

NEW DISCOVERIES ABOUT THE MURALS IN THE CHAPEL OF TURJAK CASTLE, SLOVENIA

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The present article focuses on a mural painting initially included in the digital corpus of medieval mural painting in Slovenia until approximately 1380.¹ During the research, however, it turned out that the dating published in the literature was incorrect. Several such cases were identified during the preparation of the corpus. However, the one presented below was one of the most difficult to solve, as it involves a mural that is barely mentioned in the literature and extremely poorly preserved: the mural in the Turjak Castle Romanesque chapel.

Turjak Castle, located about twenty kilometres southeast of Ljubljana, is one of the most prominent and recognisable examples of castle architecture in Slovenia (Fig. 1). It played a visible role in the Slovenian art, religious, economic, political, and military history in several historical periods from the Middle Ages to World War II.² Architecturally, the castle now presents itself as a purely Renaissance building. However, it still contains well-preserved parts of the Romanesque and Gothic phases of its construction.³ The castle chapel of St Pancras⁴ represents one of the most impressive remains of the medieval building. Its late Gothic mural is one of the most exquisite monuments of medieval mural painting in Slovenia (Fig. 2). The painting is distinguished by a row of coats of arms at the vault's apex, while the walls feature scenes that have not been entirely

¹ The digital corpus is the result of the research project titled *Transformations – From Material to Virtual. Digital Corpus of Mural Painting – New Dimensions of Medieval Art Research in Slovenia* (J6-2587), co-funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency. The project website can be found at: <https://uifs.zrc-sazu.si/en/> programi-in-projekti/transformations-material-virtual-digital-corpus-mural-painting-new-dimensions.

² *Grad Turjak 2020* is an extremely comprehensive interdisciplinary monograph, providing an overview of all the earlier literature about this castle. It also presents the latest discoveries about this location from a variety of perspectives.

³ For a recent and exceedingly meticulous study of the architectural and historical development of the castle, see SAPAČ 2020 (with all the earlier literature).

⁴ For more information about the chapel's *patrocinium*, see HÖFLER 2022, pp. 347–348 (with further references).

preserved. The upper band on the northern nave wall features a depiction of the Procession and Adoration of the Magi; in the band below it, fragments of a row of standing apostles are still visible today; while a curtain was painted in the lower band. The mural on the nave's southern wall was also designed in three bands. The upper band consists of a row of sixteen female and male saints and martyrs. From east to west, the middle band first features a kneeling donor with St Lawrence above him; St Michael weighing souls is painted next to this scene; while



1. *Turjak Castle from north-east, around 2013*
(Igor Sapač's private archive)

St Helena and St Mary Magdalene are portrayed below him. This is followed by the Crucifixion and the Coronation of Mary, while St Ursula, St Barbara, St Erasmus, and St Christopher are depicted under this motif. These scenes are followed by seven saints in two horizontal bands. The mural on this wall is concluded by Virgin and Child with St Anne (*Anna Selbdritt*) and two female saints, though only St Dorothy can be identified. A curtain was also painted in the lower band of the southern nave wall. The now unpreserved motifs of the Nativity scene, St George slaying the dragon, and the Annunciation were once painted on the triumphal arch wall. The apse, which is also no longer preserved, used to feature Christ on a rainbow in a mandorla with Mary kneeling beside him and presumably St John the Baptist.⁵ This is the only more comprehensively preserved medieval castle chapel mural in the Slovenian territory.⁶

Before the late Gothic mural was painted, the Turjak Castle chapel had been extensively altered. It was built already in the first half of the 13th century, when it was a single-nave space with an open roof structure or a flat ceiling and a semi-circular apse. During the late Gothic adaptation, the chapel was extended westwards by a third (Fig. 3). To this end, the original western wall with a Romanesque portal was demolished, the northern and southern walls were extended, and a new western wall was constructed with a moulded late Gothic stone portal and a small oblong rectangular window with a late Gothic stone frame. In the 14th or 15th century, the southern wall

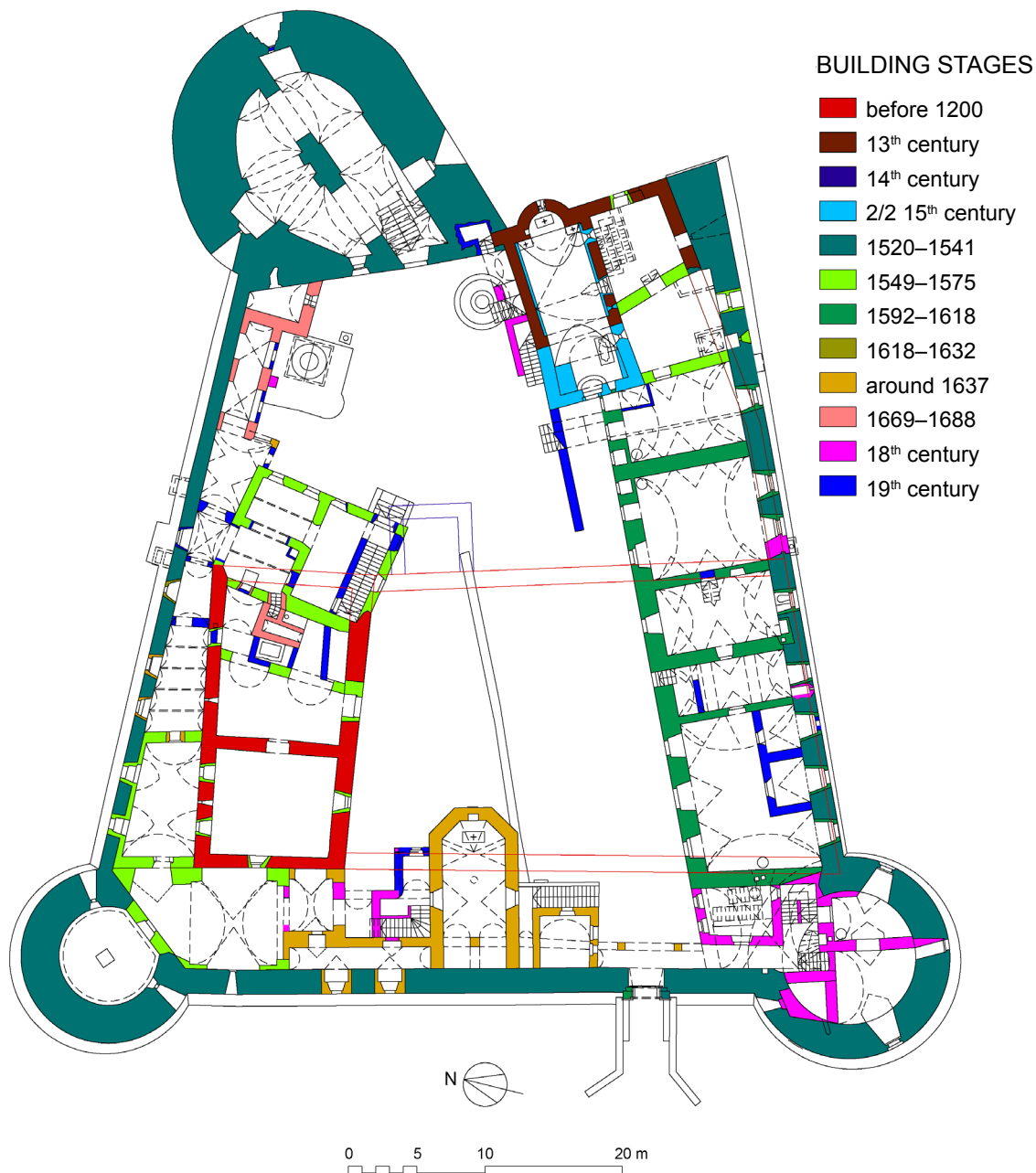
⁵ For further information about the Gothic murals in Turjak Castle, see STELE 1935, pp. 1, 6, 34; STELE 1969, pp. 40, 60, 78, 119; STELE 1972, pp. XXIV, CXVI–CXVII; MIKUŽ 1991, pp. 24–27, 32, 33, 36, 37, 42, 43; HÖFLER 2001, pp. 195–199; STOPAR 2007, pp. 59, 66–69; STOPAR 2008, pp. 237–238; ŠKULJ 2010, pp. 137–144; KOSI, HAJDINJAK 2020; MAHNIČ 2020; OTER GORENČIČ 2020a, pp. 164–173; OTER GORENČIČ 2020b, pp. 428–430; SAPAČ 2020, pp. 675–681, 747; all with further references.

⁶ HÖFLER 2001, p. 197.



2. Turjak Castle, Gothic chapel, view towards the east (© Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, France Stele Institute of Art History, Ljubljana (ZRC SAZU, UIFS), photo: Andrej Furlan)

of the castle chapel was statically reinforced with two pier-shaped stone buttresses due to the addition of an auxiliary building (perhaps the castle chaplain's apartment was located in one of its rooms). In the Gothic chapel's interior, the northern wall is slightly uneven due to the extension of the chapel towards the west. The Gothicised chapel with three new semi-circular windows in the southern wall featuring funnel-shaped window splays on the outer and inner side of the wall was covered with a massive barrel vault with an ogival cross-section made of sawn tuff. The portal under the central window was constructed in the 16th century. The preserved Romanesque window



3. Turjak Castle, ground-floor plan from around 1941 with colour-coded architectural development stages with the Gothicised Romanesque castle chapel in the southeastern part of the building complex (drawing by Igor Sapač, 2019, based on photogrammetric images taken by the Geodetic Institute of Slovenia in 2001)



4. Turjak Castle, Gothic chapel, view towards the west gallery (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

in the western part of the southern wall was partially covered by the Gothic chapel's new vault and therefore walled up from the outside.⁷ Shortly before the Gothic mural was painted, the west gallery was added to the Gothicised chapel, covering the upper part of the chapel's west portal jambs. Originally, it featured a larger opening above (Fig. 4). Access to the west gallery was provided by a portal high in the southern part of the chapel's western wall, which could be reached by an

⁷ SAPAČ 2020, pp. 721–727, 739, 747, 748 (with all the earlier literature).



5. Turjak Castle, view of the former Romanesque chapel towards the east above the vault of the Gothic chapel (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

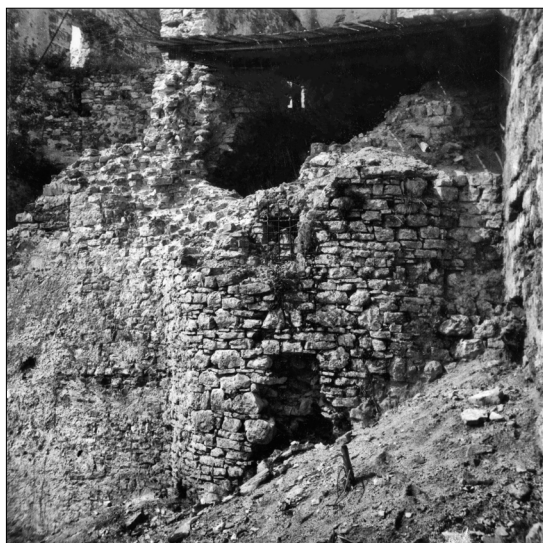
external wooden staircase along the chapel's western wall. The construction of the west gallery shortened the length of the nave's interior from about 11.8 m to 9 m, while the width remained unchanged from 4.7 m in the west to 4.3 m in the east.⁸ The construction of the west gallery allowed the nave of the chapel, whose length had been shortened, to be painted on the northern, southern, and eastern walls from the floor to the apex of the vault. The chapel's apsidal part was also painted, while the western wall with the west gallery remained unpainted.

The Romanesque chapel, which was thus constructed before the middle of the 13th century (Fig. 5), was incorporated into the castle wall of the presumed outer or second Romanesque castle bailey. Inside, it measured about 7.1 m long and up to 5 m wide. Its rectangular floor plan was thus designed in a 1:√2 ratio. The thickness of the southern nave wall was about 75 cm, while the north nave wall measured about 80 cm. The interior diameter of the semi-circular floor of the semi-domed apse measures 2.6 m, while its depth is 1.6 m (Fig. 6). Apart from a partially preserved window in the southern wall, close to the western wall, it probably received light only from a window in the axis of the apse and could be entered through a portal in the western wall. The Romanesque chapel's nave was much higher than the present Gothicised nave. The chapel was also plastered, at least on the inside.⁹ The length of the Romanesque chapel is evident from the presented remains of the original western wall on the northern and especially the southern wall of the original nave above the Gothic chapel.

Igor Sapač suggests that the chapel was altered and extended around the middle of the 15th century or shortly after 1443 at the initiative of Engelhard of Auersperg (1404–1466) and presumably

⁸ SAPAČ 2020, pp. 681, 750.

⁹ SAPAČ 2020, pp. 721–727.



