

Hălmagiu or about the sadness of a historical monument

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Abstract

„Hălmagiu or Concerning the Sadness of a Historical monument” is a study that turns the restorers’ attention a worship place from the 18th century of the western part of the country that lies in an advanced state of decay. The first part present technical data and the second one is concerned with the moral aspect of a historical monument of great spiritual significance.

1. Introduction

Moved in 1730 from the village Hălmagiu, wooden church "Saint George the Martyr" in the village Ionești, Hălmagiu town, Arad is the most representative monuments from eighteenth century wood in the west of the country. It is built of oak beams, on a stone pedestal, the plan of church provides an apse rare - in circular plan. A similar construction we find the to Holy Archangels Mihail and Gavriil church of Chieșd (Salaj).

The church tower is the specific form of wooden architecture in Banat - in the form the bulb.

Side interior walls delimiting three rooms: the altar, the nave and narthex. The altar has walls in shape circular, the cylindrical vault.

The nave is rectangular with straight walls and also cylindrical vault. The latter room, narthex, is separated from the nave by a wooden wall. Entering the church is through two doors - one on the west wall, another on the south wall of the narthex. The painting church, according to Coriolan Petranu "*Ionești painting is akin to that of Țărnure, possibly the work of the same master John Demetrovici from Timisoara*".



Fig. 1. Church Saint Great Martyr George, Hălmagiu (exterior)

The iconography is specific area, presenting nine holy Saints Hierarchs, Sacrifice of Abraham, vault Jesus Christ Pantocrator and the Holy Spirit in the altar, Judgement, Deisis and groups of angels flying in the nave.

On the iconostasis are made George the Great Martyr, Saint Nicholas, the Virgin with Child in her arms and Jesus Christ at the center and Archangels Michael and Gabriel both on the same countertop.

The register of icons has seven representations: the Nativity, Epiphany, Resurrection.

On the toolholder is the Last Supper, then the symmetrical three icons listed: Ascension, Pentecost and the Assumption. The top area of the iconostasis continue with the Crucifixion, in the middle, surrounded by saints, prophets and apostles in medallions. Deacon doors no longer exists, and the royal doors is painted Annunciation.

The painting is done by a painter who has knowledge the mural painting and whose line you can read a painting eclectic with elements of Western art.

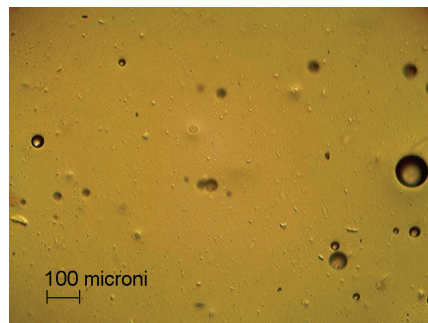
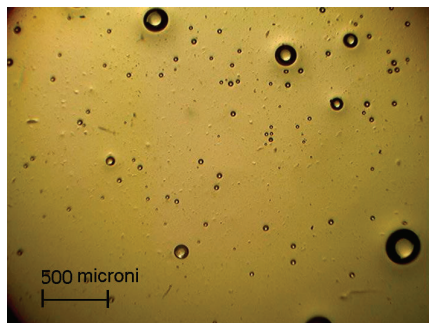
2. Experimental

The technical execution of wooden churches Ionești is realized in specific technique, the these places of worship: the support is consists of beams oak dovetail fingerjointed. The oak (*Quercus robur* L.) is part of category porous deciduous wood, is a wood with pores typical, willing the circular , clearly visible to the naked eye.

The color of the wood countertops Hălmațiu is yellowish brown colored uniform with red heartwood. The texture is fairly uniform and has a skipjack aspect due visible pores. The structure is complex, patchy. Annual rings are a regular outline.

Countertops were handmade with hatchet. They is not well polished wood fiber structure is horizontal. The density of countertops is different and this determined changes thereto due to uneven drying. On the surface countertops applied a layer of glue animal layer that was meant to link to the next layer: the primer. Because this primer composed of plaster and glue animal not had a high concentration of binder (glue) under the influence of environmental factors can be seen as how the canvas (which form of strips was applied on areas with depths greater) to detached, layer showing, on the entire surface that preserved, a chalky aspect.

