

Recollection and Reconsideration (II)

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Abstract:

(I) *The feeling of heritage develops over one's whole lifetime by positive examples collected from any given time, a proper relating to history and accumulation of knowledge. Two years after the Centenary of Romania's unification, recollection seems as helpful for a deeper understanding of the need for continuity and for conveying values conserved in time; as a result, present achievements are informed with past ones. In a world under the ever-increasing influence of images, individuals can rely on the legacy of the word as a basic vector of communication.*

Written passages act as empowering repositories of cultural heritage, recollection and reconsideration; in a subtle or more explicit manner, they can express an urge to maintain heritage values such as the Christian Orthodox faith and tradition and the love for one's homeland and people. This article presents: (1) some examples of memorable passages which include or imply, in their wider reference, an understanding of local artistic expression of sacred artistic; (2) the idea of a small collection of artworks and images as part of our over 25-year educational work with students of cultural heritage at the Sacred Art section of the Faculty of Christian-Orthodox Theology in Iasi. The students' art collection might contribute to outline present and future directions in heritage and material preservation; in time, as they become history too, they might serve to remind of the directions of studies, while expanding their creative artistic meaning as related to the work of cultural conservation-restoration.

Generalization and relationship work together to create, in varying degrees of subtlety, the path of heritage protection; the works in one's homeland represent a special priority and require cooperation.

Keywords: *Romanian Unification; cultural, ideal, material heritage conservation; models; Cultural Heritage (Sacred Art), 25-years anniversary of the Iasi Faculty of Christian-Orthodox Theology; collection of artwork and educational data (under construction)*

Abstract:

(II) *As every given present moment becomes past, each time span has its own results. The feeling of heritage, cultivated as early as childhood, develops in time, by positive examples, as a closer connection to history comes with the realization of its importance.*

Two years after the Centenary of Romania's Unification of 1918, recollection gives a better understanding of the need to continue the work of conservation of culture, ideas and materials, while introducing a reconsideration the past as a living resource.

While informing the constant need for new things, the overabundant stream of images brings in the certainty formulated as 'nothing new under the sun'. (Eminescu 1884). Both images and the Word, which one grows to understand progressively, stay as the main communicatio in a stronger or less explicit manner. Writing focused on recollection and reconsideration brings in inspiring passages. Excerpts chosen in this paper prove to act as agents in the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage, of the Christian Orthodox faith and love for one's country and people and stand as Romanian ideas and forms of artistic expression in sacred art

The idea of a small collection of artworks and images made by students in Cultural Heritage Studies at the specialized section of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology at the authors' home University proves this very need to preserve the heritage of 25 years of experiece in art education, which needs to be a collective, urgent effort of preservation and conservation.

Keywords: *recollection and reconsideration; Unification of Romania; cultural heritage conservation; cultural models; Cultural Heritage (Sacred Art), Faculty of Orthodox Theology; database for art education.*

Introduction

The Universe and history have their lights and shadows and even what is known can have impenetrable mysteries. Faith and studies and efforts directed at spreading it, the belief in the Absolute Good keeps and ennoble humans, while constantly generating attitududes and acts. In history, the problem of spiritualization and all aspects associated with it have raise questions and bring about specific solutions which interfere with and influence one another. Quite often, their role in the awareness of the

need to follow traditions and of their creative revigoration becomes particularly important for continuity and development.

Celebration of events, whether it comes at the exact date or belatedly fulfills the need to show respect and honour outstanding contributions. As it happens, a celebration might trigger other memorable events which need more than mere recollection: reconsideration. Our paper devoted to the anniversary of the 100 years since the Great Unification of Romania of 1918 presented the main idea of the recollection of historical events as a moment of reconsidering certain models, emulating personal contributions which would value Romania as a country and the Romanian people. This is the direction shown by the remarkable scholar and personality of the Romanian culture Nicolae Iorga about Romania and the Romanians.

The assassination of Nicolae Iorga 80 years ago by the Iron Guard was a great loss to Romanian history and came after other sacrifices. Today's world should learn the lesson of those events in order to avoid further possibly fateful mistakes. From a certain standpoint, sacred art, as a conservatory and creative form, is capable of restoring spritual attitudes by symbolic artworks which support the belief in divine energies. By so doing, it has a solid role to play in changing consciences. An art form which relates to the Divine, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance to all forms of expression should be a positive way of solving the complex and difficult situations in the life of humanity.

As someone close to the Romanian royal family, Nicolae Iorga (5 June 1871, Botoşani – 27 November 1940, Strejnicu, Prahova), the author of a History of Romanian Church (*Istorie a bisericii româneşti*) persuaded Queen Marie of Romania to put to paper her memories. He was impressed by the Queen's talent as a narrator and by her humanity and devotion in serving crucial historic causes, as the Quee fervently supported, with diplomatic tact the cause of Romania on the political scene of her time. The tragic experience of WWI, in which many Romanian lost their lives, was followed by the possibility to unite the country in the Great Unification of Romanian provinces on 1 December 1918.

Figure 1. *Istoria Bisericii Românești*, ediția original

Figure 2. Nicolae Iorga

(https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolae_Iorga)

With her intellect and personal charm, Queen Marie proved to be an efficient figure in the negotiations, in which she took part with the sole aim of gaining an advantage for the Romanian people. A foreigner by birth and connected by family ties to all of Europe, Queen Marie made her life a bridge between Western Europe and Russia. As a young woman, Marie, the future second foreign queen of Romania, had taken over the self-education and support both of her husband, the future king Ferdinand (who succeeded to his uncle Carol I), as of the country to which she was attached and promoted with devotion. Queen Marie's empathy for people from all walks of life, their needs and dreams grew. Personal dramas and tough aspects on the front completed her vision of Romanian reality and involved her cognitive and spiritual efforts in her fight to conquer vicissitudes of all sorts, both personal and general, during a time of great changes for Romania.

Queen Marie was also a gifted artist. As recorded in her memoirs, she had strong artistic links and made efforts to create, next to Queen Elisabeta, her own works. This connection was based on their Christian faith and comes in some examples and explanations which direct one's thought to the importance of art education and heritage protection.