6. *Turjak Castle, exterior of the derelict Romanesque castle chapel apse in 1950* (© Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, Heritage Information and Documentation Centre (INDOC Centre), photo: Marijan Zadnikar)

whitewashed plaster also extended into the splays of the semi-circular windows on the Gothicised chapel's southern wall, which were constructed at the same time as the vault.¹² According to recent research, the chapel was painted after 1469, or between 1469 and 1496, when Turjak Castle was in the hands of Pankraz II of Auersperg and his wife Anna, born Countess of Frankopan.¹³ The analysis of the depicted armours reveals that the chapel was most probably painted around 1470 or in the 1470s.¹⁴ It is debatable (although not impossible, of course) whether twenty-five years or more truly passed between the Gothic adaptation and the mural's creation. It is also arguable whether the older whitewashed plaster was originally prepared for painting because the fact that it was whitewashed

also his brother Volker of Auersperg (1401–1455) while the paintings were commissioned by Engelhard's son Pankraz II of Auersperg (1441–1496) soon after his marriage in 1469, perhaps together with his brother Lorenz of Auersperg (c. 1442–1479). Although the new murals were apparently planned immediately after the adaptation, it appears that their implementation was then slightly delayed,¹⁰ as in March 1949, the restorer Peter Železnik discovered that they were painted on an older limewashed plaster that had been originally prepared for the frescoes. He added that the fresco plaster was well bound to the base because the lower plaster had been hammered.¹¹ In 1954, Marijan Zadnikar stated that the plaster with the mural had been applied on top of an older plaster that had been hammered during the painting process. The hammered

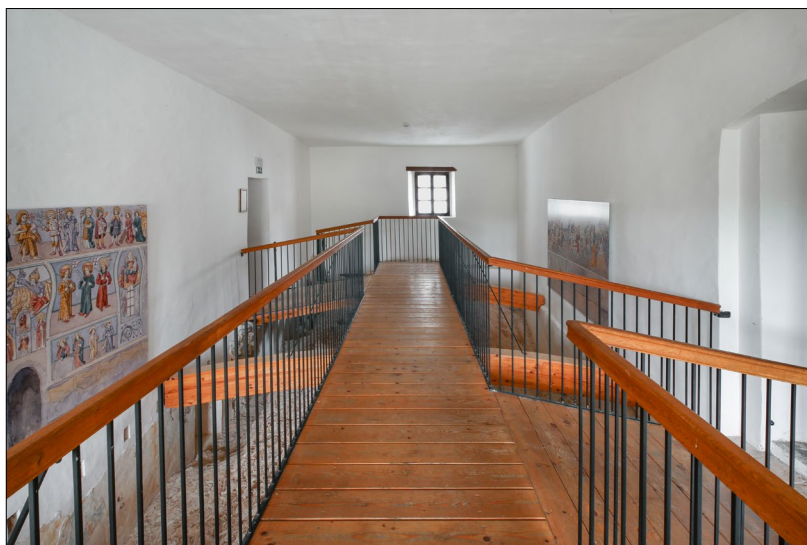
¹⁰ SAPAČ 2020, pp. 748–750. For biographies of the abovementioned representatives of the Turjak (Auersperg) dynasty, see PREINFALK 2005, pp. 427, 477, 496, 522, 553, 559, *passim*. See also the genealogical tables in KOSI 2020, p. 143; PREINFALK 2020, pp. 60–61.

¹¹ Ministry of Culture, Heritage Information and Documentation Centre, Ljubljana (INDOC Centre), Arhiv spisov, 42/1949, Peter Železnik, Poročilo za morebitno snemanje fresk v grajski kapeli na Turjaku, 19 March 1949; cf. Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, France Stele Institute of Art History (ZRC SAZU, UIFS), Terenski zapiski Franceta Steleta, CXIX, 13 October 1946, fols. 20v–21r; ZRC SAZU, UIFS, Terenski zapiski Franceta Steleta, CXXI, 16 September 1954, fols. 37v–21r.

¹² INDOC Centre, Zapiski Marijana Zadnikarja, XXX, 17 September 1954; ZADNIKAR 1959, p. 304.

¹³ Cf. KOSI, HAJDINJAK 2020, pp. 314, 317, 330–333; MAHNIČ 2020, p. 297; SAPAČ 2020, pp. 681, 747, 749.

¹⁴ Cf. LAZAR 2008, p. 150; OTER GORENČIČ 2020a, p. 172; SAPAČ 2020, pp. 747, 749; LAZAR 2021, p. 77.



7. Turjak Castle, view of the former Romanesque chapel towards the west above the vault of the Gothic chapel (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

indicates that it was not made to be painted on. If it had been, it would probably not have been bleached but merely hammered before applying another layer.¹⁵ Moreover, plaster dries relatively quickly. It is only suitable for painting for about three to four hours, after which a crust starts to form on the surface and lime from the plaster no longer binds the applied pigments. In theory, the new layer of plaster could have been applied soon after the old layer. At this time, it is difficult to firmly establish why the painting process was not initiated immediately. It is certain, however, that anything from a few months to twenty-five years or more could have passed between the application of the first and the second plaster layer.

The existing literature does not address the mural in Turjak Castle's Romanesque chapel (Fig. 7). Janez Höfler does not mention it in his review of medieval frescoes in Slovenia.¹⁶ Earlier references to these murals can only be found in France Stele's notes, in a probing report, and the writings of Ivan Komelj, while more recent references were made by Polona Šega, Mojca Arh Kos, Ivan Stopar, Igor Sapač, and Katja Mahnič. However, all these notes are exceedingly brief.

In 1927, in his field notes, France Stele observed that in the apse, under the painting of Christ in a mandorla, the Virgin Mary, and possibly St John the Baptist, an older mural layer could still be seen in some places, but nothing of it could be discerned (Fig. 8).¹⁷ In the probing report, probably written in 1962, we can read that during the restoration works to reconstruct the collapsed part of the semi-domed apse, a layer of plaster between the nave wall and the Gothic vault

¹⁵ I would like to thank Dr Anabelle Križnar for the consultation and her opinion about this issue.

¹⁶ HÖFLER 2001, pp. 195–199.

¹⁷ ZRC SAZU, UIFS, Terenski zapiski Franceta Steleta, LXX, s. d. 1927, fol. 1v.

8. Turjak Castle, remains of murals in the semi-dome of the Gothic chapel's apse around 1927 (© INDOC Centre, photo: France Stele)



with traces of older murals was revealed. It was ascertained that the nave's northern and southern walls had been painted before, though it was not verified to what extent. The author of the report highlighted the characteristic green, light red, and black contours on the original whitewashed plaster. He wrote that the intensity of the hues was well preserved but that apart from three narrow faces, a red banner, and a crown, nothing was found that could provide a more detailed iconographic definition of the mural. Because of the crown, visible at the far left side by the apse, he assumed that the mural on the southern wall was likely the Procession of the Magi, although he was aware that this was not in accordance with the established tradition of depicting the Procession on the northern wall. He concluded that the hues were typical of the period around 1300 and a few decades later, while the low crown with trefoils suggested the Gothic period.¹⁸ On 25 July 1962, after a field inspection, Ivan Komelj wrote that the newly discovered murals were most probably related to the Romanesque chapel's first construction phase and he dated them, still

¹⁸ INDOC Centre, *Zapiski različnih avtorjev, Turjak, grajska kapela*, undated and unsigned. Although the document is not signed or dated, it is, according to the opinion of Igor Sapač, a note by Ivan Komelj from 1962. I would like to thank Dr Igor Sapač for the consultation on the authorship and year of this note; cf. SAPAČ 2020, pp. 682, 735, 875–876, 880. After a consultation with Mrs Metka Košir from the INDOC Centre, it has turned out that, judging from the analogy with comparable records, this document was more likely written by the restorer who carried out the probing in the chapel. I would like to thank Mrs Metka Košir for her tireless efforts to establish the authorship of this document. Given that Ivan Komelj mentions newly discovered murals in 1962 (see note 19), the year of this document is, indeed, most likely 1962. In 1962, the financial resources for the conservation and restoration works in Turjak Castle were also approved. See INDOC Centre, *Popis spisov, Turjak*; INDOC Centre, *Arhiv spisov*, 185/1962.

uncleaned and fragmentarily preserved, to the first half of the 14th century.¹⁹ On 3 August 1962, in his fieldwork report, he noted that the remains of the mural on the northern and southern walls above the Gothic vault in the chapel were painted using the *al secco* technique on a damp original plaster applied directly to the wall. He pointed out the strong black contours of the faces and the predominance of green and red colours. He wrote that the colouring was very vivid, typical of the early 14th century, but that an even earlier dating to the 13th century could not be ruled out. He also underlined that the mural was already Gothic in character and that Mary's crown featured a barely noticeable trefoil.²⁰ In 1966, Ivan Komelj dated the Romanesque chapel mural above the Gothic vaults to the beginning of the 14th century,²¹ based solely on the light green, cinnabar red, and black colours. He mentioned that the mural on the chapel's southern wall probably depicted the Procession of the Magi.²²

In 1988, Polona Šega included a single sentence in a popular booklet on Turjak Castle, stating that above the chapel's Gothic vault, the old mural was still partially preserved on the northern, eastern, and southern walls, where a simply painted Romanesque window was also located.²³ In 2008, Ivan Stopar wrote that the Gothic painting had replaced the earlier Romanesque mural, which was still recognisable in the fragments above the chapel's Gothic vault.²⁴ Already in 2006, in a presentation of the restoration works in the castle, Mojca Arh Kos stated that fragments of a late Romanesque mural were visible above the chapel's Gothic vault.²⁵ In 2020, she wrote once again that "preserved fragments of a late Romanesque mural are still visible" above the vault of the Turjak Castle's Gothic chapel.²⁶

Igor Sapač wrote somewhat more extensively about the mural in the Romanesque chapel. In his presentation of the architectural and historical development of Turjak Castle, he summarised that the new Gothicised chapel's vault covered the earlier figural mural paintings from the first half of the 14th century, visible above the chapel.²⁷ According to Ivan Komelj's dating of the figural painting in the Romanesque chapel to the early 14th century, Sapač assumed that it was painted after 1318 when the castle had been additionally secured and fortified, and its wooden parts, in particular, had been renovated. Igor Sapač expressed a well-founded opinion that the murals in the apse – which, as mentioned above, France Stele had noticed under the Gothic

¹⁹ INDOC Centre, Arhiv spisov, 185/1962, Ivan Komelj, Poročilo o službenem potovanju na Turjak, 25 July 1962.

²⁰ INDOC Centre, Arhiv spisov, 185/1962, Ivan Komelj, Poročilo o službenem potovanju na Turjak, 3 August 1962.

²¹ KOMELJ 1966, p. 45.

²² KOMELJ 1966, p. 68.

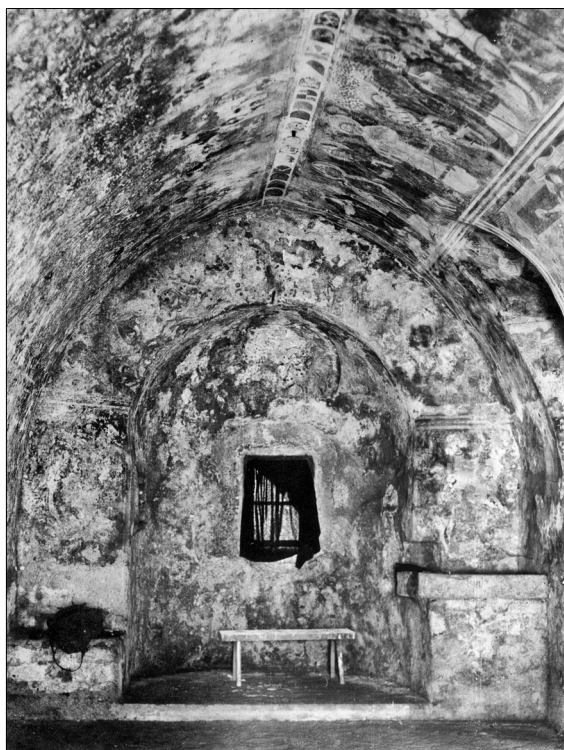
²³ ŠEGA 1988, p. 31.

²⁴ STOPAR 2008, p. 237.

²⁵ ARH KOS 2006, p. 186.

²⁶ ARH KOS 2020, p. 603.

²⁷ SAPAČ 2020, pp. 747, 749.



9. Turjak Castle, in old photographs, the lower hammered layer is clearly visible on the castle chapel's triumphal arch and in the apse (© INDOC Centre, photo: France Stele)

chapel's mural in 1927²⁸ (Fig. 9) – also belonged to these paintings.²⁹ With regard to the preserved fragments of the Romanesque chapel mural, Igor Sapač also wrote that they “are still visible now, and although they are very blurred, they fully confirm Komelj's findings”.³⁰ He also took a clear stance regarding this mural's style. He considered it most likely that it was created in the first third of the 14th century by Italian or Friulian itinerant painters, adding that although “only modest and poorly identifiable fragments remain, these murals are exceptionally important from the cultural-historical perspective as the oldest documented frescoes in castle chapels in the Slovenian area and one of the few from the period before the middle of the 14th century in this territory”.³¹ He added that the murals had been fully uncovered and restored after Komelj had written both notes in the first half of the 1960s. He also underlined that traces of the mural were

still clearly visible on the remains of the Romanesque window splay and that “sacred heads with halos and light green, ochre, and black hues” were also clearly discernible.³²

In the last article on Turjak Castle's medieval chapel, Katja Mahnič summarises that the preserved fragments of the Romanesque chapel's mural were first discovered in 1962 when Ivan Komelj assumed that the southern nave wall had been decorated with the Procession of the Magi and dated it to the beginning of the 14th century. Meanwhile, some thirty years earlier, France Stele could still see the remains of an earlier mural in the apse as well but could no longer identify the individual motifs. When the chapel was extended and vaulted in the middle of the

²⁸ See note 17.

