These are the scenes of *Jesus before Ana and Caiaphas* (events which took place on Thursday night) placed in the upper tier of the northeastern wall, a scene that comes after *The Arrest* (also Thursday night before *The Trial*), and the scene from the middle tier, *The Carrying of the Cross*, which follows *The Mocking*, both on Friday, on the day of the crucifixion.

It is noteworthy that such a narration was considered appropriate for decorating the northern wall of the sanctuary. Located in this place, the visual narrative makes an explicit reference to the events re-enacted by the liturgy and, in particular, to the divine services associated with Easter Sunday.³⁶ It is particularly noteworthy the adding of the episode *The Last Supper* which represents the historical moment in which the sacrament was established.³⁷

If we take into consideration the frequency with which certain episodes are represented (Figure 7), we find that the most often represented episodes are, as stated above, *The Last Supper* and *The Resurrection*, followed by *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane*, *The Arrest*, *The Carrying of the Cross*, and *The Crucifixion*. *The Trial of Christ*, *The Mocking* and *The Crowning with Thorns*, as well as *The Deposition* and *The Entombment* are also frequently

³⁵ Crăciun, 'Attitudes to Religious Art', pp. 28-29.

³⁶ For further information regarding what missals were used in Transylvania see Karl Reinert, *Missale Cibiniense. Gestalt, Ursprung und Entwicklung des Meßritus der siebenbürgisch-sächsischen Kirche im Mittelalter* (10 vols, Köln und Wien, Böhlau Verlag, 1972). A few such examples can be found in the Brukenthal Museum's Library. We have consulted the Missale 7, code Ms 601, from the church in Cisnădie, which, according to Reinert, dates from the second half of the 15th century (Reinert, *Missale Cibiniense*, 9, p. 10).

³⁷ Gogăltan, 'Passion Iconography', pp. 116-117, Jenei, 'Les peintures murales', pp. 111-112, Jenei, 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection', pp. 11-13, Jenei, 'Thèmes iconographiques', p. 29.

represented. Therefore, there is a predilection for the scenes directly associated with the Passion, especially those that highlight Jesus's suffering, physically and psychologically, as suggested by the episodes of his *Arrest, Trial, Mocking, Crowning with Thorns, Carrying of the Cross*, and finally *The Crucifixion*.

But our attention must also be directed towards the particularities of these compositions. Regarding the episode of *The Last Supper*, we usually have a group of characters sitting around a table, sometimes rectangular (Curciu, Râșnov), sometimes circular (Mălâncrav). At Mălâncrav, on the table we can see a plate containing two fish, a circular dish or a round bread, two braided loaves of bread and a knife, while at Curciu we can see two braided loaves of bread and a bowl with something that looks like a miniature lamb. The central figure on the other side of the table is Jesus, surrounded by the haloed Apostles, the only one without a halo being Judas. As in other examples from the Italian space (Giotto di Bondone, *The Last Supper*, 1320-25, Alte Pinakothek, Munich, Lorenzo Monaco, *The Last Supper*, 1394-95 from Staatliche Museen, Berlin and Stefano di Giovanni (Sassetta), *The Last Supper*, 1423, the Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena) and from the German space (Master of the Housebook, *The Last Supper*, 1475-80, Staatliche Museen, Berlin), Judas is placed on the other side of the table, opposite to Jesus and separate from the other apostles gathered around Christ. Because the rest of the apostles are shown close to Jesus, while Judas is isolated, as in the case of Curciu, it highlights the negative role that Judas has received, not being part of the faithful apostles. In other cases, like at Mălâncrav, we need to look more closely at this episode to figure out which of the apostles is Judas: he is the only one who does not have a halo and is also the only one who receives a piece of bread from Christ. This moment is described in the gospel of John, when Jesus is telling the apostles that his vendor is the one to whom he will give the bread, and then he gave it to Judas (John 13:26), this meaning that in *The Last Supper* scene at Mălâncrav this exact moment is captured. Usually on the table we can see the wine (which in these images discussed here is missing, most likely because of the poor state of conservation) and the bread, the elements which in the liturgical context are the two species of the sacrament, elements that anticipate the events that will follow. Typically, for medieval compositions, in this episode the emphasis is placed on Judas' betrayal. Therefore, at Mălâncrav and Curciu are present two different moments from the same event. If at Mălâncrav the moment when Jesus shares the bread with Judas (Mark 14: 18-20, John 13: 21-26)³⁸ is particularly emphasized, the latter being seated among the other