Some 145 years ago, when the future Queen Marie of Romania was born, people lived no more protected lives; they might have been more motivated and more vigorous in their belief that their mission was to know and build, in order to leave their descendants a legacy to study, perpetuate and enrich in a creative manner. 160 years ago, during the last Romanian-born ruler, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the first modern Romanian University was established, to be later followed by other similar institutions in the country, which brought a sense of unifying awareness. The first four faculties in Iasi were Theology, Philosophy (and Letters), Law, Conservatory (music and drama), Arts (visual – painting, sculpture, graphic arts etc.)

Everything mentioned so far is interconnected; this connection involves both known aspects and other more subtle ones which can be deduced from the correlation between feelings, motivations and acts.

1. Preoccupations, efforts, connections

Any attempt at listing moments of reference shows that that past, present and future are in a permanent mutual interconnection. There is a constant need of points of reference, which history can provide as moments, representation and achievements which motivate the need to believe in the idea of continuity of values. Preservation follows as a way of creative use of inspiring aspects. For a better understanding of the fact that what one calls tradition can be, at any given moment, a permanent source of creative alternatives, we shall present some written proofs and images on the topic of creative – visual arts, which correlate secular and religious aspects. Although they appear as different in sense meanings and mode of expression, their common point resides in the ancestral belief that what triumphs is positivity, as the good cannot sit, spread and keep in any being and smaller or larger family or social community, but on the sincerity, honesty and generosity of communication, involvement and the art of giving, sometimes without reservation, which shows some things from the content of some spiritual holy paths. On one hand, one can see that there are secular preoccupations premeditated by the spiritual or motivated by religion; on the other, there are attempts to approach holiness according to one's feelings, beliefs and work in one's self and for the other.

What should one choose from an overwhelming succession of examples? Which aspects and realities could persuade one that between and among acts of self-improvement and useful achievements and massive involvement: faith, which resists beyond time, company and valorization. There is a close connection between and among the first Romanian University, established in 1869, royalty, the field of visual arts, faith and sacred art: an eagerness, a need to accomplish in belief and action, on all levels.

The University of Iași, as a modern higher education, was founded in 1860. The University is the symbolic continuator of Prince Vasile Lupu's Academy (Academia Vasilienă) established in 1640, succeeded, in 1707, by the Princely Academy (Academia Domnească) founded by Dimitrie Cantemir.

The University is a direct descendant of the Academia Mihăileană, funded in 1834 by Gheorghe Asachi. In its new form it was inaugurated on 26 October 1860 (7 November, New Style), in the presence of Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza and was given his name in 1942. Eversince its establishment the institution has been a national symbol, the Transylvanian scholars and political leaders Simion Bărnuțiu, Petre Suci, Ștefan Mică among others taught here as the first professors.

Today Building A, Palatul Universității, was built between 1893 and 1897 (and extended between the wars) according to the plans of Louis Blanc and inaugurated in the presence of King Carol I and Queen Elisabeta. The building combines Classic and Baroque elements, has a monumental entrance leading to the Hall of Lost Steps ("Sala Pașilor Pierduți"), decorated with frescoes by Sabin Bălașa. This building is shared by with the 'Gheorghe Asachi' Technical University.



3.

Figure 3. Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza opening the University of Iași on 26 October 1860. Bas-relief by Wladimir Hegel



4.

Figure 4. Palatul Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", built on the site of the former National Theatre, was inaugurated in 1897; (photo source: https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universitatea_%E2%80%9EAlexandru_Ioan_Cuza%E2%80%9D_din_Ia%C8%99i)



5.

Figure 5. Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza, ruler of Romanian Principalities (https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandru_Ioan_Cuza)

Arts education started in Iasi in the second part of the 19th century, as a result of an impending need felt by state authorities, as recorded by Mihail Kogălniceanu, minister of culture in Moldova, in a report defining the role and function of arts in shaping and educating a nation: "arts can only progress when they are both protected and encouraged by the government".

On 1 October 1860, Prince Cuza signed a decree establishing the first higher school or arts in the Romanian Principalities, the School of Music and Declamation (Școala de Muzică și Declamațiune); some four weeks later the school of sculpture and the National Museum of Painting (Școala de sculptură și pictură și Muzeul Național de Pictură) were also established.

On 6 October 1864, Cuza aproved the regulations for the schools (Regulamentul pentru Conservatorul de Muzică și Declamațiune) in Iași and Bucharest. On 23 October the regulations for the national arts school (Regulamentul pentru Școalele naționale de Arte Frumoase) was approved for the study of painting, sculpture, engraving, architecture and gardens; the regulations were revised in 1869 and 1883. The first sets of instructions and rules for the arts schools were repeatedly improved and completed (<http://www.primaria-iasi.ro/portal-primaria-municipiului-iasi/universitatea-de-arte-george-enescu/2130/educatie>)

"There is only one happiness: Duty!... There is only one consolation: Work! There is only one joy: Beauty!" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3okYxr5vNw>)

– Carmen Sylva said. This was the pen name of Elisabeta-Paulina-Otilia-Luisa (1843-1916), Princess of Neuwied and the first Queen of Romania. She was an extremely gifted child, both intellectual and artistically. Under the guidance of her father, Prince Hermann de Wied, a thinker, scientist and an artist, the future sovereign was granted an exceptional cultural expase. In 1869 she married Prince Carol and started dividing her life between studies, education and charity, under her mother, Maria of Nassau's guidance. She studied classics, French and English literature, philosophy, history, grammar and was particularly gifted for languages: beside her native German, she spoke Italian, French, English, Swedish and Russian. She also took piano lessons from Clara Schumann and Arthur Rubinstein, drawing, watercolours, painting and music (organ and harpsichord). She accomplished her culture by brilliantly graduating courses in philosophy at the universities of Budapest and Heidelberg as well as her talent, at the Arts Academy in Berlin. Constant reading, music lessons and her early inclination for writing and poetry turned into a way of living and a refuge from personal unhappiness. (<https://peles.ro/personalitati/regina-elisabeta/>)

Living next to the future Queen Marie, Queen Elisabeta acted as a model for her in many all respects, including the artistic talent.