²⁹ SAPAČ 2020, p. 735.

³⁰ SAPAČ 2020, p. 682.

³¹ SAPAČ 2020, p. 682.

³² SAPAČ 2020, pp. 682–683.

15th century, the mural was first covered with plaster, which was then hammered before new frescoes were painted.³³ The author relied on Igor Sapač's findings about the castle's architectural and historical development, and she also wrote that the chapel's first mural could be dated based on two documents from 1318, which mention the castle's renovation.³⁴ She raised the question of whether the chapel had remained unpainted from the time of its construction until around 1318 or whether the mural from around 1318 might have already been a repainting. She believes it is possible that the chapel was originally unpainted. According to Katja Mahnič, the relatively long period between the chapel's construction and the creation of the mural around 1318 seems understandable, considering the extinction of the free noble family of Auersperg and their replacement by a ministerial family as lords of the castle. She points out that a mural created around 1318 would have had a considerable symbolic significance, as it could have been perceived as an act of consolidating the family's self-identity established through *memoria*.³⁵ Mahnič then continues: "Regardless of whether the old castle chapel was, in fact, painted only as late as in 1318 or earlier, we cannot say much about its decoration. Therefore, we cannot judge the totality of the visual indications that established it as a memorial space. The mural's surviving fragments indicate that the southern nave wall featured the Procession of the Magi scene. Regardless of the unusual placement of this scene on the southern wall, its choice is not surprising /.../."³⁶

This concludes what can be read in the existing literature about the preserved mural layer in the Turjak Castle Romanesque chapel. What is missing is a presentation and an attempt to identify the still visible motifs and a more appropriate or expert dating of the murals in relation to their iconography and style because dating based on colours is quite problematic, questionable, and unreliable. The abovementioned assumption that the Procession of the Magi is "probably" depicted on the southern wall is the only note regarding the mural's iconographic programme.³⁷ The word "probably" was later omitted in the subsequent publications by other authors, and the depiction of the Procession on the southern wall became a fact. The dating to around 1300 or shortly after also became undisputed, though limited to around 1318. *In situ*, however, much more can be seen than what has been described in the literature. Furthermore, the identification of the iconographic scenes adorning the walls of Turjak Castle's Romanesque chapel and the manner of their depiction allow for a much more appropriate dating. Therefore, it is possible to ascertain much more than the literature suggests.

³³ MAHNIČ 2020, pp. 279–280. That the first murals in the chapel were painted in the first half of the 14th century is also summed up by KOSI, HAJDINJAK 2020, p. 314, after the articles by Katja Mahnič and Igor Sapač (MAHNIČ 2020; SAPAČ 2020).

³⁴ MAHNIČ 2020, pp. 293–294.

³⁵ MAHNIČ 2020, pp. 294–297.

³⁶ MAHNIČ 2020, p. 297.

³⁷ KOMELJ 1966, p. 68; cf. notes 19–20.



10. Turjak Castle, conserved and presented fragment of the original southwestern corner of the former Romanesque chapel (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

Today, we can no longer say whether the Romanesque chapel had already featured paintings before the preserved layer. We can at least consider that the apse might have been decorated with the usual late Romanesque iconography, as this also corresponds to the motifs of the Gothic mural that France Stele still saw in the apse. The preserved mural layer can now be seen from a wooden platform installed between 1998 and 2002 above the apex of the chapel's Gothic vault. At that time, it replaced a reinforced concrete slab from the 1960s, which had been removed before 1993.³⁸ Although an *in situ* inspection initially reveals that the mural layer of the former Romanesque chapel is exceedingly poorly preserved, a careful study of the still visible details nevertheless provides many new insights into its iconographic programme and dating. Consequently, it also allows for some new reflections on the chapel's Gothicisation.

The first conclusion that can be drawn from a close inspection of the walls above the chapel's Gothic vault is that all the walls of the Romanesque chapel featured murals – i.e., the northern and southern nave walls, the triumphal arch wall, and – according to France Stele's notes, mentioned above – also the apse. The chapel's western wall is no longer preserved. However, as indicated by the preserved fragment of the original southwestern corner of the chapel, the mural probably continued on the western wall (Fig. 10). So, what else can still be discerned today? Is the

³⁸ ARH KOS 2020, p. 603; SAPAČ 2020, pp. 682 (n. 127), 890, 912 (No. 1.20). The concrete slab was placed in 1964, as it is evident from the document: INDOC Centre, Arhiv spisov, 141/1969, Predračun za restavracijo in konservacijo srednjeveških fresk na Turjaku.



11. Turjak Castle, remains of murals on the northern wall of the former Romanesque chapel
(© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

only iconographic identification – the supposed depiction of the Procession of the Magi on the southern wall – correct? Let us start with the northern nave wall (Fig. 11).

The traces of colour, preserved on the northern wall, reveal that – just like on the southern wall – the mural once extended all the way to the western wall. More distinct fragments are visible from about the middle of the nave wall to its eastern end. The painting is very poorly preserved, but it is nevertheless clear that it featured a multi-figural scene. Several heads can be discerned, and at least two horses are visible in the lower part just above the Gothic vault. In one spot, as many as six heads in a group can still be seen (Fig. 12). One would expect that this wall featured the Procession of the Magi. However, judging from the still visible parts of the mural, the figures appear to be facing west. A definitive assessment proves difficult due to the poor state of preservation. If the Procession of the Magi was nevertheless painted here, it must have been an extraordinarily complex and monumental composition with many protagonists – similarly, in fact, as the Gothic chapel painting, where a scene with the same iconographic motif also features many protagonists, some of whom are also looking towards the west. The mural on the northern wall reached up high, probably to the top of the Romanesque walls. It continued on the northern and southern parts of the triumphal arch wall, as indicated by the traces of colour, though nothing more can be discerned.



12. Turjak Castle, fragmentarily preserved heads in a multi-figural scene on the northern wall of the former Romanesque chapel
(© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



13. Turjak Castle, remains of murals on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel
(© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

Much more can be said about the mural on the southern wall (Fig. 13).³⁹ The first thing to note here is that the Procession of the Magi – the only iconographic motif of this mural mentioned in the literature – was not depicted on this wall. If this motif was painted in the Romanesque chapel, it was featured on the northern wall. A clearly discernible Crucifixion motif occupies most of the eastern part of the southern wall (Fig. 14). The crown with trefoils, which was mentioned by the author of the probing report and supposedly belonged to the Procession scene, depicted on this wall, is not visible. What can still be discerned, though, is the right hand

³⁹ A series of openings stands out above the presented half walled-up original Romanesque window in the upper part of the southern wall near the western wall and on the northern wall of the chapel. According to Igor Sapač's findings, these small, narrow upright rectangular openings are not remnants of the chapel's former Romanesque beamed ceiling, but rather most probably parts of the former, 16th-century wooden floor construction that decayed after 1943. In case that the Romanesque chapel had a flat ceiling rather than an open roof at all, the ceiling must have been installed higher up. See SAPAČ 2020, pp. 683, 723. The claim in ARH KOS 2006, p. 186, as well as in ARH KOS 2020, p. 603, stating that these are "the openings of an originally flat-roofed chapel", is therefore incorrect.



14. Turjak Castle, Crucifixion on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



15. Turjak Castle, Crucifixion on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel, detail of Christ (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



16. Turjak Castle, Crucifixion on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel, detail of Christ's head (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

17. Turjak Castle, Crucifixion on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel, the left thief (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



18. Turjak Castle, Crucifixion on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel, the right thief (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



of Christ on the cross and the annual rings painted on the wood of the cross (Fig. 15). At the junction between the right arm and the body, a staff with a vinegar-soaked sponge, offered to Jesus on the cross by the Roman soldier Stephaton, is visible (Stephaton's hand on the staff can be seen, while the outlines suggest his body). Christ's face and the blackened halo are also clearly recognisable (Fig. 16). To Christ's left, another cross and a head on top of the cross are also visible (Fig. 17). The head belongs to the left thief. The upper part of a tree with a thin trunk and a bushy crown can be seen next to the left thief's cross. The Crucifixion scene is completed by a third cross on Christ's right side, where the leg of the right thief and the rope tying his hand to the cross are still visible (Fig. 18).⁴⁰ In the space between, a group of soldiers face Christ (Fig. 19). The first of them, a

⁴⁰ About the practice of tying and nailing limbs to the cross, see MERBACK 1999, pp. 77–83, 88.



19. Turjak Castle, Crucifixion on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel, a group of soldiers next to Christ's cross (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



20. Turjak Castle, Martyrdom of St Sebastian pierced by arrows on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Gorazd Bence)

bearded man, wears a tall pointed hat, clearly characterising him as a Jew. He holds a spear in his hand, pointing it at Christ. It is easily discernible that he is pointing his left hand to his left eye. Through this gesture, we recognise him as Longinus – the centurion who was converted under the cross. In this context, the distinctly accentuated Jewish hat also takes on a new meaning, as it identifies him as a converted Jew. According to the most common legend, Longinus was a Roman centurion who was blind or suffered from an eye disease. At the Crucifixion, he thrust his spear into Christ's side. A few drops of blood from Christ's wound dropped into his eyes from the spear, and he was healed. When darkness and an earthquake followed Christ's death, Longinus converted and became a Christian. He started preaching in Caesarea and suffered



21. *Turjak Castle, Romanesque window in the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel* (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

martyrdom for the Christian faith.⁴¹ Behind Longinus, at least six other faces are visible in two rows – a large group of soldiers facing Christ. Some of them are holding flagpoles with banners and flags. To the left, above Christ's cross, what remains of the depiction of the sun is still visible. The exceedingly monumental Crucifixion composition was four and a half metres long, taking up two-thirds of the entire southern wall's length.

Apart from the Crucifixion, another previously overlooked motif can be identified towards the west, on the southern wall of Turjak Castle's former Romanesque chapel: St Sebastian (Fig. 20). His portrayal is extraordinary and striking, as he is tied to a tree or trunk in such a manner that the trunk is in the foreground, while the naked saint is behind it. As the mural is poorly preserved, the arrows in his body are not visible. However, they are being shot at

him by two executioners brandishing crossbows on his left and right. The one on his left is wearing tight-fitting trousers and a distinctively short fashionable tunic with a skirt, whose lower hem concludes in a zig-zag; while the trouser legs of the executioner to St Sebastian's right are of different colours. The St Sebastian scene is completed by a partially preserved Romanesque window. Its funnel-shaped window splay was also painted. The mural partly consists of painted decoration, while stencils were also partly used (Fig. 21).

On the other side of the Romanesque window, by the western wall, another motif can be identified on the southern wall, which – as far as it can be discerned based on its state of preservation – also extended to the western wall. Judging from a recognisable staff, a bishop or abbot was clearly depicted here. Meanwhile, an animal that is rather difficult to identify stands on its hind legs by

⁴¹ About the written sources influencing the creation of the legend of Longinus, the origin of his name, the facts and fiction about him and his life, and his depictions in art, see JEFFRIES PEEBLES 1911, pp. 1–55; PETZOLDT 1994.

the human figure's right leg (Fig. 22). The two most likely possibilities are that it is a bear or a pig. St Sebastian may thus have been the first in a row of saints that could have continued on the western wall of the chapel. As the animal has a strap on its back and a bear's head, the first possibility to consider is that St Corbinian, the Bishop of Freising, might have been depicted here. His portrayal would not be surprising, as the Auerspergs maintained connections with the Bishops of Freising in the late 14th and early 15th centuries. Already the daughter of Majnclin of Auersperg-Hmeljnik (1262 – before 1313) married Georg of Guttenwerd, which was in the hands of the Bishops of Freising. Otočec, where Heinrich III (the 14th century) found his second wife, was also a Freising fief.⁴² Furthermore, Ortolf II (died in 1409) was a feudatory of the Bishop of Freising in Lower Carniola, while Gottfried (the 14th century) had the same role. Two other Auerspergs – Andreas III (the 15th century) and Johann II (the 15th century), who belonged to the inner family circle of Ortolf II and Gottfried – appear in the feudal books of the Bishop of Freising at the beginning of the 15th century.⁴³ At the beginning of the 1420s or around 1422, Herbard VIII (died around 1453), a territorial chamberlain in Carniola and Windic March, was, for around four years, even the steward of the Loka seigniory, which was in the hands of the Bishops of Freising,⁴⁴ meaning that he managed the



22. Turjak Castle, St Anthony the Hermit (?) on the southern wall of the former Romanesque chapel (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

⁴² See PREINFALK 2005, pp. 389, 443, 554, 555; cf. PREINFALK 2020, pp. 49–50.

