

The program of this most recent edition of the regular conference organized by the Department of Medieval Studies featured a lively interest into the Moldavian heritage, only three of the interventions falling outside this research area.

One of those was the opening presentation, which established a novelty within this scientific event, as it was intended as a keynote speech. This was delivered by MARIUS PORUMB (*The Romanian Academy*), who imparted the audience with a comprehensive evaluation of a less frequently revisited heritage – the organs preserved in Transylvanian churches. In his lecture, *The Prospect – The Apparent Part of an Organ. Prolegomena to an Inventory of Organs in Romania*, Professor Porumb presented in fact an abstract of a broader inquiry he pursued within a research grant of the Faculty of Music at the West University in Timisoara, *The Inventory of Organs in Romania*, financed, between 2006 and 2008, by CNC SIS (The National Council for Research within the Higher Education System). Targeting the aesthetic relevance of this crucial feature of any Catholic or Protestant church ambient, the speaker briefly insisted upon the major milestones in the history of organ building in Romania, starting from the most ancient instruments, such as the one preserved in the main Protestant church from Sibiu (Hermannstadt), a work of the year 1672, up to those of 20th century, such as the organs preserved in Bucharest, at the Catholic Cathedral of St Joseph and in the Romanian Athenaeum, assembled both in 1939.

The talk given by VLAD BEDROS, *The Cypress Chest from Putna Monastery*, drew attention back to an art object which fascinated many earlier scholars, who were even tempted to consider it as a work of the 14th century. Stylistic analysis revealed however that the chest belongs in fact to the 15th century, but more precise dating and localisation are still underway. The paper presented two possible counterparts, products of northern Italian workshops: the wedding chest from *Museo di Arti applicate – Castelo Sforzesco* (Milan) and the chest from *Museo Civico di Arte industriale e Galleria Davia Bargellini* (Bologna). The second object displays the closest technical and iconographic similitudes with the cypress chest from Putna monastery. The choice of wood essence and the intaglio technique hint, in both cases (Bologna and Putna), at the craftsmanship of workshops from Carinthia, Switzerland, Austria, Bavaria, Alto Adige and Tirol, areas where the collections of decorative and applied art should be further scrutinized, with a view to identifying closer parallels to the piece of furniture preserved in Moldavia.

Two interventions during the first day of the conference targeted Tismana monastery, one of the monuments scheduled for restoration throughout 2011. The first one, held by IOANA IANCOVESCU, presented, under the title *Two 'New' Images from Tismana*, two scenes from the original layer of wall

YEARLY SYMPOSIUM OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF MEDIEVAL ART
AT “G. OPRESCU” INSTITUTE OF ART HISTORY
IN BUCHAREST:
*RECENT OUTCOME IN THE INVESTIGATION
OF MEDIEVAL ART IN ROMANIA*

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paintings, dated by the votive inscription in 1564, and replaced in the 18th century within the whole nave by a new fresco decoration; the fragments were discovered behind the wooden iconostasis (1755–1756), in the course of restoration procedures. They depict an episode from the *Bringing of Pilate's Sentence* (in the south) – an exceptional occurrence in Wallachian painting, but a common place in Macedonia, North-Western Greece and Moldavia throughout the 15th century – and the apostles Peter and John in front of the empty tomb of Christ (in the north). These images are stylistically consistent with those from the narthex, which belong to the same interval. The fact that the two scenes were concealed by the Apostles' tier of the extant iconostasis prove that the one which was in place during the 16th century featured only one row of icons above the ground tier, a precious piece of evidence, given the scarce information concerning iconostases in Wallachia throughout that interval.

The second presentation envisaging this Wallachian monument, *New Materials Concerning the Outer Decoration of the Parekklesion in Tismana Monastery*, given by MARIA DUMBRĂVICIAN and IOANA OLTEANU (*National University of Arts, Faber Studio*), brought to the interest of the academic community a recent outcome in the conservation operations: a glimpse at the original aspect of the parekklesion of St Nicholas, built at Tismana in 1650 by Matthew Basarab; the chapel was surrounded by a graveyard and buildings with sanitary functions. The edifice, which underwent much deterioration and several repair interventions, was scheduled in 2011 for preservation works, which included the setting up of a collector drain for rain

water. During the digging of the trench, a major discovery was made, concerning the original aspect of the façades. Their masonry consisted of faced tufa blocks, framed by brick courses. Just like the catholicon of the monastery and like many other contemporary churches, the parekklesion featured pseudo-cloisonné facing; the tufa blocks were coated with a layer of quicklime plaster, which also received a sgraffito finishing which bestowed to the panels a certain similitude with limestone blocks. The bricks were left visible, their joints being however highlighted by incisions made in the freshly laid mortar; such cladding was successfully concealing the currently exposed imperfections of the masonry. A second layer of outer decoration was also revealed, corresponding to a later and higher ground level within the premises; this secondary decoration consisted of pseudo-marble facing, painted on quicklime plaster. The scarce documentary evidence makes any dating tentative quite difficult, but one should however note that such decoration would suit better an inner space (an enclosed exonarthex, cells built next to the chapel) rather than a façade.