Painting and writing were among Queen Marie's mos passionate occupations. Queen Marie started to paint after a conversation with her friend Elisa Brătianu. At

a recent auction, Royal Romania – the Centennial of the Great Unification („România Regală - Centenarul Marii Uniri”), organized by Artmark, a watercolour signed by Queen Marie, *The Night Queen* („Regina nopții”) was bought for 7,000 Euros. The initial bid was 2,000 to 3,500 Euro, the ‘Night Queen’ (photo below right) is signed above left in blue, ‘Marie. In her memoirs, Queen Marie of Romania recorded her beginnings as a painter taught by the painting teacher, Ruth Mercier, a specialist in flowers. Queen Marie ‘I had well understood Mercier’s way of washing on colour in glorious quantities so that even when dry, my flowers kept a velvety depth true to nature and pleasing to the eye.’ (Queen Marie of Roumanie, *The Story of my Life*, New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1934, Ch.17. Back to Roumania, p. 378.) She started by illuminating books, painting on Japanese paper for her friend Pauline Astor and for her husband, King Ferdinand. This book was exhibited on several exhibitions in Europe and awarded two golden medals in Munchen and Barcelona. Queen Marie was also a patron of the ‘Romanian youth’ („Tinerimea artistică”), a society founded in December 1901, which gathered painters Ștefan Luchian, Arthur Verona, Jean Alexandru Steriadi and Kimon Loghi.

Other objects sold at the auction: a collection book „Omagiul României lui Ferdinand cel Mare”, in silver, on hand-made paper, with Queen Marie’s dedication to Marechal Ferdinand Foch (Paris, 1922), sold for 5000 Euros (from an initial bid of 1500 Euros) and a parade sword in sheath which belonged to King Mihai I, for 600 Euros (after a 350 Euro initial bid). „At the coronation in Alba Iulia, on 15 October 1922, Marechal Foch, as a representative of France and General Henri Berthelot took place. On that occasion, Queen Marie gave Foch this album, in a symbolic gesture of gratitude for the help given by France to Romania in WWI. Photo by Marius Veaugeois”- Artmark.

(adev.ro/pbcg5c; https://adevarul.ro/cultura/arte/o-pictura-realizata-regina-maria-romaniei-vanduta-7000-euro--omagiul-romaniei-ferdinand-mare-adjudecata-5000-euro-1_5b2f5b03df52022f7578a329/index.html)

2. Queen Marie, the arts and Queen Elisabeta (*Carmen Sylva*)

One can find a few relevant fragments in Queen Marie’s memoirs on her involvement in the arts, which she started practising with her mother-in-law Queen Elisabeta, King Carol’s wife. Even under the secular appearance of some artistic gestures the two queens shared there was a solid Christian Orthodox ground, a feeling that ‘‘beauty shall save the world’’, as Dostoievsky put it. One can read about a prolonged state of uncertainty or vocational-artistic humility which Queen Marie expressed with candour. There are also some truthful confessions about some art works, their appearance and the processes which led to their accomplishment, as well as about their sources of inspiration. The religious, Orthodox contents and

visual aspects are mentioned as stimuli and models for a series of artistic creations by the two queens. In a Romania in a process of deep change, at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the two met on the common ground of art, irrespective of their foreign backgrounds and age gap. There was a common treasure of strong commitment of teachings about the Christian faith, and respect and observance of principles inherited from predecessors, with involvement with the rest, as facts for granted, not only as an example of honour and rank. As emotionally involved persons who stood close.

To their husbands, kings ranked as liberators and unifiers of Romania, the queens came to be closely attached to the land and customs of Romania and sought to leave behind for their contemporaries and future generations examples of specific select phrases and attitudes. As they lived at the same time in the space of rulers, prominent people and everyday life, one will not be surprised, as Virginia Woolf was in her review, to find in Queen Marie's diary open candid often self-critical confessions. These store as a source of knowledge, with potencies of creative generation in various fields. The ones regarding arts could serve to generate screen versions, visual interpretation and, in relation to other creative aspects, which simultaneously educate, inspire decisions, actions and positive results, while offering a sense of joyful satisfaction:

In my youth it never entered my head to try and write. For many years I was quite unable to take myself seriously or to imagine that I should ever be able to do anything really well except riding. I continued to imagine I was still the very ignorant girl who had started out from home at the age of seventeen with little knowledge and no accomplishments.(...) This was characteristic of my attitude towards myself, I had not the least ambition to be clever. (Queen Marie of Roumanie, *The Story...* pp. 377-8)

The only "indoor" accomplishment I had was painting. Of course I was fond of reading, in several languages, but I found the greatest pleasure with my brush. Both Ducky and I, like several of the women of the English Royal Family, such as the Empress Frederick and Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, who were real artists, had talent for painting and drawing.

I had taken a few very good lessons with the same lady who had taught my mother-in-law, Ruth Mercier, a remarkable flower painter. Her technique for water colour was unique, as she expressed it: "Je peins a grande eau." (I paint with running water - M.V.) Although I had her only once with me for six weeks, she gave me a solid foundation and I never forgot her principles; they were a firm basis during the years

when I handled a brush. She was unique of her kind and her flowers were incomparable.

My love of colour and instinctive feeling for line was a great asset; I never worked enough so as to become a real artist, but what I did produce had a certain originality (and also, I believe, some strength, my drawing was good and I was undeniably *une coloriste*. Feeling that I would never have time to give myself up to more serious study, I developed my talent along certain lines with a tendency towards the decorative, acquiring a style of my own in which form and colour played the chief part. I had well understood Mercier's way of washing on colour in glorious quantities so that even when dry, my flowers kept a velvety depth true to nature and pleasing to the eye. In this I was an adept.

Ducky and I spent many happy hours painting together. In those days I was perhaps the better painter of the two, but in later life she became a real artist, whilst I laid down the brush for the pen.

