

Medieval Liturgical Vestments Depicted in the Iconographic Programs of Southern Transylvanian Churches (14th to 16th centuries)

ADRIAN STOIA*

This work sets out to list and describe the liturgical vestments present in panel and mural paintings of churches located in southern Transylvania. The surviving body of such vestments on display in the "Brukenthal" National Museum of Sibiu and that of the Black Church of Braşov not only confirms their use in religious services, but also the fact that they served as models for Transylvanian ecclesiastical painting. Of Western derivation, this type of vestment reflects a way of thinking and stands testament to social status or to the different hierarchies within the church. It is, at the same time, an indication of the development of this kind of craft, produced by specialized workshops.

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The large amount and variety of lay and clerical garments play an important role among items of material culture depicted in medieval ecclesiastical painting. Nearly every mural ensemble, as well as countless polyptychs which at that time were placed on the table of the holy Altar, portray Catholic clerics or the holy martyr saints of the church. The painted image, along with its symbolic value, welcomes the believers, showing them, in easily identifiable images, the respective people and events. Depictions of the Christ, the Virgin Mary, the holy Fathers of the Church therefore come to life, familiar and close to the believers who take part in religious ceremonies inside religious monuments. Christian iconography is meant to be symbolic, but here the message appears through both image and word. The iconographic program represents the message addressed to all those partaking in the Holy Liturgy concerning *The Heavenly Kingdom*, but also the path a Christian must follow in order to reach that objective. Entering *God's Kingdom* and thus attaining salvation by following the Church's precepts seems, by means of images, more easily understood by believers. Acceptance of martyrdom and transcendence of suffering and hardships find their way into the representations of the saints.

In this paper, we shall attempt to itemize liturgical vestments identified in mural painting and ecclesiastical painting present in southern

* Adrian Stoia, PhD, "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu, Romania. Address: Str. Primăverii 12, 550241 Sibiu, Romania; e-mail: adistoia@yahoo.com.