⁴³ See PREINFALK 2005, pp. 65, 411, 441, 450, 495, 556; cf. PREINFALK 2020, pp. 49–50. For an overview of the Freising properties owned by the Auerspergs, see BLAZNIK 1958, pp. 42–43, 45–48, 51–52, 54, 58–59, passim. On the cited pages regarding the period after 1392 and until the middle of the 15th century, Blaznik also mentions Wilhelm, Diepold, Georg, and Engelhart Auersperg.

⁴⁴ For more about this, see BLAZNIK 1973; BIZJAK 2005a; both with further references. Cf. PFISTER 2005.

(Škofja) Loka Castle. Herbard VIII was the son of Wilhelm from the younger branch of the Auersperg family and Elisabeth of Reitenburg, the court mistress to Duchess Viridis of Milan and after 1414 to Duchess Cymburgis of Masovia, i.e. first to Ernest the Iron's mother and then his wife.⁴⁵ This connection is significant because the Bishops of Freising were also closely associated with Vienna and the Austrian territory in general, to which the Auerspergs were also closely related.⁴⁶ Already since 1156, the largest and wealthiest part of the Freising estates was located in Austria. The Bishops of Freising owned Freisinger Hof in the very centre of Vienna, between the church of St Stephen and Graben. Some of them spent most of their episcopate in Vienna. Bishop Berthold of Freising (1381–1410) was even the chancellor and reformer of the University of Vienna and then the chancellor of the Austrian dukes. His successors also maintained close ties with the Austrian court in the first half of the 15th century. Last but not least, the illegitimate son of the Count of Cilli, Herman II, was also the Bishop of Freising at that time. Naturally, such a close connection between Freising and Vienna resulted in strong artistic connections between the two cities and their spheres of influence.⁴⁷ In the 15th century, Freising's artistic influence thus extended as far beyond the borders of the Diocese itself as the south of the Holy Roman Empire. On the other hand, renowned masters from Vienna, Augsburg, Munich, and other relevant art centres worked in the Diocese of Freising, leading to intensive artistic exchange.⁴⁸ In the Middle Ages, depictions of St Corbinian or his cult of worship can be found in the locations associated with the Diocese of Freising.⁴⁹ Outside the Diocese of Freising, the *patrocinium* of St Corbinian can also be found in the Diocese of Brixen,⁵⁰ which was also closely connected with the Slovenian territory in the Middle Ages.⁵¹ As only fragments of the scene with the saint have been preserved in the Turjak chapel, another possible interpretation is that the depicted animal is a pig and, therefore, an attribute of St Anthony the Abbot (St Anthony the Great). In medieval depictions, St Anthony also appears with his staff, which most often reaches the ground, in four possible versions.⁵²

As already stated, the mural has so far been dated to as early as the 13th century, the time around the year 1300, and to the early 14th century or around 1318. However, do the monumental Crucifixion, the stylistic language of the still visible faces, the two fashionable executioners of the

⁴⁵ Cf. JAKIČ 1997, pp. 328–329; PREINFALK 2005, pp. 56–57, 446, 553.

⁴⁶ For the connections between the Auerspergs and Vienna and the Austrian area in the 15th century, see KOSI, HAJDINJAK 2020, pp. 319, 324, 325, 326, 328, 331; OTER GORENČIČ 2020a, pp. 173–175, 178; OTER GORENČIČ 2020b, pp. 383–384; all with further references.

⁴⁷ About this, see STEINER 1989, pp. 94–96, 104; GÖTZ 2005.

⁴⁸ See STEINER 1989, pp. 89–104; STEINER 1994, pp. 13–14; STEINER 2005c.

⁴⁹ HARTIG 1924, p. 147.

⁵⁰ HARTIG 1924, pp. 148–149.

⁵¹ About this, see BIZJAK 2005a; BIZJAK 2005b (with further references).

⁵² BRAUN 1943, cols. 88–89.

naked St Sebastian, and the saint at the western end of the southern wall truly allow for such a dating?

First, let us examine the Crucifixion. The first depictions of the crucified Christ with the two thieves, Dismas and Gestas,⁵³ date back to the 5th century. One of the earliest examples from the years between 430 and 440 can be found on the main portal of the church of Santa Sabina in Rome. Already around the year 600, a painted wooden reliquary box known as the *Sancta Sanctorum icon*, which is now kept in the Museo Sacro Cristiano museum in the Vatican, shows Christ with both thieves, Mary, St John, Longinus, and Stephaton.⁵⁴ In the late Middle Ages, the depiction of the crucified thieves' bodies became increasingly expressive.⁵⁵ Precisely in the Austrian territory, especially in Styria, the motif of the thieves hanging over the cross from behind with their backs bent developed in the 15th century, most notably from the mid-15th century onwards. From the Austrian area through Bavaria, this way of depicting the bandits, notably the impenitent thief Gestas, also spread to German painting.⁵⁶ This manner of depiction represents a specific reference to the punishment of Jews and thus to the classical pair personifying Christianity (Ecclesia) and Judaism (Synagoga) next to Christ on the cross, corresponding to other antithetical pairs related to the Crucifixion, such as the Sun and the Moon, Longinus and Stephaton, Dismas and Gestas, etc. Such a posture prevents the impenitent thief from making eye contact with Christ and symbolically depicts the Jewish "blindness", thus portraying the Jewish gaze as inverted, diabolical, perverted, and dangerous.⁵⁷ The Crucifixion of Christ with both thieves and several accompanying figures under the cross can already be found in illuminated manuscripts in the Rabbula Gospels of 586, preserved in the Biblioteca Laurenziana library in Florence (Cod. Plut. I 56, fol. 13r).⁵⁸

Changes in the manner in which the Crucifixion of Christ is depicted, especially concerning the number of figures under the cross, can be traced from the 7th and 8th centuries onwards and then again from the Crusades, especially the Fourth Crusade when many Crucifixion images were brought to the West from the East. The interest in the specific locations where the Passion took place kept growing ever since the First Crusade. All of this went hand in hand with the emergence of mendicant orders and later with the popularity of the text *Meditationes vitae Christi* and other written sources that introduced new forms of piety.⁵⁹ A crucial step forward in the scenic innova-

⁵³ About the names Dismas and Gestas and their affirmation, see MERBACK 1999, pp. 23–26, 84–85.

⁵⁴ DITTMAYER 2014, pp. 42, 74; cf. SCHILLER 1968, p. 101; LUCCHESI PALLI, JÁSZAI 1994, cols. 608–610; MERBACK 1999, pp. 50–52, 78–79; DECKERS 2005, pp. 53, 55; STEINER 2005a, p. 72.

⁵⁵ Cf. MERBACK 1999, pp. 72–73; DITTMAYER 2014, pp. 74–76.

⁵⁶ About this, see MERBACK 1999, pp. 172–176, 185–186, 210; cf. DITTMAYER 2014, p. 75.

⁵⁷ Cf. MERBACK 1999, pp. 186–195.

⁵⁸ Cf. SCHILLER 1968, pp. 102–104; LUCCHESI PALLI, JÁSZAI 1994, cols. 609–610; MERBACK 1999, pp. 52–54; DECKERS 2005, pp. 53–54.

⁵⁹ Cf. SCHILLER 1968, pp. 102–124, 164–171; MERBACK 1999, pp. 54–59; cf. ROTH 1967, pp. 11–43.

tions regarding the Crucifixion was made in the Italian mural painting of the first half of the 14th century. The Calvary that Pietro Lorenzetti painted between 1316 and 1319 in the lower church of the Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi marks the onset of a new manner of depiction, while the Duccio di Buonisegna's Calvary on the back of his *Maestà* in the Siena Cathedral from 1308–1311 represents a turning point in panel painting.⁶⁰ Gradually, the Crucifixion with both thieves, an increasing number of narrative details, and a large number of protagonists became commonly used in the 14th-century Italian painting. Its origins can be traced to Giotto. In the 15th century, the scene with an increasing number of persons and events surrounding the Crucifixion also became widespread in German painting.⁶¹ Although the Crucifixion in a crowd can already be found, for example, as early as around 1350 in the Predigerkirche church in Erfurt⁶² – while, in panel painting, it also appeared as early as the second half of the 14th century⁶³ – the Crucifixion with the two thieves in a crowd of thirty or more people did not truly assert itself in mural painting north of the Alps until the early 15th century, culminating in the Salzburg examples around the middle of that century.⁶⁴ On the contrary, in the 15th-century Italian painting, the Crucifixion with a modest number of protagonists reasserted itself.⁶⁵ In the Austrian territory, one of the earliest examples of the so-called Crucifixion in a crowd or *Kreuzigung mit Gedräng* type in mural painting, dating back to 1370, can be found in the Church of St Magdalene (Magdalenenkirche) in Judenburg.⁶⁶

In the Turjak Castle chapel, the left and the right thief do not seem to have been depicted in the same manner, as is often the case in late medieval artworks.⁶⁷ As allowed by the state of preservation, it appears that the left bandit was tied to the cross from behind with his head hanging over the cross, as the front of the cross appears empty. Already in the so-called Kaufmann's Crucifixion from around 1340 or about a decade later, the two thieves are already hanging on the backs of their crosses over their transversal parts. The upper parts of their bodies and their legs curve around the upright parts of the crosses. We are referring to a Czech work that is on display at the Gemäldegalerie gallery in Berlin.⁶⁸ Kaufmann's Crucifixion is also one of the earliest examples of the Crucifixion in late medieval painting outside Italy that features the two thieves.⁶⁹ Another

⁶⁰ MERBACK 1999, pp. 60–61, 84, 85–88.

⁶¹ Cf. ROTH 1967, pp. 44–117; SCHILLER 1968, pp. 164–171; LUCCHESI PALLI, JÁSZAI 1994, cols. 628–630, 633–635; LANC 2002, pp. 170–171, 174–175 (Textband); STEINER 2005a, p. 73.

⁶² See MÖBIUS 1979, pp. 76–77, repr. 82; cf. SCHILLER 1968, p. 169.

⁶³ See the examples in MERBACK 1999, pp. 88–91, 121–122, 124.

⁶⁴ HÖFLER 1996, p. 99; cf. VODNIK 2001, p. 220; STEINER 2005a, p. 73.

⁶⁵ SCHILLER 1968, p. 168.

⁶⁶ LANC 2002, pp. 170–171, 174–175 (Textband), table 212 (Tafelband).

⁶⁷ See MERBACK 1999, pp. 26–27, 172–176, 185–197, 218–241, 218–265.

⁶⁸ See DITTMAYER 2014, p. 75, colour reproduction 3; cf. MERBACK 1999, pp. 121–122; SCHMIDT 2005, pp. 229–258; <https://smb.museum-digital.de/object/61522>.

⁶⁹ Cf. SCHILLER 1968, p. 169.

example of the two thieves hanging from behind the crosses can also be found, for instance, on the Idar-Oberstein retable from around 1400 or in the depiction of the Crucifixion by the Master of the Sterzinger Altarwings from the middle of the 15th century.⁷⁰

Depictions of Longinus pointing at his left eye with his left index finger are rare in the Italian territory. A similar detail can be found on the panel of the Crucifixion painted by Simone Martini around 1340.⁷¹ In manuscript illuminations, Longinus pointing to his left eye with his left hand can be traced back to at least around 1300.⁷² In the 14th and 15th centuries, this detail is relatively common, especially in panel painting north of the Alps.⁷³ In the German territory, it persisted as long as until the 16th century, for example in the panel painting of the Crucifixion from around 1530, now kept in the Diocesan Museum in Klagenfurt but originating from the succursal church of St Paul near St. Urban (Hoch-St. Paul).⁷⁴ Between 1451 and 1459, this detail can also be found in the Slovenian territory, in the depiction of the Crucifixion in the succursal church of the Holy Spirit in Slovenj Gradec.⁷⁵ Fine examples from the 15th century also include the illumination depicting the Crucifixion from around 1420–1430 in the Book of Hours of Elizabeth the Queen, kept in the British Library in London (MS. Add. 50001, fol. 37v),⁷⁶ and the Calvary by Kempton Master from 1460–1470 on a panel painting kept in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum museum in Nuremberg.⁷⁷ In manuscript illuminations, the motif of Magdalene kneeling on the ground next to the cross can be found as early as the second quarter of the 11th century,⁷⁸ while in monumental painting, Mary Magdalene kneeling on the ground with her hair down and clinging to the cross can be traced continuously from the 1300s onwards, as it was not until the 14th century that this motif became established. Giotto's depiction of Magdalene under Christ's cross in the Crucifixion scene in the Cappella dell'Arca chapel in Padua was a major influence, even in painting north of the Alps.⁷⁹

In the Slovenian territory, the monumental Crucifixion of the so-called Calvary type is extremely rare. Most of the depictions belong to the so-called devotional type with Christ on the

⁷⁰ For both reproductions, see DITTMAYER 2014, colour reproduction 7–8; see also MERBACK 1999, p. 116.

