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The Italian trend of the Interwar Hungarian Neoclassicism Art in Transylvania
Subject and main question of the PHD Project

The Trianon Treaty of 4 June 1920 led to the break-up of certain regions from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the birth of new nations. Before World War I, Hungarian artists from Transylvania were studying in Munich and Paris. Tightening the boundaries and breaking away from the motherland led to the creation of a new part of the country. In Transylvania, at the beginning of the 1920s, the only colony of artists at European level existed in Nagybánya (Baia Mare), where not only Hungarians but also Romanian and German students could learn. On the other hand, the artschool of Kolozsvár (Cluj) founded in 1925 and then relocated to Timisoara was an alternative solution. Aurel Ciupe, a Romanian artist who taught there, had a greater insight into European developments. Paris remained the most important station for Romanian artists in Bucharest and Transylvania. Nevertheless, some German artists like Max Hermann Maxy and Fritz Kimm preferred Berlin for retraining. By contrast, in the 1920s and 1930s, Italy underwent through a major transformation. Already in 1917 and 1918, many members of the Italian artistic generation, who survived the horrors of the war, forgot the lively optimism and radicalism of futurism. Leading figures as Giorgio de Chirico, Mario Sironi, and Felice Casorati have chosen the spirituality of Valori Plastici and Novecento. About the Italian developments the Transylvanian Hungarian artists have often been through local newspapers (Hungarian and Romanian), catalogs and photo-reproductions. Some of them came to Italy with external support, like Albert Nagy and Fülöp Antal Andor. Others, such as Ferenc Gáll, Béla Varga Mágori, and Zoltán Borberek Kovács, went to the Hungarian Academy of Rome. Apart from them, the art of persons like Tasso Marchini and Emil Z. Vásárhelyi also showed the influence of Italian modern neoclassicism. It can be attributed to this that in 1922 the first Romanian Artist House in Rome was established. The scholars who studied there they spread the Italian language of this understated modernism through the Salonul Oficial of Bucharest and the Collective Transylvanian exhibitions. With my presentation I would like to clarify the impact of the visual spirit of Italian modernism in the art of the Central European region.

Methodological and analytical approach

During my lecture, I'm going to use two approaches from a methodological point of view. The first is the applicability of the concepts of "center" and "periphery" in the subject matter. The other is a description of the concept of Transylvanian neoclassicism as a new avant-garde. In the first case,, a deceased art historian, wrote *Why Spatial* in 2016? I will recline on the study called *Why Spatial? Time and periphery* of Foteini Vlachou, deceased art historian. The Greek art historian treats the concept of "periphery" as a passive factor against the technician term of "center". According to this, this dichotomy is based on aesthetic ideals and stylistic principles. In that time in Transylvania the Italian modernist art was considered as a third direction compared to the naturalist-impressionism of the Artist's Colony of Baia Mare, and the Ecole de Paris. Transylvanian artists wanted to play a central role in European painting, but geographic and historical relations closed them into a peripheral context. As a result, Transylvanian Hungarian artists wanted to break out of a peripheral and regional art environment. On the other hand, I'm questioning the fact that the Middle East European neoclassicism was ever a conservative visual spirituality. The shock of the First World War and the emergence of the new world order led to a retreat from an optimistic view to a more restrained spirituality. Although in Romania the "Contimporanul" magazine existed as a significant avant-garde movement, however the national spirituality had a pluralistic profile. Within this, neoclassicism was used to emphasize Italian modernity.