³⁸ For studies that discuss *The Last Supper* episode in Transylvania see Gogâltan, 'Passion Iconography', pp. 111-112, 116-117, Jenei, 'Les peintures murales', p. 64, Jenei, 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection', pp. 11-13 and Jenei, 'Thèmes iconographiques', p. 29.

apostles and without a halo, at Curciu we may have the moment after Jesus pointed out who the seller is, Judas having the money bag in his hands (John 13: 29-30), here depicted probably at the wrist, where the painting is almost washed out. Here he is represented in the foreground of the composition, but in profile, to emphasize the duplicity of this character, kneeling and isolated by the other apostles. As I have said, in general, we can identify Judas in many ways because he is the only one who does not have the halo, the only one who receives the bread from Jesus, and if none of these two clues are present, as it is the case of Albrecht Dürer's *Supper* from the *Small Passion* series, where none of the apostles have a halo, Judas can be identified by the bag with money.³⁹

The following episodes often represented in these cycles are *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane* and *The Arrest*. The presence of the cup in some representations of *The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane* (Curciu, Mălâncrav) is a direct reference to the biblical texts.⁴⁰ In *The Arrest* scene at Mălâncrav, for example, we see the Savior confident and in control of the situation, aware though that he is about to be sacrificed, yet he does not resist his arrest, accepting his fate voluntarily. This was discussed in detail by Anne Derbes, who states that Jesus's voluntary martyrdom is a characteristic symbol of Franciscan ideology.⁴¹

Next we have *The Trial of Christ*, when the Savior is condemned to death. We have, as we have seen, both the *Trial before Herod*⁴² (at Curciu) and *The Trial before Ana and Caiaphas* (at Mălâncrav). According to the gospels, Jesus first reaches Ana, then he is sent to Caiaphas, but in the Passion cycle they are sometimes rendered in the same image,⁴³ this being a detail promoted by the Franciscans.⁴⁴ At Mălâncrav we have this scene, characterized by Caiaphas who is tearing his garment apart in response to blasphemy⁴⁵.

According to Anne Derbes, the preference for the detailed representation of the trials, both before the priests Ana and Caiaphas, and before the secular authorities Pilate and Herod, is specific to the late Middle Ages

³⁹ Angela Haas, 'Two Devotional Manuals by Albrecht Dürer: The *Small Passion* and the *Engraved Passion*. Iconography, Context and Spirituality', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 63/2 (2000): 179-180.

⁴⁰ Crăciun, 'Attitudes to Religious Art', p. 26. For more detailed discussions about this episode in Transylvania see Gogăltan, 'Passion Iconography', pp. 117, 147-148, Jenei, 'Les peintures murales', p. 65 and Jenei, 'The Passion, Death and Resurrection', pp. 13-14.

⁴¹ Derbes, 'Picturing Passion', p. 67.