The church in Lujeni (nowadays in Chernivtsi Oblast, Ukraine), built by Theodore Vitold, a Lithuanian nobleman in the service of voivode Iliș (Lige), within an interval delimited by the years 1452 and 1456, was addressed by CONSTANTIN CIOBANU in his paper, *The Iconographic Program in Lujeni*. Coming from a period prior to the enthronement of Stephen the Great, the wall painting of this monuments represent a landmark in the research of medieval art in Moldavia, and was targeted by many previous scholars, starting with priest Dimitrie Dan, who wrote, in 1893, a pioneering study concerning this church, followed by other Romanian (I. D. Ștefănescu, Gheorghe Balș, Virgil Vătășianu, Sorin Ulea, Vasile Drăguț), Ukrainian (Grigori Logvine), Russian (David Goberman) and Moldavian authors (Emil Drajnev). The presentation intended to acquaint the local academic community with the iconographic program of the nave and of the narthex, recently recovered through conservation operations. On the western wall of the nave, the restorers were able to uncover a tier of fresco decoration depicting the *Passions*. The eastern wall in the narthex preserved a large image of the *Last Judgement*. The western wall in this space displayed five tiers; the subjects in the upper course were not yet clearly identified, while the second contained portraits of saintly bishops. On the third and fourth registers the images belonged to the cycle of the *Menologion* whereas the fifth row of paintings preserved only two fragmentary episodes from the *Life of Saint Nicholas*. The decoration of the vault was totally lost; on the northern and southern walls only the lower areas of wall painting still hold on, halfway up.

The Moldavian heritage was addressed from another perspective in the last intervention during the first day of the symposium by TEREZA SINIGALIA, who delivered the presentation *An Overlooked Document from the Archives of CMI (The Commission for Historical Monuments) and the Issue*

of Wall Painting Restoration in Bukovina. The archives, now preserved within the National Institute for Cultural Heritage, contain only one file regarding the preservation of historical monuments in that area, file which withholds a document issued in 1920 by the CMI Section for Bukovina, established after the creation of Greater Romania. Its text speaks of the prospect to carry on the restoration of the outer wall paintings in Moldovița monastery, a project started in 1914, but nonetheless suspended at the outbreak of the Great War; the regional Commission was interested in keeping on with such endeavour and was suggesting that, if possible, the painter Balla from Vienna, who was in charge during the earlier stage, should be invited to draw these operations to a close. The central Commission expresses its agreement, provided that Romanian students from Beaux-Arts be also included in the process and be henceforth instructed as restorers, the Romanian kingdom being, at that time, still quite short of specialists in this field.

The second day of the conference opened with the paper entitled *The Wall Paintings in the Church of Saint Nicholas at Bălinești: Preliminary Drawings Discovered in the Narthex*, presented by GEANINA DECIU (*Giacorest*). Her talk focused upon a striking feature, uncovered during the complex preservation work which is underway in the monument and which shed new light upon issues concerning the making of colour layers, of plasters and even of the masonry. As early as the year 2006, several drawings executed with a red pigment beneath the *intonaco*, but nonetheless above the plaster layer emulating a pseudo-facing with courses of glazed bricks, were already observed. Constrained to interventions upon delimited areas, dictated by the scaffold's dimensions, the restorers came only recently to the conclusion that these under-paintings belong to the same upper *giornata*, which entails the facets of the transverse arches, above the capitals of the four pilasters. These arches preserve drawings made by members of the team involved in the decoration of the monument, most probably by the apprentices who plastered these areas. The red drawings are anthropomorphic, many of them quite childish, save two images created by an exquisite drawer, who outlined a female silhouette in the north and a male one in the south; hidden by the final *intonaco* layer, such images, made visible by the loss of the original figurative decoration, uncover an episode from the monument's unwritten history.

