

The wooden «Chasuble Madonnas» from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló

About the iconography of Catalan Madonna statues in the Romanesque period

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ABSTRACT

Numerous wooden Madonna statues of the Romanesque style have survived from medieval Catalonia, which show the Virgin as *sedes sapientiae*. The thematized exemplars from Ger (second half 12th century), Ix (last third 12th century), Targasona (early 13th century) attract the attention of today's viewer by an iconographic peculiarity. Explicitly, they show the enthroned Mother of God, as it will be pointed out, in the priestly chasuble. The chasuble most probably represents Mary's significance as symbol of the hierarchical or institutionalized church and also alludes to the conception of Mary being interpreted as priest or ministerial priest, which became more and more popular in the 12th century. The throne representations of the statues from Ger and Ix, which refer undoubtedly to the famous episcopal throne from the Girona Cathedral by its formal structure, will be related to this significant meaning, too. The iconographic type of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna» is not to be found in the art of wood carving first, but in Romanesque mural paintings in the Pyrenean Valleys of North-West Catalonia. The historical and cultural sphere, which could have been responsible for the development and dissemination of this Madonna type respectively, will be discussed in the present article in the context of the 11th and 12th century church reform in Catalonia.

Key words:

Romanesque Madonna statues, Catalonia, church reform

RESUM

A Catalunya han sobreviscut nombroses escultures d'estil romànic de la Verge, que la representen com a *sedes sapientiae*. Els exemplars de Ger (segona meitat del segle XII), Ix (últim terç del segle XII), Targasona (inícis del segle XIII) i Talió (inícis del segle XIII) criden l'atenció per una peculiaritat iconogràfica. Explicitament, figuren la Mare de Déu entronitzada i, com serà més detallat, vestida amb casulla. És molt probable que la casulla representi Maria com a símbol de l'església jerarquitzada o institucionalitzada i també al·ludeix al concepte de Maria com a sacerdot o ministeri sacerdotal, una idea que es va estenent al segle XII. Els trons de les talles de Ger i Ix, que per la seva estructura formal es refereixen sens dubte al famós tron episcopal de la catedral de Girona, també es poden vincular al mateix significat. El tipus iconogràfic català de la «Verge amb casulla» no es troba abans en l'art de la talla, sinó en pintura mural romànica de les valls pirinenques del nord-oest de Catalunya. L'ambient històric i cultural que pot justificar el desenvolupament i propagació d'aquest tipus de Verge serà analitzat en el context de la reforma religiosa dels segles XI i XII a Catalunya.

Paraules clau:

Romànic, talla, Verge, Catalunya, reforma religiosa

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1. Cf. Núria DE DALMASES and Antoni JOSÉ I PITARCH, *Els inicis i l'art romànic s. IX-XII*, Barcelona, 1986, p. 259-260, *Història de l'Art Català*, vol. 1.

2. See Jordi CAMPS I SÒRIA, «Imatge de la Mare de Déu de Ger», in Xavier BARRAL I ALTET et al., *Prefiguració del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), Barcelona, 1992, p. 149. Comparable already Walter William Spencer COOK and José GUDIOL RICART, *Pintura e imagineria romànica*, Madrid, 1950, p. 318, *Ars Hispaniae*, 6.

3. «Sur quelques modèles (Vierge provenant de Ger, [...] statue d'Hix et de Targasonne [...] par exemple), le manteau prend la forme d'une chasuble souple relevée par les bras; il répond à une recherche de symbolisme qui accentue le caractère sacerdotal de Marie» (Marcel DURLIAT, *Art Catalan*, Paris/Grenoble, 1963, p. 165-166). Including the statue from Talló, see for example Mathias DELCOR, *Les Vierges romanes de Cerdagne et Conflent dans l'histoire et dans l'art*, Barcelona, 1970, p. 51; Celina