⁷¹ SCHILLER 1968, p. 168.

⁷² SCHILLER 1968, p. 168.

⁷³ SCHILLER 1968, p. 168.

⁷⁴ See the reproduction in HÖFLER 1998, repr. 222 (Cat. No. 53).

⁷⁵ In the Brixen Crucifixion painting from around 1450, kept at the Diözesanmuseum Freising museum, Longinus points to his left eye with his right hand, see STEINER 2005b, repr. on p. 205. In the Crucifixion painting by the Master of The Regler Altar from around 1450–1455, kept in the Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe gallery, Longinus points to his right eye with his left hand, see MERBACK 1999, repr. 52.

⁷⁶ See MERBACK 1999, repr. 76.

⁷⁷ See MERBACK 1999, repr. 50.

⁷⁸ SCHILLER 1968, p. 169.

⁷⁹ Cf. SCHILLER 1968, pp. 166–167; STEINER 2005a, p. 73.

cross, Mary, and St John. Only exceptionally do they include other accompanying persons such as Mary Magdalene, Longinus, or a group of sorrowful women, as seen, for example, on the southern nave wall of the succursal church of St Stephen in Zanigrad from around 1400–1410⁸⁰ or on the northeastern side behind the altar of the succursal church of St Anthony the Abbot in Skorno pri Šoštanju from the late 15th or early 16th century, or from before the year 1526.⁸¹ The oldest example of the Crucifixion with Mary and St John, as well as with the two thieves, can be found in the parish church of St Peter and Paul in Vitanje. The scene from around 1330–1340 was originally displayed on the southern exterior of the nave. However, in the 1980s, it was taken down and placed on the triumphal arch wall, where it can be seen today.⁸² One of the most representative examples of the Calvary type of Crucifixion in medieval mural painting in the territory of present-day Slovenia can be found on the former southern exterior of the chancel of the parish church of St Michael in Dovje in Upper Carniola in the middle of the 15th century.⁸³ The work in question is the largest Crucifixion with the greatest number of protagonists in Slovenia.⁸⁴ Also in this painting, the two thieves are tied to their crosses from behind. Even before then, the Crucifixion with both thieves and accompanying figures can be found, for example, on the southern nave wall of the succursal church of St Nicholas in Pangrč Grm from around 1380–1400.⁸⁵ Around 1410–1420, such a scene was painted in the rotunda – the succursal church of the Virgin Mary and St Nicholas in the Prekmurje region's village of Selo.⁸⁶ In the middle of the 15th century, a multi-figural Crucifixion can be found on the northeastern side of the chancel in the succursal church of St James in Naklo pri Črnomlju.⁸⁷ Shortly after the middle of the century, a

⁸⁰ For the basic information about the Zanigrad mural, see HÖFLER 1997, pp. 151–154; HÖFLER 2000 (with earlier literature).

⁸¹ For the basic information about the mural in Skorno pri Šoštanju, see HÖFLER 2004, pp. 185–186 (with earlier literature); BADOVINAC 2006. In the parish church of St George in Ptuj, on the nave's northern wall, there is a painting of Christ on the cross between Mary and St John from around 1440. The donor and his family are kneeling behind Mary, while St Peter is behind St John. For more information about the mural in the parish church in Ptuj, see HÖFLER 2004, pp. 153–160. On the northern exterior of the nave of the succursal church of St John the Baptist in Tomišelj, next to the Crucifixion with Mary and St John from the first decades of the 15th century, a remnant of another figure with an inscription band, perhaps the good centurion, remains visible; about this painting, see HÖFLER 2001, pp. 191–192.

⁸² For the basic information about the Vitanje mural, see HÖFLER 2004, pp. 240–241 (with earlier literature).

⁸³ For the basic information about the Dovje mural, see HÖFLER 1996, pp. 98–99; LEBEN 1998, pp. 167–169; VODNIK 2001; VIGNJEVIĆ 2023.

⁸⁴ VODNIK 2001, pp. 223, 227.

⁸⁵ For the basic information about the Pangrč Grm mural, see HÖFLER 2001, pp. 143–148 (with earlier literature).

⁸⁶ About the murals in the Selo rotunda, see KRIŽNAR 2001; KRIŽNAR 2002, pp. 94–101, 189–196, *passim*; HÖFLER 2004, pp. 179–182; BALAŽIC 2008, pp. 99–107, 206–210, *passim* (all with earlier literature). Concurrently, in the years around 1410–1420, the Crucifixion with all three crosses was also painted on the northern nave wall of the succursal church of St Judoc in Šentjošt nad Horjulom, though only fragments of it have been preserved. About this mural, see HÖFLER 2001, pp. 183–184.

⁸⁷ See HÖFLER 2001, pp. 138–140 (with earlier literature). In the middle of the 15th century, the Crucifixion with

similar scene appeared in the Passion cycle on the northern chancel wall of the succursal church of the Holy Spirit in Slovenj Gradec;⁸⁸ and in 1526, it was painted on the area on the chancel's southern wall beneath the vault in the succursal church of the Mother of God in Marija Gradec near Laško.⁸⁹ Circa 1530, a Crucifixion with Mary, St John, both thieves and only three other assisting figures can be found in the succursal church of St Peter above Begunje na Gorenjskem.⁹⁰ It is significant that the Crucifixion of Christ with the two thieves, the angels, and a considerable number of persons under the cross – from Mary Magdalene and the sorrowful women to the centurion, the group of soldiers, and other accompanying figures – can also be seen in the Turjak chapel's Gothic mural. The latter example may not be a mass Calvary depiction with horsemen and many additional genre scenes. However, with two larger groups next to Christ's cross, it is nevertheless one of the few examples of a multi-figural Crucifixion in medieval mural painting in the Slovenian territory.

Based on the presented examples, we find that the manner in which the Crucifixion in the Romanesque chapel of Turjak Castle was executed does not support its dating to the first quarter of the 14th century, as it portrays the crucified Christ and the two thieves hanging from behind their crosses and a multi-figural group beneath the cross, while its stylistic language features exquisitely drawn and shaded faces and helmets. Based on the still visible stylistic and iconographic details, the mural can therefore be dated to around or after 1400. The annual rings, clearly painted on the wood of the crosses, are typical of the 15th century in particular.⁹¹

What about the portrayal of St Sebastian? First, it should be underlined that St Sebastian being painted next to the Crucifixion is definitely not a coincidence. The martyrdom of St Sebastian pierced by arrows next to a stone pillar or – especially north of the Alps – next to a tree trunk is directly linked to the motif of Christ's Passion or the Flagellation,⁹² while the arrows are also

both thieves may have also been painted as a part of the Passion Cycle on the nave's western wall of the succursal church of St Nicholas in Žužemberk. About this mural, see HÖFLER 2001, pp. 226–230.

⁸⁸ For the basic information about the Slovenj Gradec mural, see HÖFLER 2004, pp. 186–189; OTER GORENČIČ 2020c (both with earlier literature).

⁸⁹ For the basic information about the mural in Marija Gradec near Laško, see HÖFLER 2004, pp. 131–136; VIGNJEVIĆ 2005.

⁹⁰ For the basic information about the painting in Sv. Peter nad Begunjami, see HÖFLER 1996, pp. 169–171; GLOBOČNIK 2007, pp. 93–94 (with earlier literature). In the Slovenian territory, the Crucifixion with several accompanying figures was also depicted in 1504 in the succursal church of St Andrew in Dole pri Krašcah. The mural is located on the northeastern side of the chancel. However, because of the window that was built subsequently, only fragments with Roman soldiers on horseback and soldiers playing dice for Christ's garment have been preserved. About the mural in Dole pri Krašcah, see HÖFLER 1996, pp. 95–98 (with earlier literature).

⁹¹ This conclusion is supported by the review of the depictions available at the link <https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/>; as well as by the examples in LANC 2002.

⁹² For examples of the Flagellation with a centrally placed Christ and his two tormentors to his left and right, while Christ, like St Sebastian at Turjak, is placed behind the pillar that is in the foreground, see VLACHOS 2021, repr. 1, 3–4.

reminiscent of Christ's crown of thorns. The parallel is represented by the idea that St Sebastian intercepted the arrows (of the plague) to ensure the salvation of the people. Like Christ, he therefore sacrificed himself for the people, while the tree to which he was tied can consequently be associated with the tree of life and thus once again with Christ. In the Middle Ages, Christocentric interpretations were often attributed to St Sebastian. Christ and his suffering therefore represented a model for St Sebastian, making the latter a kind of semblance of the Man of Sorrows and thus a perfect example of *imitatio Christi*.⁹³

Already around the years 820–830 – in the Stuttgart Psalter from the Saint-Germain-des-Prés Abbey (Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. bibl., fols. 23, 74v) – we encounter an image of a naked Sebastian tied to a pillar, while torturers shoot arrows at him or one of them stabs him with a spear.⁹⁴ In mural painting, the martyrdom of St Sebastian pierced by arrows as part of a cycle can be found on an unpreserved fresco in the church of San Sebastiano al Palatino in Rome from the 11th century⁹⁵ and as a stand-alone depiction in the old Lateran Palace in Rome in the 12th century.⁹⁶ Although St Sebastian is one of the principal plague saints,⁹⁷ barely any portrayals of him from the middle of the 14th century have been preserved. The manner of depicting him as a naked, handsome young man with arrows in his body started to take root in Italian art towards the end of the 14th century, while during the 15th century, it also flourished in German territory. By far the greatest number of scenes with St Sebastian originate from the 15th and the early 16th century. Stand-alone depictions of St Sebastian without his torturers became standard in Italian painting from the second half of the 15th century onwards. Especially after the first quarter of the 15th century, so-called *Pestblätter* were the main reason for St Sebastian's popularity in artworks.⁹⁸

⁹³ Cf. RÉAU 1959, pp. 1193, 1196; ASSION 1994, col. 318; MARSHALL 1994, pp. 495–496, 500; BOECKL 2000, p. 77; MARSHALL 2002, pp. 248, 256–257; LARGIER 2005, pp. 287–288; BARKER 2007, pp. 106–107; DITTMAYER 2014, pp. 90–92; HÖLLINGER, GOERTZ 2023, pp. 41, 42–43, 65–67.

⁹⁴ See HÖLLINGER, GOERTZ 2023, pp. 46–48.

⁹⁵ See HÖLLINGER, GOERTZ 2023, pp. 48–49. BARKER 2007, p. 94, states that this mural cycle dates from the 10th century. Meanwhile, BERGDOLT 2000, pp. 40, 55, repr. 10, even states that the work could potentially be dated to the 8th century.

⁹⁶ See HÖLLINGER, GOERTZ 2023, pp. 50–51. BARKER 2007, pp. 95, 96, also mentions a fresco in the crypt of the Cathedral of Anagni from the years 1173–1179. Furthermore, BARKER 2007, p. 95, writes that the supposedly earliest independent depiction of Sebastian, pierced by arrows, dating back to the 11th century, has been preserved at the Scala Santa in Rome with its prototype at Santa Maria in Pallara. Santa Maria Pallara is another name for the church of San Sebastiano al Palatino. BERGDOLT 2000, pp. 40, 55, repr. 11, underlines that the oldest surviving example of the depiction of the martyrdom of St Sebastian pierced by arrows is a fresco in the crypt of the cathedral in Anagni from the second half of the 12th century.

⁹⁷ Before the year 680, Sebastian was not known as a plague-related saint. About this issue and the development of his cult regarding intercession against the plague during the Middle Ages, see KÜNSTLE 1926, pp. 525–528; RÉAU 1959, pp. 1191–1199; MARSHALL 1994, pp. 488–500; BERGDOLT 2000, pp. 37–40, 55; BOECKL 2000, pp. 55–56; MARSHALL 2002, pp. 240, 244–247, 250–251, 258–260; BARKER 2007; HÖLLINGER, GOERTZ 2023, pp. 33–59; all with further references.

