

STATE OF CONSERVATION IN A RUPESTRIAN CHURCH – CASE STUDY THE STONE RAVENS, ROMANIA

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The Stone Ravens church from Jghiaburi, Arges area is located on the left shore of Doamnei River, digs into the rock and it belongs to a rupestrian ensemble; unfortunately it can be seen only a part of it. The Stone Ravens church belongs to historical cultural and natural Romanian Heritage having a very important role in understanding and making a common opinion with respect of specificity and authenticity existing in each rupestrian church from Europe.

As a part of monastery complex, The Stone Ravens church was decorated with mural paintings going back to XIV century; nowadays they are in very bad conditions of preservation. The complex is unique in Romania and it was very little studied because of geographical position; it is not included in international data but it can be established some similarity with rupestrian churches from Cappadocia, Italy (Fasano, sec. XI), Bulgaria (Gospodev-Dol, Saborenata Tarcva, Tarcvata, sec. XIV) and Macedonia (sec. XIII-XIV). The stylistic characteristics, decoration of clothes are specific for The Stone Ravens sending them to mural painting from XIII in Serbia and Greece. Frescoes fragments had been analyzed and established their position in Byzantine art opening a new way for investigation of history of Romanian monachism during the time of making up Romanian country as state. Frescoes are made in similar techniques with those from Capadocia but using different materials; the rock and environment are also different. In addition organic compounds supply stimulate develop of heterotrophic biodeteriogens (organisms able to deteriorate the support during their metabolism). Some microorganisms are able to grow on mural paintings, plaster, rock and pavement; they are involved in detaching of pictorial layer and de-cohesions in plaster as support of mural painting. Cyanobacteria and alga generate biofilms including heterotrophic bacteria and fungi. The atmosphere is wet and light (natural or artificial) stimulate microbial growth making impossible to see and to read mural painting. In The Stone Ravens light comes down through the unique window and make a green carpet of alga on its way. Microclimate monitoring and biological analysis for mural painting and plaster, technological analysis had been done. Establishing of types of specific deteriorations, identification of biodeteriogens, changes in pictorial layers-photographic documentation and historical study regarding to ligant materials used in XIV-XVI century make a good understanding of state of conservation.