⁴² We think it is Herod because of his elegant garments and his crown. We have discussed this detail in a previous study, Cobuz, 'The mural paintings of the fortified church in Curciu', p. 212.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 72. This type of composition is almost identical to that of *Jesus before Caiaphas* from Giotto's Arena Chapel in Padua.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

and to franciscan influence of these narrative elaborations. The tendency to represent the trials before the Hebrew authorities, priests and the king betrays, in the author's opinion, the anti-Semitic feeling of the ambiance of origin of these images.⁴⁶

The visual narrative is more violent in the episodes of *The Mocking*, *The Crowning with Thorns* and *The Carrying of the Cross*. The rather brief text of the Gospels⁴⁷ is enriched in the visual version with details that emphasize violence. However, the most relevant episode, from this point of view, is *The Carrying of the Cross*. If, according to the textual tradition followed especially in Eastern painting, sometimes also in Italy in the context of Byzantine influence, Jesus does not bear his own cross,⁴⁸ in the murals here, according to the Western model spread at the end of the Middle Ages, Christ is the one collapsing under its weight.⁴⁹ Anne Derbes states that in the middle of the thirteenth century the way in which this scene was represented has radically changed, the one who bears the cross was now Jesus, in this way the Western influence upon this scene is clear.⁵⁰ Some of the examples given by the author are the cross painted by Enrico di Tedice, in the church of San Martino in Pisa, and Giotto's *The Carrying of the Cross* in the Arena Chapel, Padova (c. 1304-1306) or that of Giacomo Jaquerio (c. 1410) in the Church of Sant'Antonio di Ranverso, Buttigliera Alta. The author claims that these images with greater insistence on Jesus's suffering, promoted by the Franciscans, also appeared around those years. In *The Carrying of the Cross*, Jesus is carrying the cross by himself, but he is also helped by Simon of Cyrene, a detail that highlights the weight of the burden,⁵¹ this image being also present in Mălâncrav. Interesting differences can also be seen in the paintings here in the Transylvanian churches. If the image at Mălâncrav shows a barefoot Jesus who is carrying the cross standing, with a clear expression on his face, at Râșnov, Jesus is worn-out under the weight of the cross, while one of the soldiers is preparing to strike him with a stick.⁵²

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 93.

⁴⁷ Matthew 27: 26-33, Mark 15: 15-22, Luke 23: 25-33 and John 19: 1-17.

⁴⁸ Derbes, 'Picturing Passion', p. 119. Here the author discusses the first version of this image, dating back to the 12th century, of Byzantine tradition, an image that in the early Middle Ages was also transmitted to the Western European space where it continued to be used. The main feature is that Simon of Cyrene carries the cross instead of Jesus. Examples are the Sant'Angelo Church of Formis and the frescoes of Santi Martiri in Cemetery, unfortunately very damaged.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 121.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 129.

⁵² This image is very similar with those from the German area, for example the work of Derick Baegert, *The Carrying of the Cross*, c. 1490, Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster.

This interest for the suffering, moral, psychological, and physical details is also part of the spiritual atmosphere promoted by the Franciscans, for whom the imitation of Jesus's suffering was one of the fundamental characteristics of the devotional act.⁵³

Therefore, our attention must be directed to the message sent by these compositions. First, the spatial placement of this pictorial program on the northern wall of the sanctuary suggests possible messages associated with the liturgical context. If we return to the Mălâncrav program, we remember that the narrative is interrupted at some point by the presence of an Eucharistic *Vir Dolorum* associated with the sacramental niche. This niche is decorated with a small relief that represents *The Crucifixion*. Perhaps the location of the painted image of the Crucifixion in another place in the parietal program can be explained by the fact that, in the eastern area of the northern wall, the Crucifixion was already present, associated with the sacramental niche and a *Vir Dolorum*.⁵⁴

This association is also present at Sibiu, also on the wall where it would normally have been a sacramental niche or a tabernacle. According to Maria Crăciun's demonstration, this „mural altarpiece” has *The Crucifixion* in the central panel and a *Vir Dolorum* in the predella. A *Vir Dolorum* on the northern wall of the sanctuary is also present at Nemșa and Homorod.⁵⁵