⁹⁸ Cf. HADELN 1906, pp. 14–16, passim; SCHREIBER, HEITZ 1918, p. 7, and the relevant reproductions;



23. Novo mesto, Lower Carniola Museum, mural taken down from the eastern part of the upper band on the southern wall of the Turjak Castle's Gothic chapel nave, portraying St Stephen (?), St Sebastian, and St Gregory the Pope (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)

In Turjak Castle's Romanesque chapel, St Sebastian is portrayed naked, while his placement is exceedingly original, as the tree trunk is in the foreground. Such depictions are rare. In the French territory, a similar depiction in manuscript illuminations can be found in *The Hours of Jean de Boucicaut* (*Les Heures du Maréchal Boucicaut*), created between 1412 and around 1416.⁹⁹ St Sebastian can be found on fol. 21v as part of a series of full-page depictions of saints. He is stepping from behind the tree trunk. With his body facing the viewers, he is turning towards his right while looking to the left towards his attackers, who are firing arrows at him. His right arm is wrapped around the tree trunk, and his hands are tied together at the wrists.¹⁰⁰ St Sebastian pierced with arrows next to a tree whose trunk is in front of the saint, was also portrayed in the second half of the 15th century in a relief depiction on the decoration of the stoop (*Beischlagwange*). Today, this work is kept in the Museum of Gdańsk.¹⁰¹ The depiction of St Sebastian in Turjak Castle's Gothic chapel is also telling, as here, the saint is also painted next to a tree in a very dynamic pose (Fig. 23), which also partially

KÜNSTLE 1926, pp. 525, 527–528; BRAUN 1943, cols. 642, 647; RÉAU 1959, pp. 1191–1195; RONEN 1988, pp. 77, 88; ASSION 1994, cols. 318, 320, 323; BERGDOLT 2000, pp. 37, 55–56; BOECKL 2000, pp. 55–56, 60, 61, 76–77; LARGIER 2005, pp. 287–289; BERGER 2007, pp. 56–57; DITTMAYER 2014, p. 91; HÖLLINGER, GOERTZ 2023, pp. 53–56, 59–62, 71. See also note 97.

⁹⁹ Regarding dating, see CHÂTELET 2000, p. 221.

¹⁰⁰ CHÂTELET 2000, p. 248.

¹⁰¹ See BRAUN 1943, col. 647, repr. 350.

places the tree in the foreground. St Sebastian from the Gothicised Turjak chapel is now kept in the Lower Carniola Museum in Novo mesto, where it had been moved after World War II for preservation. The fresco fragment taken down from the eastern part of the upper band on the southern wall of the nave shows two more saints alongside Sebastian.¹⁰² An even more explicit placement of St Sebastian behind a tree can be found on 15th-century *Pestblätter*. One such example is an Italian wood engraving from around 1450–1465, kept in the Biblioteca Classense Ravenna library,¹⁰³ where St Sebastian is also placed in the background while his tormentor's fancy outfit is similar to that of the executioners in the Turjak chapel.

The attire of the Turjak chapel executioners is characterised by a short upper garment, trouser legs of non-uniform colours, and a crossbow. The crossbow held by Sebastian's torturers has a long, slender stock. The bow is also very long and relatively thin. The structure is probably composite or made of yew wood rather than steel. It appears to be a medium-power weapon, as the shooter wears a typical belt, originally probably with a tensioning hook attached. Given the crossbow's dimensions and the way it was cocked, in the Slovenian or Eastern Alpine area, such a military or hunting crossbow belongs to the 14th or early 15th century. The men next to Christ's cross are wearing armour, and at least one of them in the top right has a pointed helmet. The next man on the left is obviously wearing a helmet and probably a chain collar as well. These details suggest dating to around 1400 or perhaps a few decades sooner or later. However, because the painting is so fragmentarily preserved and there are so few identifiable details – only outlines of the crossbow and helmet are preserved – this does not allow for a definite dating based on the military equipment.¹⁰⁴

The literature uses the term *mi-parti* to refer to trouser legs of different colours. While examples of different-coloured socks can be identified from the 10th century onwards,¹⁰⁵ as of the 15th century, the *mi-parti* became the typical official garment of town servants and musicians, even north of the Alps – following the example of Italian cities, where it can also be found before then. This manner of dress was modelled on musicians, vassals, and servants, initially of lower social status but eventually also of court servants of a higher social status in court culture. *Mi-parti* garments often featured heraldic colours as a sign of belonging to a particular noble family or town. At the end of the 15th and throughout the 16th century, *mi-parti* garments were worn by *Landsknechts* and mercenaries.¹⁰⁶ Characteristically, in the Turjak chapel, the two-coloured trousers are worn by the saint's torturer, as the negative connotation of *mi-parti* garments was well

¹⁰² SAPAČ 2020, pp. 677–678, 868 (n. 805).

¹⁰³ SCHREIBER, HEITZ 1918, p. 12, repr. 12.

¹⁰⁴ I would like to thank Dr Tomaž Lazar for his opinion on the depicted military equipment.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. MERTENS 1983, p. 8; MERTENS 1993, p. 190.

¹⁰⁶ MERTENS 1983, pp. 8–20, 30–37; MERTENS 1993, pp. 190–191, 193–198.

established in late medieval painting, especially to symbolically mark executioners, torturers, shooters, or bailiffs, who also wear fashionable and, in particular, tight-fitting clothes in scenes depicting torture or the execution of a sentence.¹⁰⁷ It should also be pointed out that tight clothing, snugly fitting the slim bodies, and ever shorter skirts were features that began to take hold in central Europe, following courtly examples, in the mid-14th century before they were fully developed in the 15th century. Many urban and other dress codes or prohibitions on wearing (overly) short men's clothes from the middle of the 14th and 15th centuries have been preserved.¹⁰⁸ The Gothic fashion of the so-called heraldic trousers, or trouser legs in heraldic colours, was also well known in Italy. By the end of the 14th century, this fashion had faded into obscurity in many places, especially in northern Italian cities such as Milan, Florence, and Venice. However, it reasserted itself after 1400 as a sign of belonging to a particular aristocrat, ruler, or even a specific fraternity (the *Compagnia della calza* is a perfect example). In the second half of the 15th century, two-colour trousers can also be found in the highest social strata.¹⁰⁹ In our context, the most intriguing mural painting is the portrayal of St Sebastian from around 1400–1420 in the church of St Nicholas in the hamlet of Rojen in South Tyrol. All that remains of the scene are the two crossbowmen. They are wearing tight-fitting *mi-parti* pants and *mi-parti* upper garments that only cover the top parts of their legs.¹¹⁰ In the Turjak chapel, the lower parts of the crossbowmen's skirts are trimmed in a triangular shape. In the Middle Ages, *mi-parti* garments with triangularly trimmed lower hems were one of the characteristic features of musicians and (court) jesters after the so-called *Zaddeltracht* had become a distinctive element of the extravagant court fashion in the late 14th and early 15th centuries.¹¹¹ A fine example of a person wearing tight-fitting *mi-parti* trousers and a short skirt, whose lower hem concludes in vegetally shaped ribbons, is the man pouring water in the Pontius Pilate Washing His Hands scene by the Master of the Obersteiner Altar from around 1420, kept in the Landesmuseum Mainz museum.¹¹²

All the iconographic and stylistic details of how St Sebastian is depicted in the Turjak chapel – which, like the Crucifixion, have never even been noticed before – suggest that the mural must have been painted in the 15th century. Based on comparisons, the depiction of the two executioners with their tight-fitting trouser legs of different colours in combination with the completely short skirt of the tunic with a triangularly trimmed lower hem and the portrayal of the naked Sebastian with the tree in the foreground suggest that the mural was created after 1400.

¹⁰⁷ About this, see MERTENS 1983, pp. 20–23; JARITZ 1993, pp. 210, 211; MERTENS 1993, pp. 197–198.

¹⁰⁸ See WOLTER 1988, pp. 30–44.

¹⁰⁹ See MERTENS 1983, pp. 26–30.

¹¹⁰ A reproduction is available at the link: <https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/suche%7B%22s%22:%22sebastian%22%7D>.

¹¹¹ MERTENS 1983, pp. 37–38; cf. FALKE 1881, p. 191.

¹¹² See VLACHOS 2021, repr. 7–8.

Furthermore, we should also take note of the stencilled pattern in the window splay next to St Sebastian. In the Slovenian territory, the use of stencils can be observed especially from the end of the 14th century onwards. After the first decades of the 15th century, murals were barely ever painted without any textile patterns.¹¹³ The use of stencils represents another argument against the possibility that the mural could have been painted at the beginning of the 14th century. The central motif of the pattern in the Romanesque window splay is a hexagonal star with smaller star and circle-shaped forms arranged concentrically around it. In the Slovenian area, hexagonal stars with similar decorations between their arms can be found between 1450 and 1455, for example in the succursal church of St Radegund in the village of Srednja vas pri Šenčurju and the parish church of St Andrew in Mošnje.¹¹⁴

What of the saint accompanied by an animal? One such example of a bear climbing on St Corbinian is known from sculpting, where such a portrayal can be found in the early 16th century on a sculpture from the former winged altar in the church of St Mary in Treuchtlingen.¹¹⁵ In the medieval mural painting in the Slovenian area, the legend of St Corbinian has been preserved in the chancel of the succursal church of the Holy Cross on the Križna Gora hill above Škofja Loka, where it was painted in 1502.¹¹⁶ Regarding the dating of the painting in the Turjak chapel, it is crucial to note that the earliest surviving depiction of St Corbinian with a bear as an attribute is known from a panel painting belonging to the former winged altar of the church of St Andrew in Freising from around 1440.¹¹⁷ The second oldest work of this kind is a colour wood engraving from around 1460, kept in the Rothschild collection in Paris.¹¹⁸ This raises three possibilities: either the depiction of St Corbinian at Turjak Castle is the oldest that has been preserved; the entire mural in the Turjak chapel was not painted until around the middle of the 15th century (in this case the Turjak chapel's adaptation and extension might have taken place a few years or even a decade after 1450); or the saint depicted is not St Corbinian but rather St Anthony the Hermit. Iconographically, his depiction alongside St Sebastian would be entirely justified, as St Anthony

¹¹³ About this, see VODNIK 1998, p. 20, *passim*.

¹¹⁴ See VODNIK 1998, p. 79.

¹¹⁵ A reproduction is available at the link: [https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/suche#%7B%22fc%22:%22bildthema-OR\(HI.%20Korbinian\)%22%7D](https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/suche#%7B%22fc%22:%22bildthema-OR(HI.%20Korbinian)%22%7D).

¹¹⁶ About this mural, see CEVC 1944; CEVC 1963; HÖFLER 1996, pp. 114–117; DOBLER 2003 (all with further references).

¹¹⁷ Sandsteinfigur 1994, p. 134; cf. HARTIG 1924, pp. 154, 155, 161–162; KÜNSTLE 1926, pp. 388–390; RÉAU 1958, pp. 344–345. At the exhibition at the Diözesanmuseum Freising museum in the first half of 2024, the painting from the Church of St Andrew is presented as one of the oldest depictions of St Corbinian with the bear. It is set in the period around 1455, see <https://hdbg.eu/presseportal/detail/aelteste-darstellung-des-hl-korbinian-mit-dem-baeren/2898>. However, SCHUSTER 2024, pp. 123, 125, in the exhibition catalogue, states that this panel painting dates from around 1450–1460 and that it was originally in the former Stift St Veit in Freising.

¹¹⁸ Cf. HARTIG 1924, pp. 162–163; KÜNSTLE 1926, p. 388; LIEVERT 1953, p. 541; RAMISCH 1994, col. 339. For further examples, see HARTIG 1924, pp. 163–175.

was also an intercessor in the struggle against the plague.¹¹⁹ With such an iconographic design, the painting would point to Christ as the Saviour and offer believers the possibility of abandoning their sinful life and repenting and atoning for it while simultaneously, through an intercession to St Sebastian and St Anthony, praying that the plague may spare them from death or never happen again. The combination of St Anthony and St Sebastian can be encountered in Westphalia, where such an analysis has been carried out, from around 1400 onwards.¹²⁰ They are often encountered as a pair in late medieval art.¹²¹ They can also be found in panel paintings until the first half of the 16th century, for example at Bouzov Castle in Czechia, where they are part of a quartet that also includes St Elizabeth of Hungary and St Jerome.¹²² One of the most famous examples of these two saints appearing together can be seen on the closed outer wings of Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece from 1512–1516.¹²³ At the beginning of the 15th century, St Sebastian was painted alongside the scenes from the life of St Anthony the Hermit in the Chapel of St Anthony in Waltalingen, Switzerland. Also in this case, the two shooters firing crossbows at Sebastian are wearing tight-fitting *mi-parti* trousers as well as a short skirt or tunic.¹²⁴ As a plague saint, St Anthony often appears in the company of St Sebastian and St Roch.¹²⁵

From the 14th century onwards, St Anthony is usually depicted wearing the Antonite habit.¹²⁶ However, he can also be portrayed wearing ordinary clothes rather than exclusively a habit.¹²⁷ In German medieval art, depictions of St Anthony can be found mainly from the end of the 14th century onwards, though most of them are from the 15th century. By the 16th century, this saint's popularity in art had faded notably.¹²⁸ In Western European art, the images of St Anthony with his attributes – a staff, pig, bell, book and/or a tau cross – thus culminated in the 15th century.¹²⁹ The pig stands on the saint's left or right side and follows him like a dog or a lamb, often looking up at him or even climbing on him with its front legs.¹³⁰ This detail has also been preserved in the

¹¹⁹ Cf. RÉAU 1958, p. 104; DORMEIER 1988, pp. 272, 273, 289, 293, 301, 302, 304; Pest 1994, col. 409; TSCHOCHNER 1994, col. 156; BOECKL 2000, p. 53.

¹²⁰ KORTE 1952, p. 59.