Aunt Elisabeth was always painting "books," elaborate enluminures (miniatures, ornate letters on a manuscript – M.V.) on parchment, destined for churches. One of these is at Curtea de Arges, in the church which has become her resting-place. It is a wonderful bit of work, most perfectly mounted and finished off. I also personally possess a beautiful little book she painted for me as a wedding gift, a wee little volume like the precious prayer books of old, offered to me in a priceless little casket copied from an ancient Byzantine reliquary. It is not a prayer book but contains poems specially written for a young bride starting out on her life's journey, poems Aunty wrote for the occasion. I dearly love this perfect little *objet d'art*.

Although we were not great admirers of Aunty's art as a painter, this idea of illuminating books was very attractive to us. We did not try to paint Bibles or to compose our own verses, but we decided each to paint a book for the other decorated with flowers and as text a selection of those poems and quotations most dear to us. At the age of twenty-two and twenty-three these were of course more sentimental than philosophical and well-dosed with *Weltschmerz*, for although we loved life and its gaieties we were acutely conscious of its tragic undercurrent.

These books were not only planned and promised but actually took form, and we still treasure them immensely. They are full of colour and originality and although no doubt faulty, still to-day I consider them artistically good.

Later I painted two more books, more important productions with an art which had become more raffine, more studied and perhaps better understood; I had, so to say, learned to express myself.

My first book was painted on Japanese paper, but these later books were painted on precious parchment, each page framed in silver and the whole book cleverly mounted on hinges so that when opened the pages lay quite flat. One of these books was painted for my great friend, Pauline Astor, as wedding present. (Queen Marie

of Roumanie, *The Story...* p. 379 ff.). And it continues on the details in the achievement of a painted Gospel.

The second of these more sophisticated books was painted for my husband. It was my biggest achievement and had been conceived with the idea of leaving something to the house which could not be carried off. I was never able to keep anything I painted, everything was carried off almost before it was dry.

This book was also done on parchment and mounted on the same principles as the other, only the pages had a different shape and the book was much fatter than the first, nor were the flowers restricted to any special colour. It took some time to do, but the result was satisfactory and today, now that I paint no more, we are all glad that this book exists as a memento of my abandoned art. Less poetically unique than the book Queen Alexandra loved, it has nevertheless been to several exhibitions and was given two gold medals, one in Munich before the War, and another in Barcelona in 1929.

Once Aunt Elisabeth asked me to collaborate with her in painting a Bible. I accepted and we worked at it diligently for about two years, then Aunty's enthusiasm ran out, so it was, alas ! never finished.

Though this work threw us a good deal together, it was not easy to collaborate with one whose taste and style differed so entirely from my own.

One could never be safe from surprises and these surprises were often equal to shocks. Aunty's imagination ran away with her, and the results were occasionally startling.

It was difficult to get her to stick to one style. She would suddenly fall in love with a new idea quite indifferent as to whether it harmonized with what had gone before. (Maria, Regină a României, *Povestea vieții mele*, partea a 2-a și a 3-a, Ed. Erc Press, București, 2012, pp.78-81). (Maria, Regină a României 2012: 78-81).

Queen Marie was to experience later, in her own way, new approaches, as, for instance, the oasis of recreation and intimacy-cosiness in her Palaces at Balchik. Almost a year and after another catastrophic world war and redistribution of territories, dictatorships and their consequences, all that has been preserved in the form of objects, writings, images act as reminiscences and historical witnesses for the time they were made.

3. At Balchik (Bulgaria), on Queen Marie of Romania

Contemporary inner and outer views of the Museum and Church in the Complex Dvorece (Palaces).

Figures 6-7. Photos of **Queen Marie at different ages**, Carol II, their children



6.



7.

Figure 8. Crucifix and symbolic painting with Queen Marie at sunset

Figures 9-10. Stone cross and throne

Figure 11. Queen Marie, bust

Figures 12-22. Local rustic icons at the Museum and Church in Balchik and some scenes and ornaments in murals (photos by M.V.).



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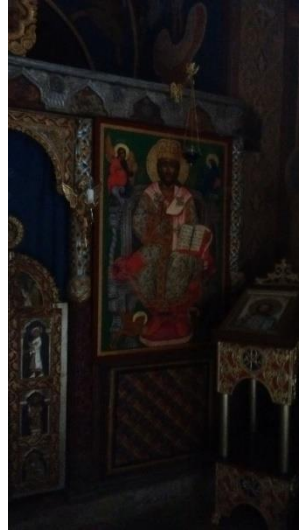
19.



20.



21.



22.

Queen Marie's artistic taste, manifest in all her residences of the family castles Peleş and Pelişor, in Sinaia, is exhibited in a more personalized manner in Balchik, where Queen Marie created a residential leisure complex for her receptions; chapel *Stella Maris*.



23.

Fig. 23. The *Stella Maris* chapel in Balchik



24.

Fig. 24. A silver Stella Maris coin in Balchik made by sculptor Emil Wilhelm Becker, issued on the occasion of laying Queen Marie's heart in the chapel, in 1938

Stella Maris (in Latin, 'Star of the Sea') is a Byzantine-style chapel built in Balchik in 1929, at Queen Marie's request, for her moments of prayer; the name is one of the attributes of the Mother of God

The church was built by Agostino Fabro Enterprises, on the plans made by architect Roghabihab; it was painted by Dumitru Brăescu (in 1929 the Pantocrator in the tower) and by Anastase Demian and Tache Papatrindafil (the rest of the frescoes, respectively, in 1930); the chapel is built of stone, has a small front yard, a fountain and Christian grave stones.

The chapel is part of the so-called *Queen's Nest*, an architectural ensemble which includes the Balchik Castle, a ward, the villa of administrator Carol Gutmann, Prince Nicolae's villa, Princess Ileana's villa, Mavi Dalga, Cara Dalga, Sabur Jevi, the Stella Maris Chapel and other houses for the suite, all inside a spacious garden on the Black Sea shore.