The image of Mălâncrav is probably the most eloquent regarding the message. This kind of Eucharistic *Vir Dolorum*,⁵⁶ in which Jesus touches his side wound, from which the blood flows into a cup with a host, refers directly to the doctrine of transubstantiation, meaning the moment of the liturgy in which the bread and the wine become the body and the blood of Jesus⁵⁷, but it links also to the doctrine of concomitance, meaning that both species of the sacrament (the host and the cup in which the blood flows) contain separately the real body and blood of Christ.⁵⁸ According to Dóra Sallay, although there are more types of such representations of Eucharistic *Vir Dolorum*, they all have the role of instructing the believers on these two doctrines established by Christ himself, as well as the role of pointing out the real presence of Jesus in that place.⁵⁹

⁵³ Eugene Honée 'Image and Imagination in the Medieval Culture of Prayer: a Historical Perspective', Henk van Os (ed), *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300-1500* (London: Merrel Holberton, 1994), p. 164.

⁵⁴ Crăciun, 'Polipticul și devoțiunea euharistică', pp. 58-62.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 62-67.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 59.

⁵⁷ Sallay, 'The Eucharistic Man of Sorrows', pp. 63-66.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 64.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 66.

Even in the absence of an image with *Vir Dolorum*, the cycle dedicated to the Passion of Jesus makes an explicit reference to the events reenacted during the liturgy and, in particular, to the divine services associated with the Easter season. The inclusion, in a prominent position (in the upper part of the architectural structure that frames the pictorial program, both in Mălâncrav and Curciu and also in Râșnov) of the episode of *The Last Supper*, representing the historical moment in which the sacrament was established is particularly noteworthy. It is therefore not surprising that in *The Last Supper* episodes on the table are usually illustrated the cup with wine and the bread, the future species of the sacrament, used to re-enact the Christian sacrifice during each liturgy. Therefore, the didactic message of these visual narratives is centered on the role of Christ's sacrifice in the process of the salvation.⁶⁰

The fact that the pictorial narrative is represented on the northern wall of the sanctuary may have pragmatic reasons, dictated by its visibility, especially from the donor's perspective, his seat being usually placed in a niche located on the southern wall of the choir, as well as motivations associated with the role of the clergy in the administering of the sacrament. Paul Binsky in his article "*The English Parish Church and Its Art in the Latter Middle Ages: A Review of the Problem*" recalls the theory of the existence of two different social classes, the laity and clergy, the laity participating in religious life only at great feasts while the liturgy was reserved for the clergy alone.⁶¹ Here Binsky emphasizes Eamon Duffy's theory that there was no such separation because the Eucharistic and the devotional language was enriched by a whole set of images,⁶² so that means that both of these social classes were, one way or another, involved in the liturgical act.

As a conclusion, we would like to briefly recall the functions of this pictorial program. They are primarily educational. The visual narrative of the Passion cycle gives the public a visual lesson about the events during Passion Week. Secondly, the image is perfectly integrated with the liturgy, has a mnemonic (commemorative) function associated with it, illustrating the text read from the gospels in the same temporal segment, at the same time of the liturgical year.

The decoding of the pictorial program dedicated to the Passion by its textual references, this devotional literature produced predominantly in the Franciscan ambiance, makes us assume that the visual narrative was probably integrated into an elaborate devotional program where the public was invited

⁶⁰ Gogâltan, 'Passion Iconography', p. 122, Crăciun, 'Polipticul și devoțiunea euharistică', pp. 62, 66.

⁶¹ Paul Binsky, 'The English Parish Church and its Art in the Latter Middle Ages: A Review of the Problem', *Studies of Iconography*, 20 (1999): 9.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

to contemplation, meditation, and lastly, to identify with the sufferings of Jesus. Therefore, such a program has not only a didactic function but also a devotional one, being from this perspective integrated into the religious practices of the medieval believer.