In the talk entitled *Intercession towards the Mandylion*, CONSTANȚA COSTEA briefly commented upon the iconography of the dome in the nave of the church from Arbore, relating it to earlier or contemporary Moldavian monuments. In keeping with the principle – distinctive for this monument – of juxtaposing common subjects in unexpected syntaxes, the dome's decoration displays, amongst other themes, a register exhibiting choirs of angels bearing *clipei* with *the dove of the Holy Spirit, Christ Emmanuel, God the Father, Christ Pantokrator, the Hetoimasia, John the Baptist, the sun and the moon, the Deipara*. The latter images – starting with the

throne, up to the cosmic symbols and the intercessors – could act as eschatological signs intermingled within the ‘ages’ of godhood and the hypostases of the Holy Trinity. The following tier, showing – under the figures of the *prophets*, on the arches – *The Genealogy of Christ* in its four sequences used by the manuscript tradition which circulated in Moldavia at that time, rests upon the register dedicated to the *apostles*. The *Mandylion* which interrupts this last tier in the east, flanked by the *Deipara* and *John the Baptist*, engages the apostles in an enlarged *Deesis* with eschatological meaning. The allusions to the Second Coming – involving the contrast between genealogy and eschatology – singles out the dome’s iconography at Arbore.

The same iconic monument came under the scrutiny of the ensuing intervention, *The Cycle of Saint George in the Outer Wall Paintings at Arbore*, held by CORINA POPA (*National University of Arts*). The western façade of the church displays four cycles, dedicated to saints Demetrius, George, Nicetas and Parasceve; the life of saint George contains thirty episodes and is marked by a plethora of tortures and the scarcity of miracles, a proportion characteristic for most depictions of this hagiographic material. Containing quite the same number of scenes as the cycles displayed in the narthex of Voroneț and on the northern façade at Humor, the cycle from Arbore singles out through its micro-cycle dedicated to the slaying of the dragon and to the subsequent deliverance of the princess, followed by the episodes when the saint, accompanied by the bishop and the king, is depicted in front of a church, then sited on a synthronon and eventually at a banquet, moments celebrated by the whole city. These images seem to convey not necessarily the joy of being delivered from the peril, but rather the bliss of receiving the salvific faith. This sequence of events, lacking from all other chronologically connected Moldavian cycles of saint George, appears to illustrate a hagiographic variant from the family of Georgian texts dating back to the 11th century (cod. Jerusalem 2), which permeated Mount Athos’ milieu in the 15th century. Either the painter, either the iconographer employed at Arbore might have been well aware of such versions, through the mediation of Greek *Menaia*

remnant of the Euthymian literary tradition, preserved, in the 15th century, at Moldovița monastery.

The conference ended with the paper given by CARMEN SOLOMONEA (University of Arts, Iași), *The Main Church of Dragomirna Convent – The Wall Paintings in the Nave and in the Dome. Technical Aspects and State of Preservation*, which brought to the attention of the academic community information gathered throughout the conservation procedures conducted in this 17th century monument. The wall painting underwent various deterioration forms, dictated by practical aspects (specific for *al fresco* and *al secco* techniques), while the impact of rain waters infiltrating through the damaged roof was visible in several areas at the drum base and in the northern apse of the nave. Another issue at stake were the past interventions, from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, including the paintings on the pillars from the western side of the nave and local over-paintings in the lower register. Preliminary inquiry revealed the nature of pigments and their degradation processes, drew attention to regions with exfoliation tendencies (also remarked in gilded parts and obviously caused here by the employed techniques and adhesives) and also exposed the decoration technique used for the compound stone pillars, covered with a thin layer of plaster upon which alternated areas of colour and gold leaf were applied. The cleansing operations and the removal of tempera over-paintings altering the original aspect brought to light stylistic features fairly reminiscent of the wall paintings from Sucevița, but nonetheless unhindered by this model; in Dragomirna, images shared with the iconography of Sucevița developed upon larger surfaces, involving more spontaneous drawing and brush strokes, quite diversified and large architectural backgrounds and also a variety of pigments’ mixtures and overlaying which did not always observe the rules imposed by their chemical composition. The restoration process also exposed the pictorial techniques used by the painters and the nature of pigments, specific for this ensemble being the smalt (dark powder blue), the malachite – none of them altered with time –, the cinnabar and the minium (lead tetroxide).