In the territory of medieval Catalonia there can be found numerous wooden, polychromed Madonna statues of the Romanesque style, which show the Virgin enthroned with the Infant Christ seated in her lap and which appeared since the second half of the 12th century¹. The thematized exemplars from Ger (second half 12th century, fig. 1), Ix (last third 12th century, fig. 2), Targasona (early 13th century, fig. 3) and Talló (early 13th century, fig. 4), which are regarded as characteristic examples of the Romanesque Madonna sculpture in nowadays Franco-Spanish Pyrenees of the Cerdanya (Alta Cerdanya/Baixa Cerdanya)², excel not only in the aesthetic quality. Furthermore the sculptures belonging to the area of the old bishopric of Seu d'Urgell also attract the attention of today's viewer by an iconographic peculiarity, which distinguish them from the majority of the preserved Catalan Madonna statues of the Romanesque period. They namely show the enthroned Mother of God —as the research assumes consistently— in the priestly chasuble gathered up by her arms³. In addition to the under-tunic a separate veil, falling over the Virgin's shoulders, characterizes the clerical vestment type of the wooden sculptures⁴.

In the first part of the following article it will be tried —with the support of parament research and comparative examples of the Romanesque art— to verify adequately, that the Marian outer garments of the sculptures are indeed high medieval chasubles⁵. Previous research on the statues, which are discussed in this article, has not striven for such an argumentation. Subsequent to this, the motif of the sacerdotal chasuble shall be identified as an iconographic supplement of the Romanesque sedes sapientiae iconography, which stands for

Mary's significance as symbol of the hierarchical respectively institutionalized church⁶.

After the Marian concept, which basically was already developed in Early Christian times, has been analyzed with regard to its dominant status in High Middle Ages, the throne representations of the Madonna statues shall be examined more intensive. At least the thrones of the sculptures from Ger and Ix (figs. 1-2), as it will be pointed out, actually support the characteristic Mary-Ecclesia significance of the Madonna statues, too. In the following part of this article it shall be indicated, that the iconographic type of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna» doesn't find its earliest representatives in the art of wood carving but in Romanesque mural paintings in the Pyrenean Valleys of North-West Catalonia, which must be dated between the end of the 11th and the middle of the 12th century. By this fact, which has obviously been overlooked by previous research, Edouard Junyent's hypothesis of the wooden «Chasuble Madonnas» being the oldest and most characteristic examples of the Catalan Madonna statues in general, reaching back to a not preserved prototype⁷, shall be confirmed scientifically.

After it has been briefly indicated, that —in my opinion— the iconographical context, to which the «Chasuble Madonnas» of the Catalan mural paintings belong, meaningfully supports the function of Mary as a symbol of the institutionalized church, there shall be asked for the historico-cultural circumstances, which were responsible for the development respectively for the dissemination of this special Madonna type. Previous research concerning the statues from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló didn't lay great emphasis on answering this question⁸.

Are the Marian outer garments of the Madonna statues high medieval chasubles?

Shape

The chasuble from the 10th to the beginning of the 13th century, which was called *planeta* or *casula* in the Middle Ages, was a floor-length, completely closed, sleeveless and hoodless cloak, which had to be rolled up at the sides for the unrestricted usage of the hands at the celebration of the mass⁹. Thus, the chasuble of these centuries was rather a wide bell-shaped cape that wrapped the body of the celebrating priest entirely¹⁰.

Not only do pictorial representations in art history verify this without a doubt, but also numerous preserved early and high medieval chasubles all over Europe. The Bavarian National Museum is keeping an early specimen (fig. 5) that can serve as an example for suchlike shaped chasubles, which are called «bell-chasubles» in the Modern Age¹¹. It is associated with the famous archbishop Willigis of Mainz (975-1011) and was made between the end of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century¹².

The making of such a «bell-chasuble» was a comparatively simple task in this way, that only a roughly semicircular piece of cloth had to be fit up with gaps for the head and had to be sewn together along the straight edge¹³.

When comparing the shape of the «bell-chasuble» of Saint Willigis (fig. 5) mentioned above with that of the Marian outer garments of the Madonna sculptures from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4) dealt with in this article, it doubtlessly comes to light, in my opinion, that these vestments are «bell-chasubles» of the Romanesque period, which are gathered up by the arms.

Furthermore, for example, the comparison of the Madonna statues with the almost contemporaneous reliquary-bust of the canonized bishop Césaire (fig. 6), in which case the «bell-chasuble» of the cleric falls over his upper arms and forms a round shape in the lap area, too makes this abundantly clear¹⁴.