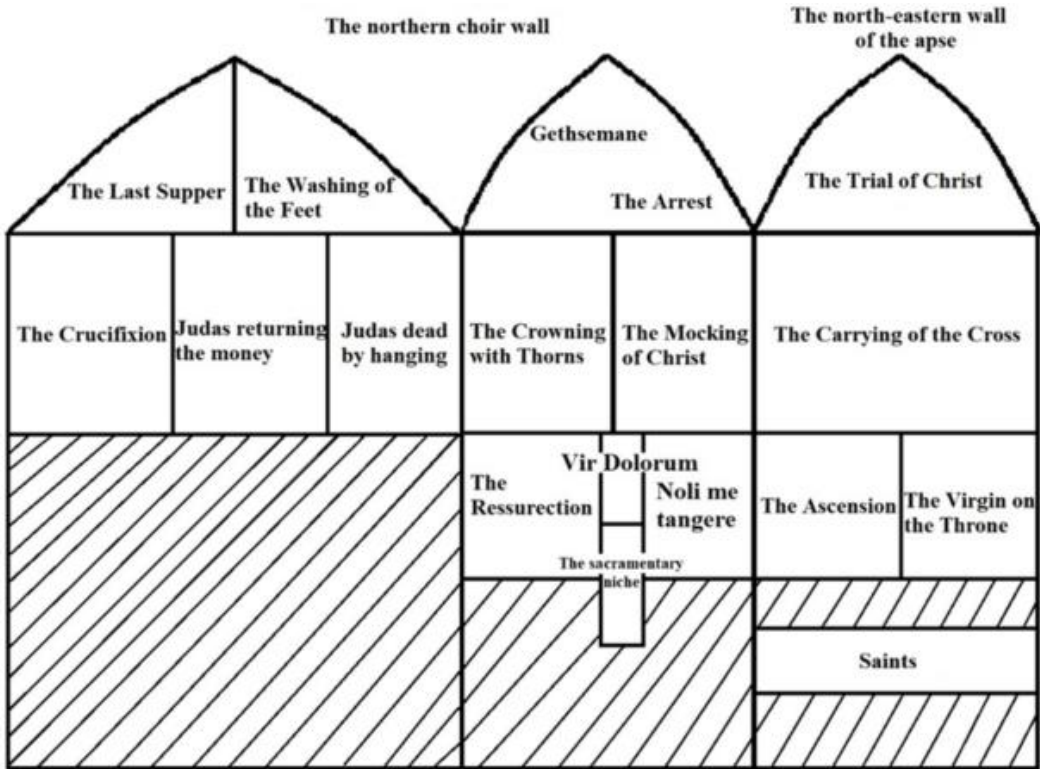


Figure 1. Mălâncrav. Wall paintings scheme

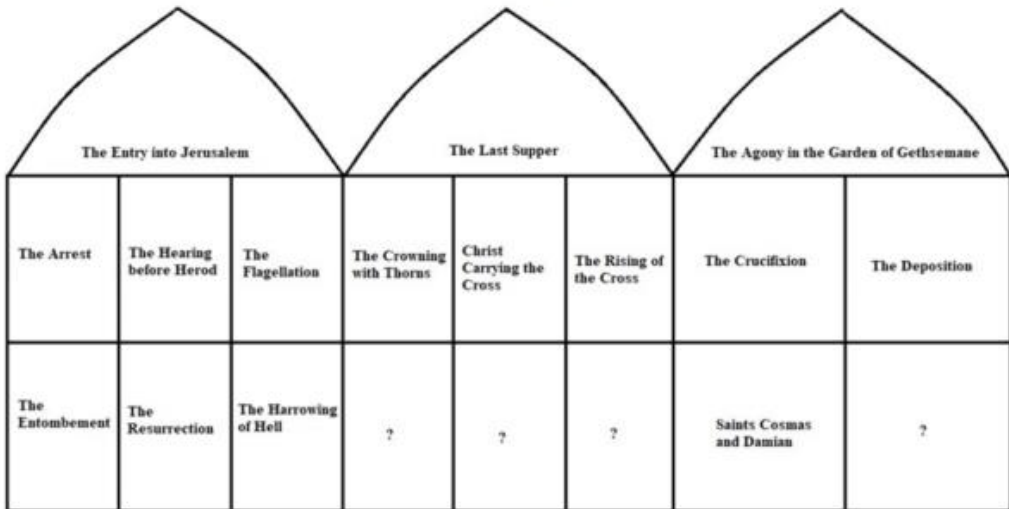


Figure 2. Curciu. Wall paintings scheme

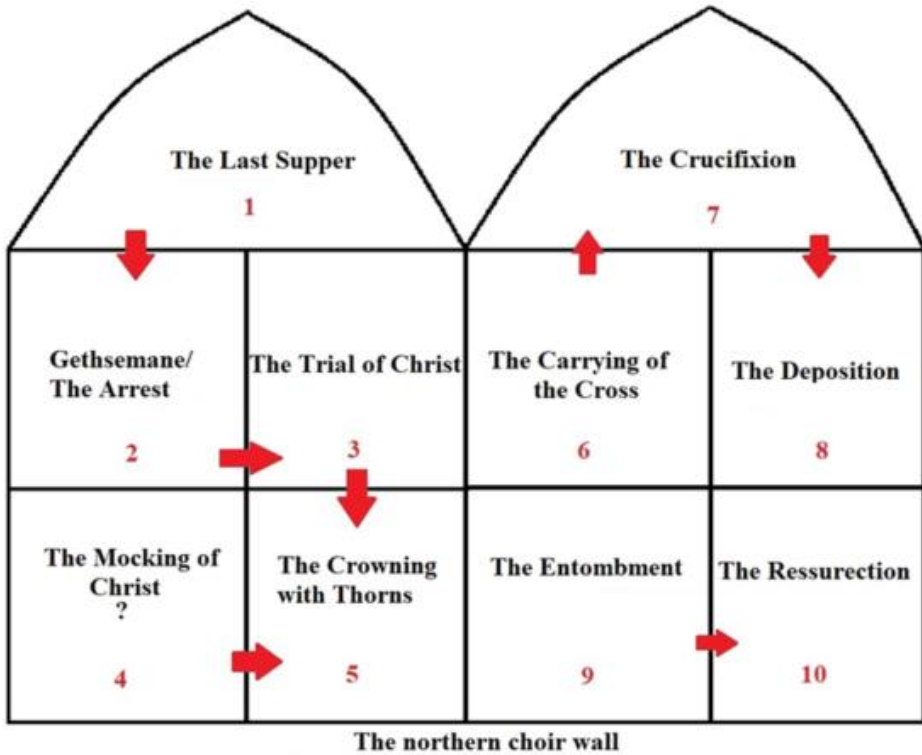


Figure 3. Râșnov. Wall paintings scheme

Matthew	Luke	Mark	John
<i>The Entrance into Jerusalem</i> (21: 7-9)	<i>The Entrance into Jerusalem</i> (19: 35-37)	<i>The Entrance into Jerusalem</i> (11: 7-9)	<i>The Entrance into Jerusalem</i> (12: 12-15)
<i>The Last Supper</i> (26: 26-29)	<i>The Easter Feast</i> (22: 7-20)	<i>The Last Supper</i> (14: 22-25)	<i>The Washing of the Feet</i> (13: 4-10)
<i>Gethsemane</i> (26: 36-46)	<i>The Revealing of the Seller</i> (22: 21-23)	<i>Peter's Notice</i> (14: 26-31)	<i>The Arrest</i> (18: 1-11)
<i>The Arrest</i> (26: 47-56)	<i>Which One is the Greatest?</i> (22: 24-30)	<i>Gethsemane</i> (14: 32-42)	<i>Jesus Before Ana and Caiaphas</i> (18: 12-27)
<i>Jesus Before the Council</i> (26: 57-68)	<i>Peter's Notice</i> (22: 31-38)	<i>The Arrest</i> (14: 43-52)	<i>Jesus Before Pilate</i> (18: 28-38)