The glue used to Hălmațiu is part of collagen oils:



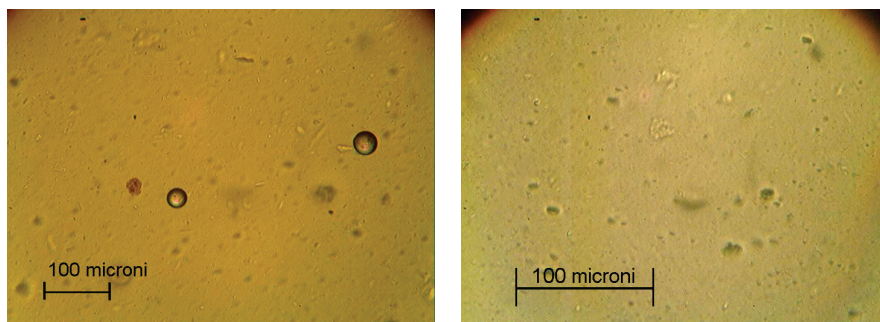


Fig. 2. Glue - optical microscopy: a. 200X; b.400X

Microscopic images at different degrees of magnification of bone glue film: observe the formation of air bubbles and craters, entrainment of impurities and is hardly identifiable micro-granular structure.¹

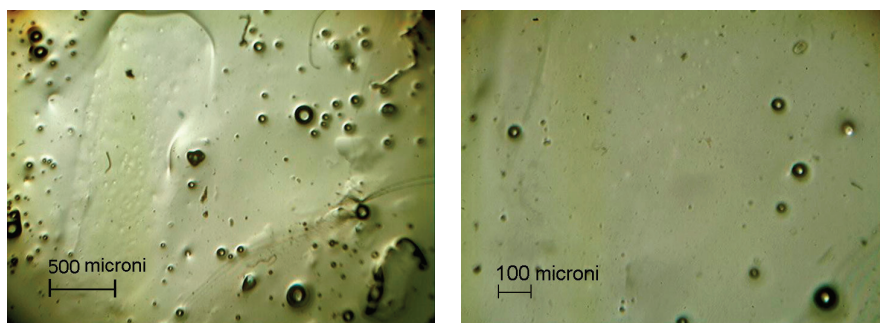


Fig. 3. Glue - optical microscopy: a. 200X ; b. 400X

Microscopic images at different degrees of magnification of leather glue film: observe the formation of air bubbles and craters, entrainment of impurities and is hardly identifiable micro-granular structure²

The strips of cloth have also been used in the contact areas on the side of the support is made of the flax threads.

¹ Proiect CNCIS IDEI 856 - Etapa 2/2009, Universitatea Transilvania din Brasov, Catalog caracteristici micro-structurale Partea III: Materiale auxiliare restaurare, p. 4.

² Ibidem, p. 5.

Pictorial layer has the chromatic formed from pigments: red, ocher, blue, black and white. Due to seepage which have penetrated the church structure over time have changed the colours. In the eastern part of the nose can see paintings with water-based colors and the iconostasis and altar - repainting made with oil colors.

What draws attention to this beautiful wooden church is that it is currently in an advanced state of decay. This will result in the shortest time loss last painting surfaces. At the derelict competed several factors including:

- Execution Technology, where we meet many tops that presents cracks and knots which led to the degradation of the paint layer;
- Excessive moisture in the lower area since the church did not have a proper drainage, which also led to the loss of the paint layer;
- Moisture in the upper area due the to rainwater - a phenomenon that is observed in particular in areas where the walls intersect with each other but also because of the cover;
- Moisture condensation due to the large number of parishioners (especially noticeable in winter);
- Structural changes resistance after restoration interventions, created pressure on the side walls - causing effect of slumping counter-tops and pressure on the paint layer (layer had the disadvantage of being poor in glue animal), a phenomenon that made him be expelled;
 - The vibrations produced by operating the bell tower,
 - Ageing the component materials;
 - The fire that affected at a time place of worship;
 - Apply a coat of mortar over the original painting;
 - The action of man who detached violent the bands of cloth;
 - Use candle inside, which led to the deposition of a thick layer of smoke³.