The Department of Medieval Studies
(This rapport incorporated the abstracts submitted by contributors)

CENTRE D’ÉTUDES BRANCUSIENNES
„BARBU BREZIANU”,
PROJET DE L’INSTITUT D’HISTOIRE
DE L’ART « G. OPRESCU »*

Il y a quelques décennies, au début des années 70, le regretté Theodor Enescu, chercheur éminent de l’art moderne roumain, auteur d’une importante étude

posthume sur Brancusi, proposait la création d’un centre d’études brancusiennes dans le cadre de l’Institut d’Histoire de l’Art de Bucarest. L’initiative est venue suite au Colloque international Brancusi tenu en 1967, qui avait réuni à Bucarest des historiens de l’art des plus connus à cette époque. Ce colloque avait marqué un moment important dans la redécouverte de l’oeuvre du sculpteur roumain, célébré en tant que pionnier de la sculpture moderne par l’historiographie de l’art après la seconde guerre mondiale, lorsque l’art de la première moitié du XX^e siècle fut soumis à une révision et une réévaluation encore valables de nos jours.

Nous ignorons les raisons qui, à ce moment-là, ont empêché la création de ce Centre d’études

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brancusiennes. Peut-être était-ce la restructuration des instituts de recherche, en 1975, qui avait limité l'autonomie de l'Institut, et laissé de côté les propositions aussi utiles que celles avancées par Theodor Enescu.

En 2008, l'Institut a reçu la donation de l'archive de Barbu Brezianu, historien de l'art dont le nom est lié à l'étude de l'oeuvre de Brancusi, commencée tout d'abord en qualité de chercheur à l'Institut, étude continuée, avec le même enthousiasme, jusqu'à l'âge vénérable de 98 ans. Ce fut l'occasion de rediscuter de cette proposition restée jusque là sans résultat.

Barbu Brezianu a appartenu à une génération brillante et, en même temps, très éprouvée. Il fut collègue et ami de Constantin Noica, Mircea Eliade, Petru Comarnescu, Eugen Ionescu, pour ne mentionner que quelques noms illustres. Suite à l'instauration du communisme, il se voit obligé de renoncer à sa carrière juridique. Il commence à écrire sur Brancusi en 1967, année de la parution de son premier article, à un moment où, sur le plan mondial même, la bibliographie brancusienne était encore à ses débuts et sa sculpture de jeunesse pratiquement inconnue. Or, c'est justement ce qui deviendra le point clé de ses études. Avec une persévérance hors du commun, Barbu Brezianu a publié, pendant plus de quatre décennies, de nombreuses études et articles qui ont mis en lumière des documents, des témoignages, des informations, des photographies inédites, un matériel exceptionnellement riche et documenté. En partant de ce véritable corpus documentaire, l'historien de l'art Barbu Brezianu a établi des éléments valables aujourd'hui encore, des connexions, des sources, des filiations, des interprétations de l'oeuvre et de la pensée brancusiennes. C'est grâce au dévouement sans limites du critique vis-à-vis de son sujet que nous pouvons aujourd'hui identifier les nombreuses nuances dans l'expression morale et spirituelle complexe de Brancusi, qui corrigent le stéréotype de « paysan du Danube », jadis véhiculé avec beaucoup d'insistance. En 1974, Barbu Brezianu publie la première édition de son ouvrage *L'oeuvre de Brancusi en Roumanie*, livre à propos duquel le sculpteur américain Isamu Noguchi, élève de Brancusi, écrivait : « ... c'est, probablement, la meilleure présentation que j'aie jamais connue de l'oeuvre et de la vie d'un artiste. Sa logique est superbe car tous les éléments, corrélés ou non dans le temps, sont situés dans leur perspective historique. Ils gagnent ainsi un relief et une signification admirables. »

La contribution majeure de Barbu Brezianu à la connaissance de l'oeuvre de Brancusi, se trouve synthétisée dans les quatre éditions de l'ouvrage mentionné – 1974, 1976 – édition roumaine et anglaise, 1998, édition roumaine, française et anglaise, dont l'auteur fut reconnu comme un précurseur par tous les critiques importants de l'oeuvre du sculpteur roumain. La dernière édition a été complétée par des informations précieuses et des documents jadis censurés.

Barbu Brezianu ne s'est pas limité à la recherche de type académique. C'est un polémiste redoutable, chaque fois qu'il en ressent le besoin, lorsque par

exemple, à l'occasion de la longue controverse sur la restauration de la *Colonne sans fin* de Târgu-Jiu, il se prononce avec toute son énergie et des arguments incontestables contre sa démolition.