Queen Marie's model for the Stella Maris Chapel in Balchik is the 15th-century of Saint Jacob's Chapel, in Trikomo, a small village in northern Cyprus, 20 km from Famagusta. Queen Marie might have seen this chapel during a cruise on the Mediterranean, in the first years of Queen Michael, when, after the death of King Ferdinand I of Romania, fearing a possible coup by Marshal Alexandru Averescu, she conducted secret negotiations for a possible quick retreat.

According to Queen Marie's will, in 1938, her heart was laid in the *Stella Maris* Chapel, while her body was buried at the Curtea de Argeș Monastery.

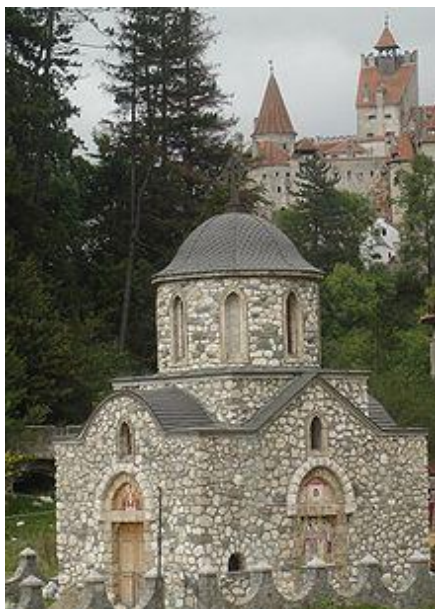


Fig. 25. A replica of the *Stella Maris* Chapel built at Bran Castle

After September 1940, when the southern Romanian provinces which formed the so-called Quadrilater had to be given by Romania to Bulgaria, Princess Ileana of Romania asked for Queen Marie's heart to be brought to Bran Castle, in a casket with the Queen's heart and laid it in the small wooden church there (Jercălăi Skete in Urlați, Prahova). A year later the queen's heart was moved to an specially-designed crypt in the nearby rock of Măgura Branului, next to the camp hospital newly founded by Princess Ileana, called 'Queen Marie's Heart'.

Princess Ileana wished to build a replica of the Balchik *Stella Maris* Chapel in the hospital courtyard, to keep Queen Marie's heart there. The founding stone was laid in the summer of 1947, on the banks of the Turcu river, next to Vama Medievala (the Middle Age Customs) and was consecrated by Father Arsenie Boca from the Sâmbăta Monastery. The replica church was built within a few months. The chapel was painted by Arthur Verona; the chapel was not consecrated; nor was it ever to store Queen Marie's heart, because, in 1947, the communist regime abolished the monarchy and King Mihai and his aunt Princess Ileana went into exile. Queen Marie's heart was left in the rock crypt for 27 years.

On 5 July 1968, Titus N. Hasdeu, the director of the Bran Museum, accompanied by some politruks, forced the crypt and the marble sarcophague open and found Queen Marie's heart in the gilded silver casket; the casket was brought to the store room of the Bran Castle Museum.

In March 1971, the casket was moved to Romania's National History Museum and opened; it contained another smaller silver octagonal casket, which was also opened. The two caskets have become part of Romania's National Thesaurus and Queen Marie's heart, stored in a plastic bag, was stored in Romania's National History Museum, where it stayed until 3 November 2015, when it was taken to the Golden Chamber of the Pelisor Royal Castle, Queen Marie's last residence; the Golden Chamber has been declared a Royal Chapel.

The octagonal silver casket weighs 561 gramms; it is wrapped in the British and Romanian flags and placed inside the large, 8.1 kilos gilded silver casket with platinum insertions and 307 gems. The two caskets were made by the jeweller Maurice Fremont; on one side the casket reads *Alteței sale Regale, Principesei Maria a României – Doamnele române* ('to Her Royal Highness, Queen Marie of Romania from the Romanian ladies'); on the top lid of the casket there is the royal crown, placed on the Romanian Kingdom flag; on the lateral sides, one can read the M monogram and the pre-1918 Romanian coat-of-arms.

The Bran Chapel was renovated and reconsecrated in 2005; it is still to store Queen Marie's heart.

(https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stella_Maris)

4. *ILLUMINATIONS FROM THE UNSEEN*, an anniversary exhibitions project and iconographic and visual art workshop set, supported and coordinated by Assoc.Prof. Merișor Georgeta Dominte

UNIUNEA ARTISTILOR PLASTICI DIN ROMÂNIA - FILIALA IAȘI
GALERIILE DE ARTĂ „NICOLAE TONITZA”

UNIVERSITATEA „ALEXANDRU B. CUȘA” IAȘI
FACULTATEA DE TEOLOGIE ORTODOXĂ „DUMITRU STĂNILOAE” IAȘI

VERNISAJUL
MIERCURI 11 IULIE 2018, ORELE 16:00
PREZINTĂ PROF. DR. PR. ION VICOVAN,
DECAN AL FACULTĂȚII DE
TEOLOGIE ORTODOXĂ
„DUMITRU STĂNILOAE” DIN IAȘI

EXPOZIȚIE ȘI WORKSHOP DE ACTIVITĂȚI ICONOGRAFICE, LUCRĂRI LIBERE ȘI RESTAURĂRI,
INDRUMATE DE CADRE DIDACTICE DE LA SPECIALIZAREA ARTĂ SACRĂ A FACULTĂȚII DE
TEOLOGIE ORTODOXĂ „DUMITRU STĂNILOAE” DIN IAȘI

ILUMINĂRI DIN NEVĂZUT



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28.

Figures 26-28. The exhibition and workshop *ILUMINĂRI DIN ABSOLUT* (*Illuminations from the Unseen*), organized at the *Tonitza* Art Gallery of the Iasi Romanian Artist's Union, on 11-19 July 2018, was the result of a common professional effort of professors, students and graduates and on the occasion of the 25 years since the foundation of the department of Sacred Art (originally called Cultural Heritage and later renamed into Conservation – Restoration) in the Faculty of Theology of the Universitatea Alexandru Ioan Cuza of Iași

ILLUMINATIONS FROM THE UNSEEN

In the secular and sacred art, the states of inspiration, creation and restitution are determined by non-identical factors which are similar in their need and urge to preserve and restore art objects for the benefit of generations to come. Each object which needs to be preserved and restored involves similar and specific scientific approaches.