<i>Peter's Denial</i> (26: 69-75)	<i>Gethsemane</i> (22: 39-46)	<i>Jesus Condemned by the Council</i> (14: 53-65)	<i>Jesus and Barabbas</i> (18: 39-40)
<i>Jesus is Brought to Pilate</i> (27: 1-2)	<i>The Arrest</i> (22: 47-53)	<i>Peter's Denial</i> (14: 66-72)	<i>Jesus is Given to the Jews</i> (19: 1-16)
<i>The Regret and the Death of Judas</i> (27: 3-10)	<i>Peter's Denial</i> (22: 54-62)	<i>Jesus in front of Pilate</i> (15: 1-5)	<i>The Crucifixion</i> (19: 17-30)
<i>Jesus in Front of Pilate</i> (27: 11-14)	<i>Jesus Before the Council. The Conviction</i> (22: 63-71)	<i>The Determined Death</i> (15: 6-20)	<i>Jesus's Death Proven</i> (19: 31-37)
<i>The Determined Death</i> (27: 15-25)	<i>Jesus before Pilate</i> (23: 1-5)	<i>The Crucifixion</i> (15: 21-28)	<i>The Entombment</i> (19: 38-42)
<i>The Soldiers Mocking</i> (27: 26-31)	<i>Jesus Before Herod</i> (23: 6-12)	<i>The Bystanders Mocking</i> (15: 29-32)	<i>The Ressurrection</i> (20: 1-10)
<i>The Ressurrection</i> (27: 32-38)	<i>The Determined Death</i> (23: 13-34)	<i>The Death of Jesus</i> (15: 33-41)	
<i>The Bystanders Mocking</i> (27: 39-44)	<i>The Mocking</i> (23: 35-43)	<i>The Entombment</i> (15: 42-47)	Total: 11 episodes
<i>The Darkness</i> (27: 45-50)	<i>The Death of Jesus</i> (23: 44-49)	<i>The Ressurrection</i> (16: 1-8)	
<i>The Curtain from Inside the Temple is Breaking</i> (27: 51-56)	<i>The Entombment</i> (23: 50-56)		
<i>The Entombment</i> (27: 57-61)	<i>The Ressurrection</i> (24:1-8)	Total: 14 episodes	
<i>The Sealing of the Tomb</i> (27: 62-66)			
<i>The Ressurrection</i> (28: 1-7)	Total: 16 episodes		
Total: 18 episodes			

Figure 4. Scenes described in the Gospels



Figure 5. Mălâncrav. *The Carrying of the Cross*



Figure 6. Râșnov. *The Carrying of the Cross*

No. crt.	The episode	Mălâncrav	Curciu	Râșnov
1.	<i>The Entrance into Jerusalem</i>		X	
2.	<i>The Last Supper</i>	X	X	X
3.	<i>The Washing of the Feet</i>	X		
4.	<i>The Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane</i>	X	X	X?
5.	<i>The Arrest</i>	X	X	X?
6.	<i>Jesus Before Ana and Caiaphas</i>	X		X?
7.	<i>Jesus in Front of Pilate</i>		X	X?
8.	<i>Judas Returning the Money</i>	X		
9.	<i>Judas Dead by Hanging</i>	X		

10.	<i>The Mocking of Christ</i>	X	X	
11.	<i>The Crowning with Thorns</i>	X	X	
12.	<i>The Carrying of the Cross</i>	X	X?	X
13.	<i>The Nailing on the Cross</i>		X?	
14.	<i>The Crucifixion</i>	X	X?	X
15.	<i>The Deposition</i>		X	X
16.	<i>The Entombment</i>		X	X
17.	<i>The Ressurrection</i>	X	X	X
18.	<i>Noli me tangere</i>	X		
19.	<i>The Harrowing of Hell</i>		X	
20.	<i>The Ascension</i>	X		

Figure 7. The frequency of the episodes at Mălâncrav, Curciu and Râșnov