Barbu Brezianu a désiré que ses archives et sa bibliothèque soient destinées à l'Institut qui a facilité et encouragé ses recherches, donc, à la fin de 2008, Andrei Brezianu, son fils, a fait don à l'Institut d'une partie, et j'insiste sur ce mot, mais une partie importante de la bibliothèque, de la correspondance, et environ trois cents dossiers documentaires thématiques. La correspondance contient deux importants paquets de lettres échangées avec les historiens de l'art Ionel Jianu et Sidney Geist. De plus, de nombreuses lettres donnent la mesure de relations professionnelles diversifiées que Barbu Brezianu avait réussi à entretenir à une époque où la correspondance avec « les étrangers » était mal jugée et demandait toute sorte de subtilité. Les dossiers contiennent des notes, des fiches de lecture, des coupures de presse, des brochures, des catalogues, des photocopies, des photographies, parfois, des lettres, tout ce qui forme la partie invisible du travail de l'historien de l'art.

Miroir fidèle du laboratoire de l'historien de l'art, les archives nous familiarisent non seulement avec un style de travail, mais également avec une *forma mentis* qui se distingue par une curiosité vivante et une exceptionnelle soif de connaissance. La session organisée à l'Institut en 2010, intitulée : *L'archive vivante – autour de la donation de l'historien de l'art Barbu Brezianu*, a été le début de la mise en valeur des multiples aspects de la donation, des efforts pour attirer d'autres chercheurs travaillant dans des institutions différentes, comme l'Université nationale d'art et le Musée national d'art contemporain, et des préoccupations systématiques en vue de continuer les études brancusiennes.

La richesse de la donation et, implicitement, l'obligation qui revient à l'Institut d'organiser et de rendre accessibles ces archives nous a rappelé l'initiative plus ancienne de Theodor Enescu et nous a poussé à solliciter l'accord de l'Académie pour fonder le Centre d'études brancusiennes « Barbu Brezianu ».

Je dirais que c'est à ce moment-là que sont apparues les difficultés réelles liées à l'organisation systématique, pratique et effective des archives et, en même temps à l'affirmation du Centre dans la vie culturelle et scientifique.

Mais l'esprit de Brancusi y a veillé semble-t-il ; et, il y a un an, un collectif de chercheurs de l'Institut d'Histoire de l'Art a gagné le financement du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique pour le projet intitulé « *Le Saint de Montparnasse* » entre document et mythe : cent ans d'exégèse brancusienne, projet élaboré avec mes collègues du Secteur d'art moderne et contemporain: Irina Cărăbaș, Corina Teacă, Ruxanda Beldiman, Virginia Barbu, Olivia Nițiș. C'est sur ce projet à peine commencé que je voudrais insister en présentant quelques uns de ses points d'intérêt.

Le projet prévoit un inventaire de la donation en trois parties – bibliothèque, correspondance, dossiers documentaires – afin de les mettre à la disposition du public intéressé. Ici intervient sans doute la clarification préliminaire de questions qui tiennent de la classification et des critères choisis.

La bibliothèque et les archives de Barbu Brezianu ne sont pas seulement une source riche pour des recherches futures, mais également une incursion dans le laboratoire de l'historien de l'art exemplaire par sa curiosité intellectuelle tout d'abord. On peut affirmer sans trop exagérer que chaque livre a entre ses pages un autre livre, composé de coupures de presse ayant trait au livre. Brezianu était un passionné des journaux, sa première course de la journée était d'aller au kiosque de presse. Il aimait aussi fréquenter les antiquaires. Et parce que les anecdotes sont révélatrices, je me rappelle que Irina Fortunescu, épouse et collaboratrice de Barbu Brezianu, me racontait comment elle avait vendu un livre aux antiquaires, sans qu'il le sache. Quelques jours après, Barbu revient à la maison, enchanté d'avoir acheté ce livre chez l'antiquaire où Irina l'avait laissé ! Ses préoccupations et ses passions se dessinent dans les annexes personnelles ajoutées dans presque chaque volume.

On peut dire, en passant, que les bibliothèques personnelles et les archives en tant qu'expression d'une subjectivité font aujourd'hui l'objet d'expositions *sui-generis* itinérantes dans tous les coins du monde – par exemple, l'artiste et théoricienne américaine Martha Roesler a prêté sa bibliothèque au prestigieux Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA) de Paris. Chez nous, Lia Perjovschi a plusieurs fois exposé sa bibliothèque.

A leur tour, les trois cents dossiers documentaires thématiques, bourrés de notes, photocopies, coupures de presse, revues, catalogues, photographies ou lettres, en dehors de la correspondance archivée séparément, garderont leur organisation première, non pour conserver avec une vaine piété la pensée de l'historien de l'art, mais parce que cet ordre a sa propre logique, qui semble offrir le meilleur raccourci vers le sujet de la recherche. C'est également l'ouverture vers la recherche des mécanismes par lesquels l'histoire de l'art construit son objet.