Artistic inspiration and creation, each faith and its specific images of sacred art resorts to specific approaches and observe a set of basic rules. Nevertheless, in the Christian Orthodox faith there exists a certain creative liberty, both in working with shape, form and composition. The practice of Byzantine-inspired art does not exclude the visual knowledge of some forms of religious expression, even when the interest is focused on the deep understanding of the features of Orthodox iconographies, in miniatures, icons, murals, cult objects, illustrations etc.

An exhibition and a workshop called *Illuminations from the Unseen* expressed a diversity of stages in the formation of some young artists, students and graduates, taught and trained in courses in Sacred art and Cultural Heritage at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology at the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Iași. Various forms of visual artistic expression, secular and iconographic as well as the endeavour to save by conservation and restoration some church treasures were represented at the exhibition of icons on wood and document books.

Illuminations from the Unseen refers to the spiritual light, to the benefic energies which inspire and guide our attitudes and actions to positive, constructive and creative goals and help recuperate values. These values can be expressed by some rules recognizable in time and space, which explains the very emergence and perpetuation of iconographic models, in which Uncreated Light, haloes of Saintly Persona are the expression of illuminations dawned on them during their life on earth and the state of transcendence acquired in eternal life.

Illuminations from the Unseen are messages anyone can receive, provided one makes oneself available, depending on the level of energy one aspires to keep in one's mind and in acts, in order to enact the Christian values based on charity, faith and hope. Good, Beauty and Truth can gain the necessary force and manage to convey a complex message, as what one has the chance to convey the inner and outer Light on earth depends on the way one is and on what one does, empowering the following generations to the same.

As parts of life, dissolution, desintegration, decomposition obey a higher, more general order and its visible and invisible organisational forms. As long as what we can see with our physical sight is an infinitesimal part as compared to the unseen mysterious aspects which exist, Illuminations which come as a realization should be given access to our souls, thoughts and expressions, as they enhance their potential to regenerate, recuperate and restore.

The effort to better understand the existing depth of what we see and the art of seeing can be crowned by illuminations we receive and by the state of wisdom which conveys to us that one is an infinitesimal, but very important part in a complex machine which requires harmony on all its levels.

In iconography, models of saintliness are no exchange currency, their value is stable irrespective of market value; they are not negotiated or modified according to some material variations and dependancies; they are not replaced according to fashion or design, which require change and variation, as models of saintliness relate to the non-temporal and their meaning is eternal. They do not change in order to keep saintliness as a reference point for the evolution and self-improvement of the human beings, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of the community. The foundations of iconographic conception, which is an expression of some Christian-Orthodox teachings, does not change, does not align with visual models, because what they convey constantly resides in a covered energetic register.

In the icon, the image speaks about transfiguration, as human beings tend to attain, as an asymptote, Godliness, and project themselves in a reversed perspective and contain themselves and live the iconographic state, not just by contemplating it from a physical reality, as it happens with the religious painting. In the latter, what comes first is the originality of the image, contrasts and tension, as consequences of the incarnation of our Saviour - Jesus Christ. In icons, one is no longer in the earthly life, as Resurrection has already given us another perspective: eternal life.

Both in icons and in religious paintings, the students' apprenticeship and evolution is a life-long process which witnessed similarities in efforts of teaching (oneself) to render the seen and the unseen in particular ways of perception.

Illuminations are reflected in the results in the choice of senses, options in efforts. The icon, as it includes the expression of the Uncreated Light, refers from the start to the Divine Prototype.

Icons, miniatures, religious writings and objects used in the Christian Orthodox cult, together with cultural goods, especially local ones should undergo conservation and restoration, both as an act of preserving heritage values and as an implicit support of the idea of continuity of faith, together with its confession by new iconographies. These are essential aspects which structure human creation in relation to models given by Divine Creation.

Illuminations from the Unseen invites to personal introspection and practical use of remedies which could offer, along with personal and communal peace and satisfaction, the opportunity to connect with what messages conveyed divine benefic energies prompt one to manufacture, do, create.

Georgeta Merișor DOMINTE, Assoc.Prof.

11 July 2018 – Opening of the exhibition and workshop *Illuminations from the Unseen*, Nicolae Tonitza Gallery of the Romanian Visual Artists' Union (UAPR), Iași, 11-19 July 2018 (Figures 29-41)



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Figures 29-36. Works and visitors, opening of *Illuminations from the Unseen* exhibition, 11 July 2018.



37.

Figure 37. Works and visitor at the opening of workshop *Illuminations from the Unseen*, Nicolae Tonitza Gallery (UAPR), Iași: Assoc.Prof., PhD Iulian C. Damian (Director of Department of Orthodox Theology), graduate student Aurora Fermeșanu (Moisuc), Assistant Professors Elena Ardelean, Mina Moșneagu, Bogdan Cojocca; student Ionuț Bărbăzan (autorul of Petre Țuțea's portrait), Rev.Professor Ion Vicovan (Dean of Faculty of Orthodox Theology), student Daniel Bejan, Assoc.Prof. Georgeta Merișor Dominte, student Ștefan Gafincu, Professor Nicoleta Melniciuc, Visual Education teacher Mariana Saraiman, student Amorina Roșcan, Vasile Tudor, Assistant Professor, PhD.



38.

Figure 38. Visitors: mother and daughter next to an icon of Russian saints made by authorized church painter Marius Ghinescu, a graduate of our faculty.



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Figure 39-41. Contemplating *Illuminations from the Unseen*

PHOTS OF WORKSHOP ILLUMINATIONS FROM THE UNSEEN



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Figures 42-47. Workshop participants – artists, organizers and visitors: students Ionuț Bărbăzan and alumna Aurora Fermeșanu (Moisuc) painting outdoors, Professor Nicoleta Melniciuc and visitors (figures 42-44); post-graduate student Andreea Lemnaru showing a scene painted for the illustrated Bible for children to Assoc.Prof. Georgeta Merișor Dominte (figure 45); Prof. M.G.Dominte and works created at workshop by our alumna Saraiman Mariana's daughters and students Barbazan Ionuț (Year 2) and Gafincu Ștefan (Year 3, Sacred Art), 2018 (figure 46); MA student Adam Botoșineanu painting an icon, 14 July 2018 (figure 47);



48.