Colour and pattern

During the 10th and 11th century only single-coloured, frequently patterned silk cloths were used for the making of chasubles, which had often been imported from the Orient¹⁵. Not until the 12th century bi- and multi-coloured silk cloths were increasingly used, whereby for example vegetable patterns or half geometrical ornaments could be made, not only by changing



Figure 1. Madonna statue from Ger, second half of the 12th century, provenance: Santa Coloma de Ger, H. 52, 5 cm, limewood, polychromed, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Jordi Camps i Sòria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guia visual arte romànic*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1st ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 49.

LLARÁS USÓN, «Marededéu de Ger», in *Catalunya Romànica*, vol. 1, *Introducció a l'estudi de l'art romànic català*. Fons d'art romànic català del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona, 1994, p. 282.

4. Previous research has identified this three-piece clothing (tunic, chasuble, veil) as type-specific feature of the Madonna statues from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló, which are discussed

in this article. Cf. DELCOR, *Les Vierges romanes de Cerdagne et Conflent*, p. 51.

5. The chasuble developed from the antique *paenula* in Early Christian times. After the chasuble had already been reserved for the clergy in Carolingian times, it was exclusively used in the 10th century as liturgical outer garment of the celebrating priest. See Karen STOLLEIS, *Messgewänder aus deutschen*

Kirchenschätzen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart. Geschichte, Form und Material, 1st ed., Regensburg, 2001, p. 9.

6. In such a way already rudimentally see CAMPS i SÒRIA, *Imatge de la Mare de Déu de Ger*, p. 149; Eduard CARBONELL i ESTELLER, Montserrat PAGÈS i PARETAS et al., *Romanesque art guide*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 3rd ed., Barcelona, 2003, p. 68.

7. «Il se peut que le prototype de cette Vierge ait été habillé d'une chasuble sacerdotale et d'une coiffe, comme le montrent certains des modèles les plus archaïques et les plus caractéristiques» (Edouard JUNYENT, *Catalogne Romane*, vol. 2, Zodiaque, La Pierre-qui-Vire 1961, p. 270).

8. A reason for this could be the fact, that previous art-historical research on the Catalan Madonna statues is in general characterized by a dominant formal-stylistic approach and pays little attention to iconographic-iconological aspects. In such a way, in my opinion, see for example CAMPS i SÒRIA, *Imatge de la Mare de Déu de Ger*, p. 149-150.

9. For the following explanations concerning the shape of the chasuble see Joseph BRAUN, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Verwendung und Symbolik*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1907 (Reprint Darmstadt, 1964), p. 173-184.

10. Here it has to be remarked, that in Carolingian times chasubles might have occasionally been equipped with hoods, being contrary to the usual practice. See Leonie VON WILCKENS, «Ein mittelalterliches Zubehör von Kasel und Pluviale», in *Jahrbuch des Museums für Kunst und Gewerbe*, 3 (1994), p. 47-54.

11. See STOLLEIS, *Messgewänder aus deutschen Kirchenschätzen*, p. 110.

12. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 67.

13. Cf. the pattern of the «bell-chasuble» by Braun (fig. 26).

14. The bust of Saint Césaire, bishop of Arles, which is partially covered with precious metal and shows the cleric in a Romanesque chasuble, has to be dated to the second quarter of the 12th century. Cf. Danielle GABORIT-CHOPIN, «Buste de saint Césaire» (Cat. No. 293), in *La France romane au temps des premiers Capétiens (987-1152)*, Musée du Louvre (Exh. cat.), Paris, 2005, p. 382.

15. For the following explanations of cloth and pattern of the chasuble see BRAUN, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient*, p. 200-205.

16. See STOLLEIS, *Messgewänder aus deutschen Kirchenschätzen*, p. 15.

17. See Joseph BRAUN, *Liturgisches Handlexikon*, 2nd ed., rev. and enl., Regensburg, 1924 (first 1921), p. 105-107.



Figure 2.
Madonna statue from Ix, last third of the 12th century, provenance: Sant Martí d'Ix, H. 68 cm, hard-wood, polychromed, Ix (Hix/Bourg Madame), parish church of Sant Martí. Illustration from Mathias Delcor, *Talla de la Mare de Déu d'Ix*, in: *Catalunya Romànica*, vol. VII: La Cerdanya. El Conflent, Barcelona, 1995, p. 158.