En ce qui concerne la correspondance, nous proposons l'édition d'une sélection des lettres les plus significatives de Ionel Jianu et Sidney Geist, aussi bien que des lettres provenant de personnalités importantes de l'histoire de l'art européen, comme Carola Giedion-Welcker, Friedrich Teja Bach, Eduard Trier, Udo Kultermann, Herbert Read, Corrado Maltese, Eric Shanes, Nora Eliasberg ou d'artistes comme Isamu Noguchi, Eugen Drăguțescu, Natalia Dumitrescu et Alexandru Istrati, les deux derniers héritiers de Brancusi.

Le projet prévoit l'organisation de colloques, de conférences, de journées d'étude, certains d'entre eux, avec – nous l'espérons – une participation internationale, sur des thèmes liés à l'interprétation

de l'oeuvre de Brancusi, pour finir par la publication d'un volume d'études.

Ces vingt dernières années, est apparue une nouvelle génération d'historiens de l'art, ainsi que d'autres interprétations, d'autres méthodologies et une autre problématique. Des aspects de l'oeuvre de Brancusi qui auparavant n'entraient pas dans les préoccupations de l'historien de l'art, furent propulsés au premier plan – par exemple, la photographie de Brancusi dont la signification a été décryptée, comme clé de lecture de son oeuvre, par Friedrich Teja Bach, ou les relations compliquées et subtiles entre Brancusi et Duchamp que l'historiographie américaine, la première, a mises en évidence, thème de recherche sur lequel s'est penché également chez nous Cristian Velescu. N'oublions pas la sérialité telle qu'elle fut entendue et exploitée par les sculpteurs minimalistes ou les nouvelles possibilités de l'art public et le remodelage par Brâncuși du concept de monument.

Des historiens de l'art tels que Friedrich Teja Bach, Ina Klein, Paola Mola, Doina Lemny, Alexandra Parigoris, Jonathan Wood, Alex Potts, Anna Chave et d'autres encore ont fortement contribué à l'interprétation de l'oeuvre de Brancusi, contributions ici connues par un cercle restreint de spécialistes. Parmi les objectifs de notre projet celui d'attirer les jeunes chercheurs vers des sujets de recherche apparemment épuisés n'est pas le moins important. Je voudrais profiter de cette occasion pour affirmer de nouveau que ce serait un devoir d'honneur de traduire la monographie de Friedrich Teja Bach, prestigieux professeur d'histoire de l'art à l'Université de Vienne, directeur, pendant des années, de l'Institut d'Histoire de l'Art de la même Université. Il s'agit de la monographie la plus comprehensive, suivie du catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre de Brancusi, parue en 1987. Le livre a une circulation très restreinte, il n'y a qu'un petit nombre d'historiens de l'art qui en sont au courant. Affirmer de plus en plus souvent l'importance de la traduction de ce livre mènera, peut-être, à l'apparition d'un mécène désireux de financer cette entreprise!

Qu'il nous soit encore permis de rêver ! L'idéal serait si la Roumanie devenait l'hôte d'un institut tel que l'Institut Henri Moore de Leeds, institution en quelque sorte unique, qui, en partant de l'héritage du sculpteur, premier sculpteur anglais à la réputation mondiale, a développé un vaste programme de recherche sur la sculpture dans son sens le plus large grâce à des expositions, des bourses de recherche, des conférences et au développement d'une bibliothèque et d'archives spécialisées dans la sculpture internationale. Pour le moment, il s'agit d'un modèle intangible, mais si nos efforts, à nous tous qui parlons de Brancusi, s'orientaient dans cette direction, un miracle marquerait peut-être la postérité de Brancusi, dont la vie fut, selon lui-même, une suite de miracles.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
**SZATHMARI, PIONEER
PHOTOGRAPHER AND
HIS CONTEMPORARIES,**
“G. OPRESCU” INSTITUTE
OF ART HISTORY,
14th – 16th MAY, 2012

“G. Oprescu” Institute of Art History celebrated Carol Pop de Szathmari’s birth bicentennial (1812-2012) with a three-day international conference, held both at the Romanian Academy and at “G. Oprescu” Institute. On this occasion were presented the results of latest researches on Szathmari’s life and work, concerning the connections with some of his illustrious contemporaries (photographers, painters, writers, statesmen), the scientific issues related to his plates and prints, the analysis of his albums and pictures in state and private collections in Romania. As the keynote lecturer was invited Prof. Larry J. Schaaf, an independent photo-historian from Baltimore (Maryland, USA), and an expert on the invention and early history of photography.