Figure 48. Workshop during the exhibition: students Stefan Gafincu and Alexandru Şerban and their secular art works and Daniel Bejan at the easel and Gh. Şerban.



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Figures 49-51. Student Amorina Roșcan at work, Prof. Georgeta Merișor Dominte and MA student Andreea Lemnaru showing their works at workshop, visitors. 52.- 53.- 54.



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54

Figures 52-54. Artistic emulation: alumnus Daniel Afuduloaie, student Ionuț Barbazan and a dedicated visitor, work at workshop at exhibition *Illuminations from the Unseen*. (Coordinated by Assoc.Prof. G. M. Dominte).

Some works from the exhibition *ILLUMINATIONS FROM THE UNSEEN*

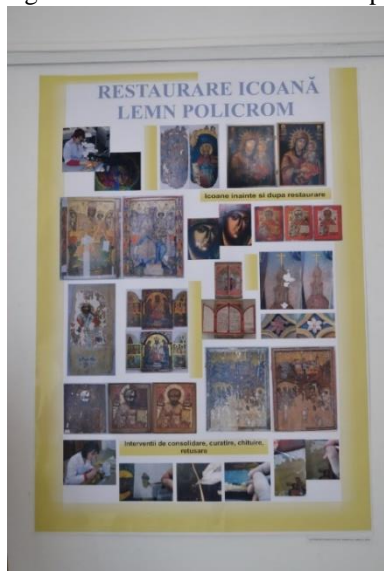


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Figures 55- 56. Posters of Church painting made by Assist.Prof. Bogdan Cojoccea



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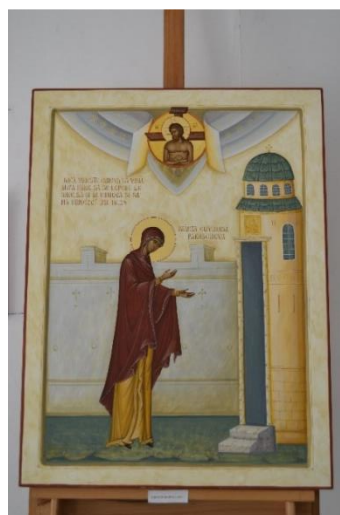


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Figures 57-58. Posters of restoration of icon on wood and document book made by Assist.Professors Mina Moșneagu (figure 57) and Elena Ardelean (figure 58).



59.



60.

Figures 59-60. Icon of Theotokos by visual education teacher, Sofragiu Petru, PhD (figure 59); icon of Saint Paraskevi, by church painter Ghinescu Marius, both graduates of the Sacred Art and Cultural Heritage section (figure 60).



61



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63

Figures 61-63 (works by graduates of Sacred Art Section): the Princely icon of the Apostles by Hieromonk Rotaru Cristian (figure 61); icon of Theotokos and a painting of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Iași, by Saraiman Mariana (figures 62-63).



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Figures 64-66. Children's books illustrations on secular and religious topics by Lemnaru Andreea, MA student, 2018.



67



68

Figures 67-68. Metropolitan Anastasie Crimca – graphic by alumna, restorator specialist Andrei Ana-Maria (figure 67); Saint Macarios – icon by Arbore Robert, MA student, 2018 (figure 68).



69



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71

Figures 69-71. A document of the Psalter – p. 197; Jesus Christ and the Apostles; Prophet David leading riders in an attack. (miniatures from Metropolitan Anastasie Crimca's Psalter, finished in 1616 at the Dragomirna Monastery, Suceava; reproductions in traditional technique by Săucinițanu Silvia (Mother Macrina –figure 69), Moraru Daniela (Mother Teodosia, figure 70) and Schipor Elisabeta (Mother Macaria-figure 71), alumna of our section.



72

Figure 72. A film of the composition of photos by Assist.Prof. Vasile Tudor and portraits of photographed.



73



74

Figures 73-74. The western side of our Faculty, Iasi; the Golia Monastery, Iasi (detail), landscapes by student Gafincu Ștefan (Year 3, Sacred Art), 2018



75

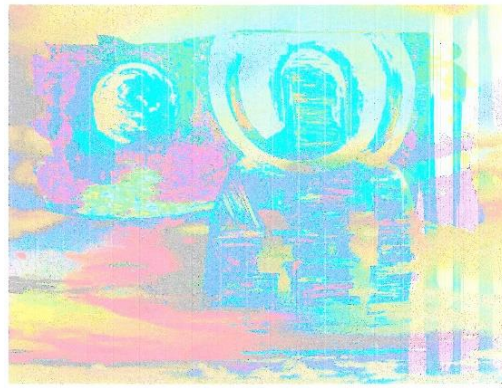


76

Figures 75-76. Ecclesiastic architectures – graphic by Bejan Daniel
(Year 2, Sacred Ar, 2018)








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78


Figures 77-78. *Crepuscul sonor*, graphic art by Assist.Prof., PhD Stelian Onica;
Illuminations, by Assoc.Prof.,PhD. Merișor Georgeta Dominte

5. SOME RECENT 2020 POSTERS OF VISUAL ARTISTIC FUNCTIONS INVOLVING STUDENTS, POSTGRADUATES AND ALUMNI FROM THE SACRED ART SECTION (Figures 79-83)

SĂRBĂTORI LA IAȘI

EXPOZIȚIE DEDICATĂ HRAMULUI SFINTEI CUVIOASE PARASCHEVA ȘI SĂRBĂTORIRII A
160 DE ANI DE LA ÎNFIINȚAREA UNIVERSITĂȚII „ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA” ȘI
A UNIVERSITĂȚII NAȚIONALE DE ARTĂ „GEORGE ENESCU” DIN IAȘI



