

# THE LOST STAINED GLASS WINDOWS OF THE CHURCH OF THE FRANCISCAN MONASTERY IN CLUJ-NAPOCA

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**Abstract:** This study deals with 96 glass fragments discovered during the archaeological research carried out in 2013 inside the Franciscan Monastery in Cluj-Napoca. To date these findings, two variants were proposed. Based on optical analysis, analogies with other artefacts from the history of art, and in accordance with the architectural history of the building, there resulted the hypothesis that the fragments might be dated to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The study continued by determining the chemical composition of selected windowpane fragments using Ion Beam Analysis (IBA) methods, namely Particle-Induced X-ray Emission (PIXE) and Particle Induced Gamma-ray Emission (PIGE). Compositional data revealed that the fragments are much more recent, most likely being parts of the stained-glass windows mounted during the campaigns of restoration and reconstruction of various historical monuments from Transylvania from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Rezumat:** Acest studiu se referă la fragmentele de sticlă de vitraliu descoperite în urma cercetărilor arheologice efectuate în anul 2013 în interiorul Mănăstirii Franciscane din Cluj-Napoca. Pentru a data aceste descoperiri au fost analizate două ipoteze. Bazându-ne pe analiza optică, analogii cu alte artefacte, în acord cu istoricul arhitectural al clădirii a rezultat ipoteza că fragmentele provin din secolul al XVI-lea. Studiul a fost continuat cu determinarea compoziției chimice a câtorva fragmente prin metode analitice bazate pe utilizarea ionilor accelerați, și anume PIXE – emisia de raze X indusă de protoni și PIGE – emisia de raze gamma indusă de protoni. Aceste analize au revelat că fragmentele sunt mult mai recente, ele provenind de la vitralii montate în timpul campaniilor de restaurare și reconstrucție a monumentelor din Transilvania de la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului al XX-lea.

According to some opinions, the Monastery of the Dominican order (nowadays Franciscan) from Cluj-Napoca was founded at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century or at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The timeframe is given by the erection of the second defence curtain of the city. The first reliable attestation dates from 1397, the date on which the sacristy and the altar of St. Dominic were mentioned.<sup>1</sup> The church received the patronage of St. Virgin Mary and St. Anthony, both attestations from 1455. Several stages of intervention are known, documented in 1400, 1453-1459, and 1500-1505,<sup>2</sup> partly supported by arguments related to art history. The monastery was devastated by the Reformers in 1552 and secularized in 1556. It then functioned as a town school until 1693. Immediately after the establishment of the Habsburg regime in Transylvania, it was conceded to the Jesuits; from 1724 it functioned as a Franciscan monastery.

In 1902, the monastery underwent extensive reconstruction works, in the spirit of Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, a restoration in the original style but also in a neo-Gothic manner being attempted, with the idea of reconstructing the cloister from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> In 1949, the place became a parish church; afterwards the communist authorities decided to dissolve the Franciscan order in Romania and the cloister was secularized, housing a music school that later became Sigismund Toduță High School of Music that functioned here until 2010. Only after 1990 the church became a monastery church again and the monastery was returned to the Franciscan Order.

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<sup>1</sup> Rusu, Máko Lupescu 2000, pp. 105.

<sup>2</sup> Salontai 1999, pp. 121-122; Rusu, Máko Lupescu 2000, pp. 105-106.

<sup>3</sup> Salontai 1999, pp. 123-124; Rusu, Máko Lupescu 2000, p. 106.