The Conference was officially opened at the Library of the Romanian Academy, in the “Theodor Pallady” Gallery, with the exhibition *Szathmari’s Workshop – From Drawing to Chromolithography*. Meaningful and pleasant events were organized along the days of session’s works: a military review dating from the period of Romania’s Independence War (1877-78), staged by the “6 Dorobantzi” Association, a visit to the Cabinet of Prints of the Library of the Romanian Academy, guided by Cătălina Macovei, the Retrospective exhibition *Carol Pop de Szathmari, painter and photographer* at the National Cotroceni Museum, hosted by Adina Rențea, the special tour in Bucharest, led by Ruxanda Beldiman, pointing out several historical monuments pictured by Szathmari whose reproductions were gathered in a gift album for guests, and last but not least the projection at the Institute of the documentary movie *The Eyewitness*, made in 2002 by Gabriel Cobasnian and Adrian-Silvan Ionescu.

In his paper entitled *Silver from Sunshine: the Photographic World of Szathmari*, Prof. Larry J. Schaaf, framed Szathmari’s early accomplishments in European context, starting with the development of the photography at its beginning. He drew parallels between the inventions of William Henry Fox Talbot, the early portraiture by Hill and Adamson, Roger Fenton or Nadar, and the evolution of Szathmari’s photographic art.

Detailed technical informations were provided about glass negatives, which replaced those on paper, leading to finer detail and shorter exposures, especially after the Crimean War. Professor Larry J. Schaaf’s conference raised several questions on the topic and interesting discussions.

Monika Faber, from Photoinstitut Bonartes, Vienna, former curator at the Albertina Museum,

presented new information on *Industrial photography in a multinational state: an example of the Banat*. The paper was focused on the work of Andreas Groll, a 19th century photographer and his “Album der Banater Besitzungen der k.u.k. priv. oesterreichischen Staats-EisenbahnGesellschaft” (*Album of the properties in the Banat owned by the private Imperial and Royal State Train Company*, 1860). The pictures represented various buildings owned by the Company, but also landscapes and other works. The goal of the Company was to state its positive involvement in the development of the Banat region in the Empire.

Dr. Silvana Răchieru (University of Bucharest/The Romanian Cultural Institute in Istanbul), in her paper *From Family Portraits to Imperial Propaganda: Photography in the Ottoman Empire*, studied the relations between reforms and modernization in the Ottoman Empire and the new fashion: photography, with the opening of the most fashionable and prestigious studios by the turn of the century. The author commented on the meanings of the photography within the Islamic mentality which avoided for centuries any human representations, the role played by photographers in Istanbul’s high society, and the use of the new medium as a personal and state propaganda.

PhD candidate Adriana Dumitran (The National Library of Romania) studied the *Advertising graphic of Carol Pop de Szathmari photo cards*. It was shown that Szathmari created and used several types of photo cards announcing each change of his status (Court photographer, medals and awards, new workshop location etc.)

Cristian Graure (The Banat Museum, Timișoara) in “*A new vision of the world*” – *Nineteenth century Banat seen through the lens of the stereoscopic camera* presented the less known work of photographers such as Joseph Brand, Fridolin Hess, Joseph Kossak-Bohr, Adolf Wippler in Timișoara and Băile Herculane (formerly Herkulesbad), practitioners like Vincenz Rose and Friedrich Hollschutz in Steierdorf-Anina by using the most modern technical tools of their time. Also the imperial patronage and the importance of photography to the marketing of tourism was highlighted.

Lucian Ciupei (Institute for Doctoral Studies, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca) on his paper *Political Image in Carol Pop de Szathmari’s Vision* presented a historical analysis of the Romanian public appearance within the perspective of the artist’s documentary vision. The paper’s goal was to reveal the meanings of the political communication, in turbulent times of fundamental changes, finalized with the Union of Wallachia and Moldavia.

The paper of Albert Schupler (Master student, National University of Arts, Bucharest) *Veress Ferenc (Cluj Napoca, 1st of September 1832 – Cluj Napoca, 3rd of April 1916)* investigated the beginnings of Transylvanian photography and the major contribution brought by Verres Ferenc. The author

pointed out the achievements of his over 60 year career: researches and experiments, with important results in photoceramics and the production of clichés on glass plates as negatives, his activity as a photography teacher, his writings, his editing and publishing enterprises.