EXPOZIȚIE CU LUCRĂRI DE ARTĂ SACRĂ, REALIZATE DE STUDENȚI, MASTERANZI
ABSOLVENȚI ȘI CADRE DIDACTICE DE LA SPECIALIZĂRILE ARTĂ SACRĂ
ȘI ARTĂ SACRĂ ÎN PATRIMONIUL CULTURAL, ALE FACULTĂȚII DE TEOLOGIE ORTODOXĂ
„DUMITRU STĂNILOAE” DIN IAȘI

PARTICIPANȚI EXPOZIȚIE:
ALECU RALUCA, BEJAN DANIEL, COJOCARU FLORENTIN,
ASIST. DR. COJOCEA BOGDAN, DĂNILĂ MIHAIL,
CONF. DR. DOMINTE GEORGETA MERIȘOR, GOȘMAN GHEORGHE, HARAGA BOGDAN,
HREMALIUC PETRU, LEMNARU ANDREEA, MISOAGĂ ANA, MISOAGĂ FELICIA,
MARTINOV ELENA, LECT. DR. ONICA STELIAN, RĂȘCANU GEORGE,
IERODIACON ROTARU CRISTIAN DANIEL, ASIST. DR. SOFRAGIU PETRU

COORDONATORI ACTIVITĂȚII:
ASIST. DR. COJOCEA BOGDAN, ASIST. DR. TUDOR VASILE, ASIST. DR. SOFRAGIU PETRU,
CONF. DR. DOMINTE GEORGETA MERIȘOR, LECT. DR. ONICA STELIAN

CURATOR: MUZEOGRAF ELENA GHERMAN

MUZEUL MITROPOLITAN AL CATEDRALEI MITROPOLITANE DIN IAȘI
SALA SINAXAR

14 - 30 OCTOMBRIE 2020

Figure 79.



Figure 80.

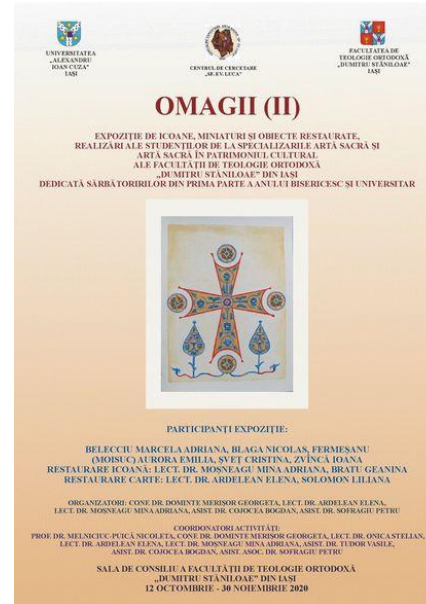


Figure 81.

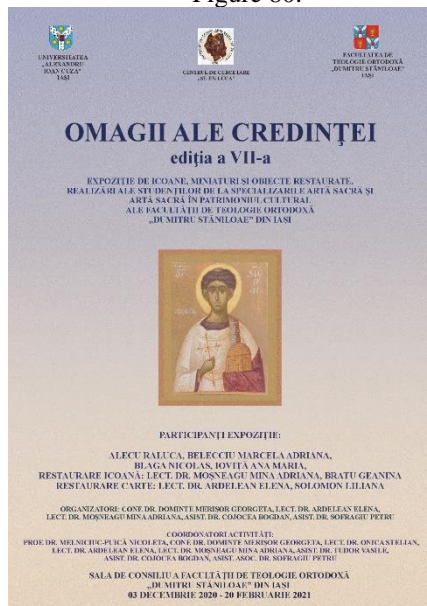


Figure 82.



Figure 83.

Conclusions

This paper gives some glimpses from a complex, deep film about a broader topic which might include the divine energies working on planet Earth. History can appear as a huge machine which vigorously rolls along various facts and lives, in a permanent state of alert, in search of a necessary harmonization. Everything is stored for posterity, in minute, abstract details of names, images, objects, documents etc. At every given time, or anniversary, one tends to reconstruct, out of the known and rediscovered, states of mind expressed in innumerable nuances, with a view to understanding the exact specific time in the past, particularly when events had a strong impact on society.

From such a standpoint, secular or religious documentary and artistic works offer the possibility to foray into a former reality. By sacred art, which promotes spiritual values, one understands that its forms include a process of finding ways for attaining the aim of transcending to a state of goodwill, of cleansing from worldly aspects, tensions and problems. This is exactly what makes the very substance of history and of secular artistic expressions.

This is why the positive elements found in the aspects presented above brings to one's attention what is to be appreciated, maintained and contained, in opposition to the nebulous, hostile and destructive elements.

The lessons learned are that all negative aspects should no longer prevail, determined, perpetuated and spread, to the detriment of positive creativity. This is why, aiming at maintaining and increasing the sacralization of art, it is vital to disseminate the contributions made by young iconographers and restaurators, to appreciate, support and develop them. Their artistic manifestation and exhibition are a creed of the creative perpetuation of Orthodox iconographic and heritage traditions.

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- Photos by Angela Leonte, visitors, professors, alumni, (post)graduates and student at the Sacred Art Faculty of Orthodox Theology, Cuza University, Iași (Fig. 26-82)
- Photos by Marina Vraciu, la Balchik, Bulgaria (Fig. 6-22).
- adev.ro/pbcg5c;https://adevarul.ro/cultura/arte/o-pictura-realizata-regina-maria-romaniei-vanduta-7000-euro--omagiul-romaniei-ferdinand-mare-adjudecata-5000-euro-1_5b2f5b03df52022f7578a329/index.html
- <http://www.primaria-iasi.ro/portal-primaria-municipiului-iasi/universitatea-de-arte-george-enescu/2130/educatie>
- <https://peles.ro/personalitati/regina-elisabeta/>
- https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandru_Ioan_Cuza VOLUM
- https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolae_Iorga
- https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stella_Maris
- https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universitatea_%E2%80%9EAlexandru_Ioan_Cuza%E2%80%9D_din_Ia%C8%99i
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3okYxr5vNw>