Figure 4.
Madonna statue from Talló, early 13th century, provenance: Santa Maria de Talló, H. 89 cm, wood, polychromed, Talló (Bellver), church of Santa Maria. Illustration from Mathias Delcor, *Talla de la Mare de Déu de Talló*, in: *Catalunya Romànica*, vol. VII: La Cerdanya. El Conflent, Barcelona, 1995, p. 97.

the weave of the damask cloths, but also by different colours of the fabric. At the same time the wide range of colours, which formed the feasible base of the ground colour of liturgical paraments in the previous centuries, was slowly reduced. There was a tendency to prefer the colours white, red, green, yellow, black and violet for the making of liturgical outer garments. Around 1200 however this choice of colour was combined in the tract «De sacra altaris mysterio» by Pope Innocent III. (1160-1216) comprising a liturgical colour canon, which was based on the ecclesiastic feast-calendar¹⁶. However, this canon still wasn't binding during the whole 13th century, so that the popular colours blue and

grey still were frequently used for the making of liturgical garbs¹⁷.

In summery it can be postulated, that the colours of the Marian figures' outer garments from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (green, red, red, yellow) militate in favour of the fact, that the vestments not only depict the Romanesque chasuble very exactly according to the cut, but also show very common respectively popular colours, which were used in the process of making chasubles in the 12th century. Also vegetable, coloured ornaments, which —as for example observed at the statue from Ix (fig. 2)— differ from the ground colour, are not untypical for chasubles of the 12th century.



Figure 3. Madonna statue from Targasona, early 13th century, provenance: Sant Sadurn de Targasona, H. 70 cm, wood, polychromed, stolen ca. 1980. Illustration from Mathias Delcor, *Les Vierges romanes de Cerdagne et Conflent dans l'histoire et dans l'art*, Barcelona, 1970, frontispiece.

Decoration with applied orphrey braids

Up to the end of the 10th century the «bell-chasuble» generally lacked any kind of trimming¹⁸. For example, the golden braids from the silken chasuble of Saint Willigis (fig. 5) have been sewn on in later centuries¹⁹.

Around about the turn of the first millennium ornamented, woven braids (orphrey bands), which hid for example the frontal seam, came into usage more frequently. Until the beginning of the 13th century, however, these orphrey braids had not at all been submitted under any rule regarding their form or disposition, nor had they