Adrian Stan (Prahova County Museum of History and Archeology, Ploiești) brought new information on the collections of the museum: *Photographs from Carol Pop de Szathmari's studio in the patrimony County Museum of History and Archaeology*. 12 of 93, unknown photographs, by Szathmari representing important figures in Romania's political life of the second half of the 19th century where shown (metropolitan Calinic Miclescu, bishop Melchisedec Ștefănescu, journalist Ulysse de Marsillac, local politician C. T. Grigorescu, drawing teacher Iosif Wallenstein, etc).

In her paper, *Photography as a meeting place of modernities. Szathmari revisited by Ion Grigorescu*, Phd Ioana Vlasiu ("G. Oprescu" Institute of Art History) tried an analysis of contemporary art in connection with photography and its realistic statute. In the 70s Romanian art, Ioan Grigorescu used old photos as "reality frames" in his work – painting, graphics, films. Grigorescu discovers an "ancestor" in Carol Szathmari and starts to write articles on him in *Arta* revue. The study aimed to decode the approach and interest of this contemporary artist, obsessed by truth and a passionate of photography, in the work of a predecessor, a meeting of which both gained.

Cătălina Macovei (The Library of the Romanian Academy) brought new data on *Carol Pop de Szathmari. From photography to photochromatic and oleography*, by showing that Szathmari's work as a lithographer had a quite controversial character. Some of his works are presented as ethnographic and architectonic documents, historical monuments, all charming and of a priceless authenticity and interest, but also a new aspect in the history of Romanian graphic, both as a document and as art phenomenon.

The contribution of Ruxandra Dreptu (Spiru Haret University), *Szathmari, the photographer – painter of the remotness* emphasized the less studied aspect of Szathmari's attitude to distances. As a passionate traveler, he painted and photographed general views of different landscapes. Photos taken at Cheile Dâmbovicioarei covered panoramic sights intending to capture as much of the landscape. The painting with the same title aims to be a replica of the photo, only the colours are different in a light transition from dark to light, due to the perspective.

PhD candidate Horia Vladimir Șerbănescu (National Military Museum "King Ferdinand I") presented *Carol Szathmari*, as a *military photographer*. Important aspects in the artist's career and work were underlined, the fact that he started his career as a military photo reporter during the Crimean War, immortalizing figures of officers and

troops, aspects of everyday military life. In 1877 Szathmari became again a war correspondent and took pictures showing the Romanian troops in action. Interesting photographic documents were presented from the archive of the museum.

PhD candidate Molnár Attila (President of the Association for the Transylvanian Museum of Photography) spoke about *The hidden portret of Szathmári*. The lecturer drawn parallels between Szathmári's career and that of the painter Barabás Miklós and of Zichy Mihály, court painter of Russian tsars.

Ruxanda Beldiman's presentation ("G. Oprescu" Institute of Art History) focused on a less studied topic *Carol Pop de Szathmari's civil and ecclesiastical architecture photography*.

Photos of important and significant churches and palaces taken in Bucharest in the 1860s as well as urban frames become visual documents, bringing important information about the history of the monuments, whose aspect has been modified (the University of Bucharest), or has been demolished (the Colțea Tower), revealing the old urbanistic frame of the capital.

Adriana-Natalia Bangălă (Library of the Romanian Academy) discussed about *A Selection of pictures from Carol Pop de Szathmari's Albums "Romania" to be found in The Prints Cabinet of Library of the Romanian Academy* explaining the latest researches on the respective photographic albums revealing the photographer's route (Craiova, Oltenia, to the Prahova Valley and from the surroundings of Bucharest, to the capital itself). Based on Prince Carol's diary, some of the photos within *Romania* were framed chronologically.

Emanuel Bădescu (Library of the Romanian Academy), in his contribution *Carol Szathmari, pictures from the Prints Cabinet Collections of the Library Romanian Academy*, focused on the enlargement of the collections with photographs by Szathmari, which increased until late the 20th century.

The paper of Dr. Adrian-Silvan Ionescu ("G. Oprescu" Institute of Art History) *Carol Pop de Szathmari and Ulysse de Marsillac: two destinies, one friendship* revealed the relation between two foreign artists, both making brilliant careers among Romanians whom they loved and served with painting and photography (Szathmari) writing and publishing (Marsillac). Both depicted the adoptive country in the brightest colors and made it known better for the larger public, through international exhibitions and newspapers spreading. Ulysse de Marsillac admired Szathmari and chose him for taking his portrait. The journalist covered most of the artist enterprises with extensive articles or mere notes, writings that reveals their special friendship.

Virginia Barbu and Ruxanda Beldiman