¹²¹ KRAEHLING 1938, p. 14; cf. BOECKL 2000, pp. 53, 77, 138; MÜLLER 2015, p. 70.

¹²² A reproduction is available at the link: <https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/suche#%7B%22s%22:%22antonius%22%7D>.

¹²³ SAUSER 1994, col. 214.

¹²⁴ See the reproduction in KRAEHLING 1938, p. 45, repr. 1. A part of this mural is no longer preserved, cf. https://www.zh-kirchenspots.ch/content/e1665/e1666/e6325/e3457/index_ger.html.

¹²⁵ KRAEHLING 1938, p. 15; SAUSER 1994, col. 210.

¹²⁶ BRAUN 1943, col. 88.

¹²⁷ This is evident already from the review of his depictions on the website at <https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/>.

¹²⁸ BRAUN 1943, col. 87; RÉAU 1958, p. 106.

¹²⁹ SAUSER 1994, col. 209.

¹³⁰ BRAUN 1943, cols. 92–93.

Turjak chapel. The pigs often have the so-called St Anthony's bell tied around their necks, while an examination of the surviving depictions reveals that when appearing alongside this saint, the pigs often wear a sort of bandage – a white ribbon like the one seen on the animal depicted at Turjak. A similar white ribbon is also tied across the belly of the pig next to St Anthony the Hermit on the southern wall of the southern transept in the parish church of St Matthew in Murau, dating from around 1330.¹³¹ The depiction of St Anthony's animal attribute in a mural from 1415–1425 in the succursal church of St John in Prado (Agums) in South Tyrol also features a white ribbon.¹³² A white spot is also visible on the pig looking up at St Anthony in a stained-glass window from the chancel of the former chapel of Corpus Christi in the castle in Wiener Neustadt from the early 1420s or from before 1424, which is now kept in the Neukloster there.¹³³ A pig rising on its hind legs and wearing a white bandage – though, like in most cases, painted in a dark grey tone – is also depicted next to St Anthony on the winged Mariastein altarpiece from around 1425, kept in the Musée d'art et d'histoire museum in Geneva.¹³⁴ The pig next to St Anthony in a mural from 1480–1500 on the western wall of the evangelical church in Stitnik, Slovakia, is also wearing a white ribbon.¹³⁵ Given that the peak of the depictions of St Anthony in (Central) Europe can be traced to the 15th century, the Turjak example – if it is identified as St Anthony – can still only be placed in the 15th century. All the other surviving iconographically undisputed portrayals of St Anthony in medieval mural painting, of which there are fewer than five in Slovenia, were created in the 15th or early 16th century. An exception is the mural in the succursal church of the Our Lady on the Rock in Vuzenica, where the image of an abbot belongs to the phase from around 1400. However, due to its fragmentary preservation and missing attributes, it cannot be confirmed with any certainty that the portrayed figure is definitely St Anthony the Hermit.¹³⁶ Other churches that should be mentioned include the parish church of St Urh in Branik¹³⁷ and the old parish church of St Oswald in Zgornje Jezersko.¹³⁸ Here – and most likely also in the succursal church of St Andrew in Vrhovlje pri Kožbani¹³⁹ – both St Sebastian and St Anthony are depicted, while in Branik,

¹³¹ LANC 2020, p. 282 (Textband), table 355 (Tafelband).

¹³² A reproduction is available at the link: <https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/suche#%7B%22s%22:%22antoniuss%22%7D>.

¹³³ See BUCHINGER, OBERHAIDACHER-HERZIG, WAIS-WOLF 2015, pp. 415, 417, 419–420, repr. 639.

¹³⁴ A reproduction is available at the link: <https://www.mahmah.ch/collection/oeuvres/triptyque-du-couvent-de-mariastein/f-0132>.

¹³⁵ A reproduction is available at the link: <https://realonline.imareal.sbg.ac.at/suche#%7B%22s%22:%22antoniuss%22%7D>.

¹³⁶ About this mural, see HÖFLER 2004, pp. 248–252.

¹³⁷ About this mural, see HÖFLER 1997, pp. 75–78 (with earlier literature).

¹³⁸ For an iconographic presentation of the entire mural, see STELE 1921, pp. 113–137; HÖFLER 1996, pp. 187–190; LEBEN 1999 (with further references).

¹³⁹ About this mural, see HÖFLER 1997, pp. 147–150 (with earlier literature).

St Roch is also portrayed. The facts that could cast doubt on the identification of the animal in the Turjak chapel as a pig are its head and its colour, though the latter does not match that of a bear either.

Stylistically, the head of Longinus is most suitable for dating. As the upper layer of the painting has peeled away and only the drawing of Longinus' head survives, a definitive assessment is difficult. However, judging from the preserved drawing, it is an example of the so-called second Prague style at the stage represented by the Viennese Ducal workshop, which specialised in stained glass windows. In Slovenia, two works from around 1410–1420¹⁴⁰ by masters related to the Viennese Ducal workshop survive: the second mural in the rotunda or the succursal church of the Virgin Mary and St Nicholas in Selo and the Procession of the Magi in the chancel of the Abbey Church of St Daniel in Celje.¹⁴¹ The quality of the Turjak murals, however, is remarkably higher and raises them closer to the so-called Upper-Styrian Ducal workshop, which focused on monumental mural painting and was active mostly in the Duchy of Styria. The Turjak murals show a red pre-drawing with a wide brush and decisive strokes. Compared to the stylistic level in Selo and Celje, the drawing is much more detailed, especially around the eyes, and can be compared to the works of the Upper-Styrian Ducal workshop (e.g. the murals in the former church of the Friars Minor in Bruck an der Mur; the murals in the succursal church of St Rupert in Bruck an der Mur are also interesting for comparison, as is the mural of the cemetery chapel in Riffian near Meran by Master Wenzel, related to these two Styrian works).¹⁴² Analysis of the iconographic details in the Turjak Castle chapel suggests that we could date the mural to the first quarter of the 15th century. A comparison with the works of the Upper-Styrian Ducal workshop and the lack of characteristics of the international Gothic style, however, indicate that the most likely time of creation is around 1400 or, better, the beginning of the 15th century. The saint on the western part of the southern wall could thus be identified as St Anthony the Hermit. Despite its poor condition, the preserved mural of the Romanesque chapel is therefore an extremely important and remarkable monument of medieval mural painting in Slovenia.

On the same wall where it was painted in the Romanesque chapel, the Crucifixion of Christ with both thieves and several accompanying figures was also painted below, in the Gothicised

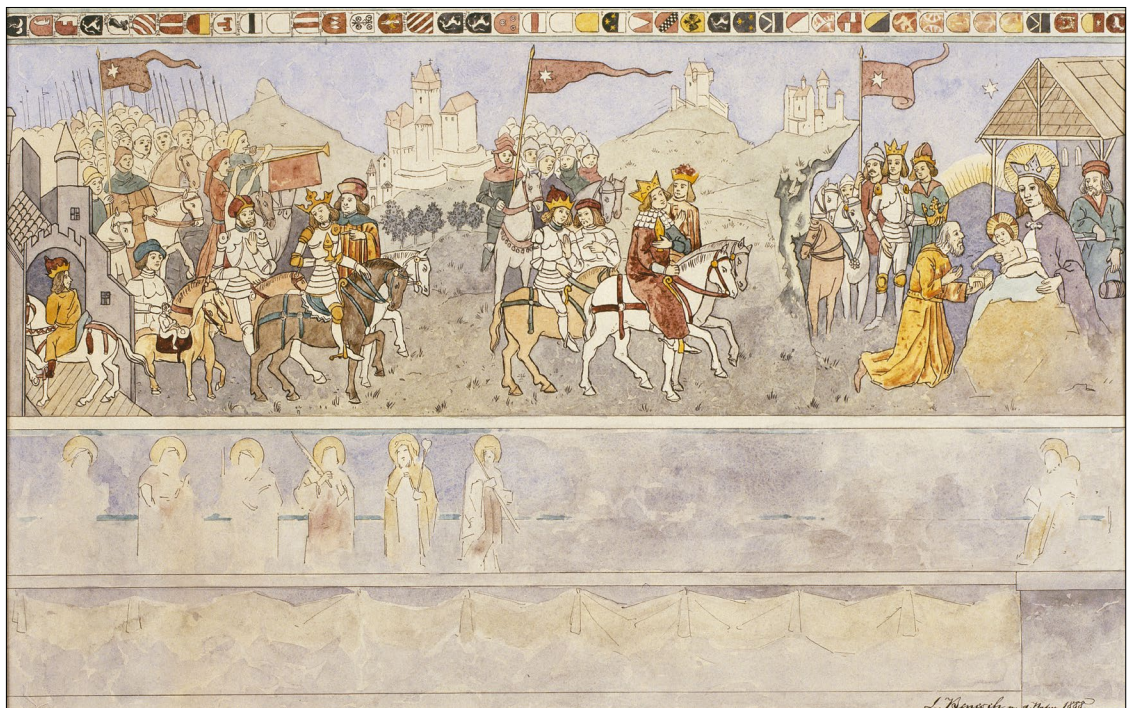
¹⁴⁰ KRIŽNAR 2001, p. 22; KRIŽNAR 2002, pp. 189, 197.

¹⁴¹ The parallel with the Viennese Ducal workshop was brought to my attention by the academician Dr Janez Höfler, for which I am very grateful. About the mural in the rotunda in Selo, cf. n. 86. About the mural in Celje, see KRIŽNAR 2001; KRIŽNAR 2002, pp. 94–101, 197–199; HÖFLER 2004, pp. 88–89; both with further references. On the Viennese Ducal workshop, which specialised in stained glass windows, see also FRODL KRAFT 1992; SCHMIDT 2000, pp. 478–481; BUCHINGER, OBERHAIDACHER-HERZIG, WAIS-WOLF 2015, pp. 15, 21, 259, 262, 265, 277, 407, 408, 580, 582.

¹⁴² I would like to thank Dr Anabelle Križnar for the consultation on the fragment, which reveals a connection with the so-called second Prague style and Ducal workshop in Upper Styria. For all the above mentioned examples, see KRIŽNAR 2002, pp. 62–72, 161–164, 175–180, 203–204; LANC 2002, pp. 50–64 (Textband).



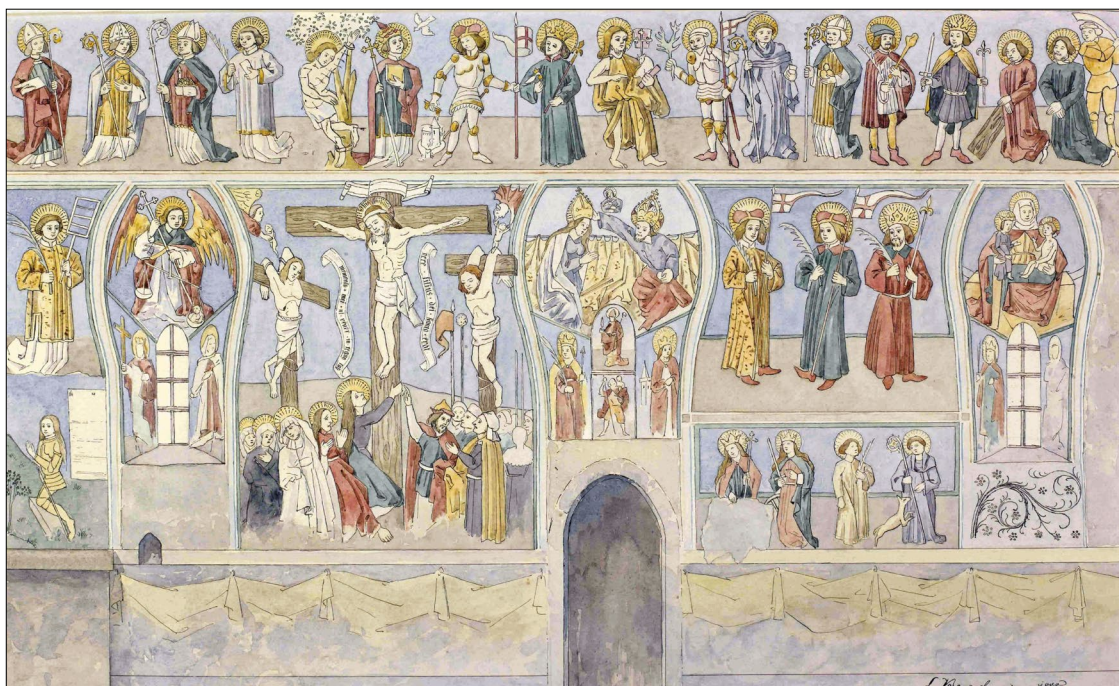
24. Turjak Castle, mural on the Gothic chapel's northern wall (© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



25. Ladislav Benesch: *Procession of the Magi*, the northern wall of the Turjak Castle Gothic chapel, a pen-and-ink drawing combined with watercolour and graphite pencil, from 1888 (© Print Cabinet of the National Museum of Slovenia, photo: Tomaž Lauko)



26. Turjak Castle, mural on the Gothic chapel's western part of the southern wall
(© ZRC SAZU, UIFS, photo: Andrej Furlan)



27. Ladislav Benesch: mural on the southern wall of the Turjak Castle Gothic chapel,
a pen-and-ink drawing, combined with watercolour and graphite pencil, from 1888
(© Print Cabinet of the National Museum of Slovenia, photo: Tomaž Lauko)

chapel. Here, Mary Magdalene stretches her arms towards Christ's cross, while a similarly depicted group of soldiers, with the first of them wearing a markedly Jewish hat, stands out. The Procession of the Magi is also painted in the Gothic chapel below, on the same wall as presumably in the Romanesque chapel (Figs. 24–25). The row of saints can also be found in both the Romanesque and Gothic chapels (Figs. 26–27). In the late Gothic mural, St Sebastian is also depicted in a surprisingly dynamic posture. Therefore, we can conclude that the iconography of the older painting also determined, at least to some extent, the iconographic design of the younger painting. We do not know whether St Corbinian or St Anthony the Hermit were also painted in the Gothic chapel, but it is possible, as a row of saints, not all of whom have been preserved, was painted in the chapel. The new discoveries about the mural in the Romanesque chapel at Turjak Castle do not only bring many new insights into its iconography and dating but also allow for a better understanding of the iconographic concept of the Gothic chapel, but above all, they uncover an exceptionally high quality and valuable monument of medieval wall painting in Slovenia.¹⁴³

¹⁴³ I would like to thank Dr Gorazd Bence for all his help in creating this article.