³ Arhiva CPB, aviz MC 216/22.11.2013 privind lucrările de conservare-restaurare a picturii murale de la biserica de lemn Sf. Gheorghe, sat Ionești, com. Hălmagiu, jud. Arad, cod LMI/2010 CT-II-m-A-02835, întocmit de expert restaurator Cornelia Săvescu

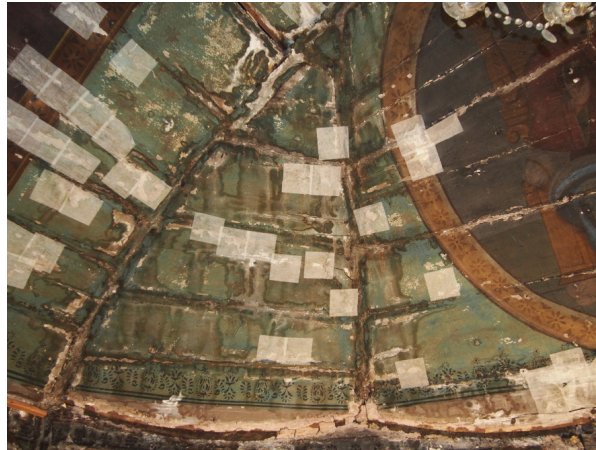


Fig. 4. Altar - vault



Fig. 5. Altar - eastern wall



Fig. 6. Altar - south wall



Fig. 7. Nave vault



Fig. 8. Narthex vault



Fig. 9. Altar south wall



Fig. 10. Iconostasis



Fig. 11. Narthex (the old painting under mortar again)



Fig. 12. Nave (separating wall of the nave and narthex)

The data presented above are technical and submit the monument from the perspective of a patient upon whom they had investigated and who was a diagnosis, but a church is more than a sum of the technical characteristics. In it encompasses mentality and spirituality a community, religiosity and the ability to speak in terms of artistic, cultural context where life unfolded in a certain area.

The importance of the church is not given just that is entered or historical monuments, or that reveal the contents emblematic historical-social, mentality and sensitivity of the community of origin, level of knowledge, superstition, the conception of about birth, life, death and life by then, but the reason it's a factor through that artists contribute to the crystallization of a style and a national art schools, interpreted and valued in their own way.

Artistic achievements of painters "thin" Romanian find their application in the ability to assimilate and propagate the current civilization. If the models used in the Romanian residential space are undoubtedly inspired by the shapes and Christian symbols being played back in flat forms and two-dimensional schematic and stylized, from Western Europe will see how forms of expression taken through tridimensionality with depth and perspective.

This style generally characterized by lines and angles in which the human body loses its plastic substance becomes spiritualized and expressive. Characteristic for of the second half of the eighteenth century is sense of the value of spatial composition is unique in that era. Various events favored by natural phenomena (earthquakes) that reinforce the superstitious beliefs of the time, leading to the realization of a large number of productions apocalyptic in that heavenly light colors that contrast with that of hell.

3. Conclusions

Religious paintings invaluable source of information for the period covered in the second half of the eighteenth century and the second half of the nineteenth century. Thanks to them we can reconstruct rural community life from where coming the objects. The decor items, render the place where unfolds this life. The painting express thoughts and feelings artists of , but also the taste and preferences of the public to whom they are addressed.

And returning to our case study - the Church "Holy Great Martyr George" from Ionești commune Hălmagiu, Arad - live surely each of us a sense of rebellion and helplessness, feeling sad and even pain when we watch images of physical state in that is. Torn and fracture literally painting the church seems to have resignedly and no longer ask help.

A minimal emergency intervention to longer extend the time in a world "without time" to help it overcome a wet winter, as a sign of respect for grandparents, would be grounds for belief that the link between generations is not lost, that I forgot the past, from our past.

And, on concerning Hălmagiu, is another painful question: How many such children sad of Romanian culture are in this the status?