

An Interpretatio Wallachica of Serbian Influences: the Cases of Ribița, Streisângeorgiu and Crișcior (but also Râmeț)

Abstract:

The present paper explores the close ties between the mural paintings in three churches from the north and the south of the Mureș Valley, in Transylvania: Streisângeorgiu, Ribița, and Crișcior. A fourth term of comparison is added, the painted inscription of the Râmeț monastery church, in order to point out that the votive inscriptions in the three previously mentioned churches may derive from this source. The author deals mainly with the presence of certain details, especially circumstantial data (the names of kings, bishops and voivodes of the land), and with the mentioning of charters in these votive inscriptions. He argues that all of them point towards a Serbian influence and mentions a series of Serbian charter- and painted-inscriptions which could have been the sources of the Mureș Valley inscriptions. He then proceeds to verify his hypothesis, looking for other pieces of evidence indicating a Serbian influence: the poses in the votive depictions of the ktetors, the iconography of the votive paintings, but also the military saints, and the presence (in the murals of Ribița and Crișcior) of the three Hungarian Saint Kings, a probable echo of the Serbian monarchs represented in the churches of various Serbian nobility. His final argument is that the Serbian influence may have taken the form of a stimulus diffusion, a type of cultural transfer in which one culture receives an element from another but gives it a different form.

Keywords: *epigraphy, votive painting, donors, stimulus diffusion, Saint Kings of Hungary, military saints.*