SOURCES

Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, Heritage Information and Documentation Centre, Ljubljana, Arhiv spisov (File archives); Popis spisov (File inventory); Zapiski Marijana Zadnikarja (Marijan Zadnikar's notes); Zapiski različnih avtorjev (Notes by various authors).

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NOVA ODKRITJA O POSLIKAVI KAPELE NA GRADU TURJAK

Povzetek

Članek obravnava stensko poslikavo, ki je bila sprva uvrščena v digitalni korpus srednjeveškega stenskega slikarstva na Slovenskem do okoli leta 1380, a se je med raziskavo izkazalo, da je datacija, objavljena v literaturi, napačna. Gre za fragmentarno ohranjeno plast poslikave v romanski kapeli gradu Turjak. V literaturi manjkata tako predstavitelj in poskus identifikacije motivov, ki so še vidni, v navezavi na ikonografijo in slog pa tudi ustrežnejša časovna umestitev. Edini zapis o ikonografskem programu predstavlja domneva, da je na južni steni upodobljen Pohod sv. Treh kraljev, časovno pa se poslikava umešča v 13. stoletje, v čas okoli leta 1300, v zgodnje 14. stoletje oziroma okoli leta 1318. Poslikava, ki si jo je mogoče ogledati z montažnega lesenega mostovža nad obokom gotsko prezidane romanske kapele, je zelo slabo ohranjena, natančen študij še vidnih detajlov pa kljub temu omogoča številna nova spoznanja tako o ikonografskem programu kakor tudi o dataciji, posledično pa omogoča tudi nekaj novih premislov o gotizaciji kapele.

Danes so ostanki poslikav v nekdanji romanski kapeli, ki je bila pred prezidavo poslikana po vseh stenah, vidni na severni, predvsem pa na južni ladijski steni. Na severni steni so razločnejši fragmenti vidni od sredine ladijske stene pa vse do njenega vzhodnega konca. Kljub slabi ohranjenosti je razvidno, da je bil tukaj večfiguralni prizor. Razpoznavnih je več glav, v spodnjem delu tik nad gotskim obokom pa tudi vsaj dva konja. Morda je bil tu naslikan Pohod in poklon sv. Treh kraljev; vsekakor je bila to kompleksna in monumentalna kompozicija s številnimi protagonisti. Če je omenjeni ikonografski motiv bil naslikan v romanski kapeli gradu Turjak, je bil torej na severni in ne na južni steni.

Večji del južne stene zavzema motiv Križanja. Vidna je desna roka Kristusa na križu, vidne so letnice na lesu križa, ob stiku desne roke in telesa je vidna palica z gobo s kisom, ki jo rimski vojak Stefaton podaja Kristusu. Na Kristusovi levi je viden še en križ in glava na vrhu križa. Ta seveda pripada levemu razbojniku. Tik ob križu levega razbojnika je viden zgornji del drevesa s tankim deblom in košato krošnjo. Na Kristusovi desni strani je viden tretji križ z nogo desnega razbojnika in vrvjo, s katero je bila njegova roka privezana na križ. H Kristusovemu križu je obrnjena gruča vojščakov, od katerih ima prvi, bradati mož visoko zašiljeno judovsko čepico. V roki drži sulico, ki jo usmerja proti Kristusu, z levico pa kaže v svoje levo oko. S pomočjo te geste ga prepoznamo kot stotnika Longinusa. Za Longinusom je v dveh vrstah vidnih vsaj še šest nadaljnjih obrazov; gre torej za številčno skupino vojščakov, obrnjeno h Kristusu. Nekateri od njih imajo v rokah drogove s praporji in zastavicami. Levo nad Kristusovim križem je viden ostanek upodobitve sonca. Monumentalna kompozicija Križanja se je v dolžino razprostirala štiri metre in pol in s tem zavzemala dve tretjini dolžine južne stene.

Poleg Križanja je v smeri proti zahodu mogoče prvič identificirati še en doslej spregledani motiv, in sicer sv. Boštjana. Način njegove upodobitve je izjemno presenetljiv, saj je na drevo ali deblo privezan tako, da je v prvem planu deblo in šele za njim goli svetnik. Puščic v njegovem telesu zaradi slabe ohranjenosti ni videti, jih pa z leve in desne vanj s samostrelom streljata rablja v izraziti modni opravi s kratko tuniko s krilom s trikotniško zaključnim spodnjim robom in z oprijetimi hlačnicami; rabelj desno od Boštjana ima hlačnici različnih barv. Prizor s sv. Boštjanom zaključuje deloma še ohranjeno romansko okno. Njegovo lijakasto ostenje je bilo prav tako poslikano, okras je bil deloma naslikan s šablonami.

Na drugi strani romanskega okna, tik ob zahodni steni, je prvič prepoznan še en motiv. Tu je bil upodobljen škof ali opat. Vidna je palica, ob njegovi desni nogi pa se, postavljena na zadnji dve nogi, vzdiguje žival, ki jo težko povsem prepričljivo identificiramo. Najbolj verjetni se zdita dve možnosti, in sicer da gre za medveda ali pa za prašiča. S sv. Boštjanom se je tako morda začela svetniška vrsta, ki bi se lahko nadaljevala še na zahodni steni kapele. Ker ima žival opasan hrbet in medvedjo glavo, je bil tu morda upodobljen sv. Korbinijan. Njegova upodobitev ne bi bila presenetljiva, saj so konec 14. in v začetku 15. stoletja Turjaški imeli nekaj povezav s freisinškimi škofi. Če pa je upodobljena žival prašič, je bil tu naslikan sv. Anton Puščavnik.

Večfiguralno Križanje, modna rablja golega sv. Boštjana in svetnik na zahodnem koncu južne stene ne omogočajo časovne umestitve, kakršna je za to poslikavo in celo brez ikonografske identifikacije motivov predlagana v literaturi. Monumentalno Križanje z zelo dobro izrisanimi in senčenimi obrazi je mogoče umestiti šele v čas okoli leta 1400 ali po njem. Tudi način upodobitve obeh rabljev sv. Boštjana s tesno telesu prilagočim se oblačilom, s hlačnicama različnih barv in povsem kratkim krilom tunike s trikotniško zarezanim spodnjim robom ter golega sv. Boštjana z drevesom v prvem planu lahko postavimo šele v prvo polovico 15. stoletja. Tudi uporaba šablon v okenskem ostenju govori proti temu, da bi poslikava lahko nastala v začetku 14. stoletja. Osrednji motiv vzorca v ostenju romanskega okenca je šesterokraka zvezda, okoli katere so koncentrično razporejene manjše zvezdaste in krožne oblike. V slovenskem prostoru šesterokrako zvezdo, ki ima med kraki soroden okras, najdemo v letih 1450–1455, in sicer v podružnični cerkvi sv. Radegunde v Srednji vasi pri Šenčurju in v župnijski cerkvi sv. Andreja v Mošnjah. In svetnik z živaljo? Najstarejša ohranjena upodobitev sv. Korbinijana z medvedom kot atributom je znana šele s tabelne slike nekdanjega krilnega oltarja cerkve sv. Andreja v Freisingu iz okoli leta 1440. To pred nas postavlja tri možnosti: ali je upodobitev sv. Korbinijana na Turjaku najstarejša ohranjena, ali je celotna prva poslikava turjaške grajske kapele nastala šele okoli sredine 15. stoletja, ali pa upodobljeni svetnik ni sv. Korbinijan, marveč sv. Anton Puščavnik. Njegova upodobitev poleg sv. Boštjana bi bila ikonografsko povsem upravičena, saj je bil tudi sv. Anton priprošnjik zoper kugo. Čeprav je od 14. stoletja sv. Anton praviloma upodobljen v noši antonitov, ga najdemo tudi v neredovnem do tal segajočem oblačilu. Prašič ob sv. Antonu pogosto pogleduje navzgor ali se celo s sprednjima nogama dviguje k njemu. Prav ta detajl je ohranjen tudi v turjaški kapeli. Prašiči imajo okoli vratu večkrat privezan t. i. Antonov zvonček, pregled ohranjenih upodobitev pa razkrije, da imajo pogosto tudi nekakšno prevezo, bel trak, kakršnega vidimo na živali, upodobljeni na Turjaku. Glede na to, da je vrhunec upodobitev sv. Antona v (srednje)evropskem prostoru mogoče zaslediti v 15. stoletju, tudi turjaški primer – če ga prepoznamo kot sv. Antona – spet lahko postavimo edinole v čas po letu 1400.

Slogovno še najoprijemljivejša za datacijo je Longinusova glava. Ker je zgornja plast poslikave odluščena, je dokončna opredelitev otežena. Vseeno pa lahko po ohranjeni risbi sklepamo, da gre za primer t. i. drugega praškega sloga na stopnji, ki jo predstavljala Dunajska vojvodska delavnica. V slovenskem prostoru se povezuje ta z Dunajsko vojvodsko delavnico, specializirano za vitraje, druga poslikava rotunde v Selu ter Pohod in poklon sv. Treh kraljev v prezbiteriju opatijske cerkve svetega Danijela v Celju iz časa okoli 1410–1420. Kvaliteta turjaških fresk je v primerjavi s temi deli bistveno višja, kar stenske poslikave romanske kapele gradu Turjak postavlja bližje t. i. Gornještajerski vojvodski delavnici, ki se je osredotočala na monumentalno slikarstvo. Na Turjaku je vidna predrisba, izdelana s širokim čopičem in odločnimi potezami. V primerjavi s slogovno stopnjo v Selu in Celju je veliko podrobnejša, zlasti okoli oči, in jo lahko primerjamo z deli vojvodske delavnice na Gornjem Štajerskem. Analiza ikonografskih posebnosti poslikave romanske kapele na gradu Turjak kaže na možnost časovne umestitve v prvo četrtino 15. stoletja. Sorodnost z deli gornještajerske vojvodske delavnice in hkrati

odsotnost značilnosti mednarodnega gotskega sloga pa kažeta, da je najverjetnejši čas nastanka okoli leta 1400 ali začetek 15. stoletja. Svetnika na zahodnem delu južne stene je tako mogoče prepoznati kot svetega Antona Puščavnika. Ohranjena stenska poslikava romanske kapele je tako kljub slabi ohranjenosti izjemno pomemben spomenik srednjeveškega stenskega slikarstva na Slovenskem.

Kristusovo Križanje z obema razbojnikoma in več spremljevalnimi osebami, med katerimi izstopa sorodno koncipirana skupina vojščakov, od katerih ima prvi poudarjen judovski klobuk, je na isti steni, kot je bilo naslikano v romanski kapeli, naslikano tudi spodaj v gotsko predelani kapeli. Prav tako je Pohod in poklon sv. Treh kraljev na isti steni, kot je bil domnevno upodobljen v romanski kapeli, upodobljen tudi spodaj v gotski kapeli. Tudi vrsto svetnikov najdemo tako v romanski kot v gotski kapeli. Sv. Boštjan je tudi na poznogotski poslikavi koncipiran v presenetljivo dinamični drži. Ugotovimo torej lahko, da je ikonografija poslikave romanske kapele vsaj do neke mere določila tudi ikonografsko zasnovo poslikave gotizirane kapele. Nova odkritja o poslikavi romanske kapele na gradu Turjak s tem prinašajo ne samo številna nova spoznanja o njeni ikonografiji in dataciji, marveč omogočajo tudi boljše razumevanje ikonografske zasnove gotizirane kapele, predvsem pa razkrivajo izjemno kakovosten spomenik srednjeveškega stenskega slikarstva na Slovenskem.