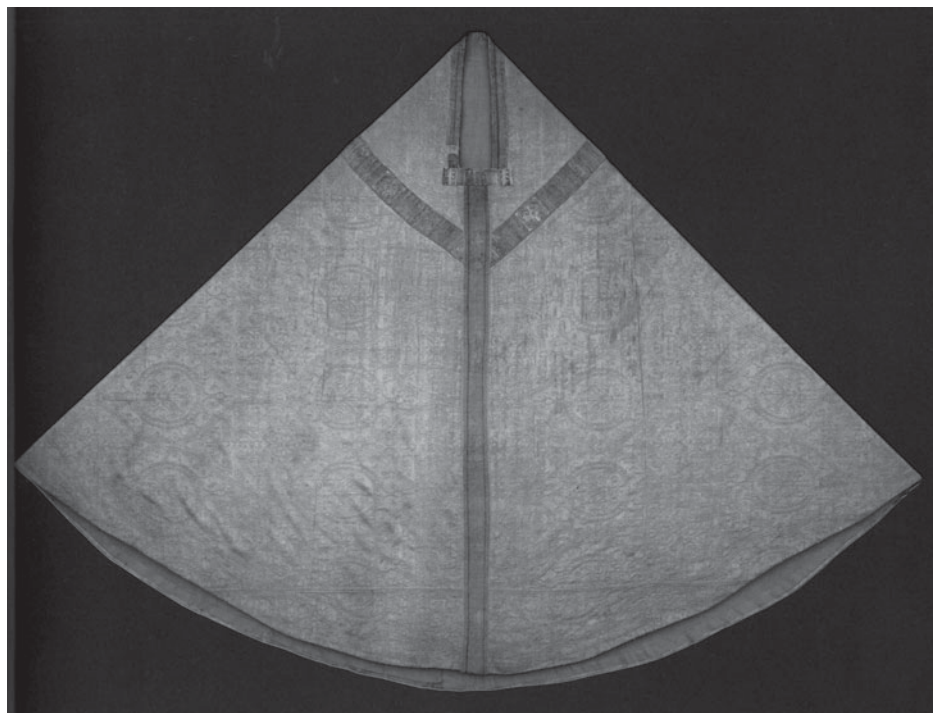


Figure 5. «Bell-chasuble» of the archbishop Willigis of Mainz, end of the 10th/beginning of the 11th century, H. 144 cm, Byzantine silk cloth, golden braids from later periods (12th - 15th century), Munich, Bavarian National Museum. Illustration from Karen Stolleis, *Messgewänder aus deutschen Kirchenschätzen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart. Geschichte, Form und Material*, 1st ed., Regensburg, 2001, plate of illustrations.

been considered as obligatory for the making of chasubles. Both, pictorial representations and the preserved chasubles of these centuries proof this adequately, as Braun has demonstrated convincingly:

Bald umgibt ein Besatz bloß den Kopfdurchlaß, bald umrandet er auch den Saum oder zieht sich senkrecht über die Vorderseite des Gewandes herab. Hier mangelt jeder Zierbesatz, dort gesellt sich zu dem Vorderstab und der Einfassung des Kopfdurchschlupfs und des Saums ein Vertikalstreifen in der Mitte der Rückseite, während anderswo Besätze ein förmliches Gabelkreuz bilden²⁰.

As an example for a highly braids-decorated chasuble of the first half of the 12th century, the so-called chasuble of Saint Wolfgang (fig. 7), which comes from St. Emmeram in Regensburg, can be cited. Not only are the opening for the head and the hem decorated with braids, but the middle seam in the breast area of the garment as well. This middle seam is covered with a wide vertical trimming, shaped like a forked cross²¹.

When connecting Braun's results of research concerning the orphrey braids of 11th and 12th century chasubles in turn to the Marian outer garments of the Madonna statues from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4), dealt with in this article, it becomes

18. For the decoration of the medieval «bell-chasuble» with applied orphrey braids see BRAUN, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient*, p. 209-215.

19. See STOLLEIS, *Messgewänder aus deutschen Kirchenschätzen*, p. 67.

20. BRAUN, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient*, p. 210-211 («Sometimes a trimming surrounds only the opening for the head, another time it also edges the hem or it moves downwards vertically on the front side of the garment. In some cases there is no trimming at all, in other cases the front column and the edging of the head-opening and the hem are joined by a vertical band on the middle of the back side, whereas elsewhere trimmings shape a formal forked cross.»; translation: author).

21. See Regula SCHORTA, «Sogenannte Kasel des heiligen Wolfgang» (Cat. No. 72), in Reinhold BAUMSTARK (ed.), *Rom und Byzanz. Schatzkammerstücke aus bayerischen Sammlungen*, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (Exh. cat.), München, 1998, p. 228-230.



Figure 6.
Reliquary-bust of Saint Césaire, second quarter of the 12th century, H. 91 cm, wood, polychromed and covered with precious metal, Maurs (Cantal), church of Saint-Césaire. Illustration from Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, *Buste de saint Césaire* (Cat. No. 293), in: *La France romane au temps des premiers Capétiens (987-1152)*, Musée du Louvre (Exh. cat.), Paris, 2005, p. 383.



Figure 7.
So-called «bell-chasuble» of Saint Wolfgang, first half of the 12th century, H. 159 cm, Byzantine silk cloth with applied braids, Regensburg, Catholic Church Foundation of St. Emmeram. Illustration from Regula Schorta, *Sogenannte Kasel des heiligen Wolfgang* (Cat. No. 72), in: Reinhold Baumstark (ed.), *Rom und Byzanz. Schatzkammerstücke aus bayerischen Sammlungen*, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (Exh. cat.) München, 1998, p. 229.

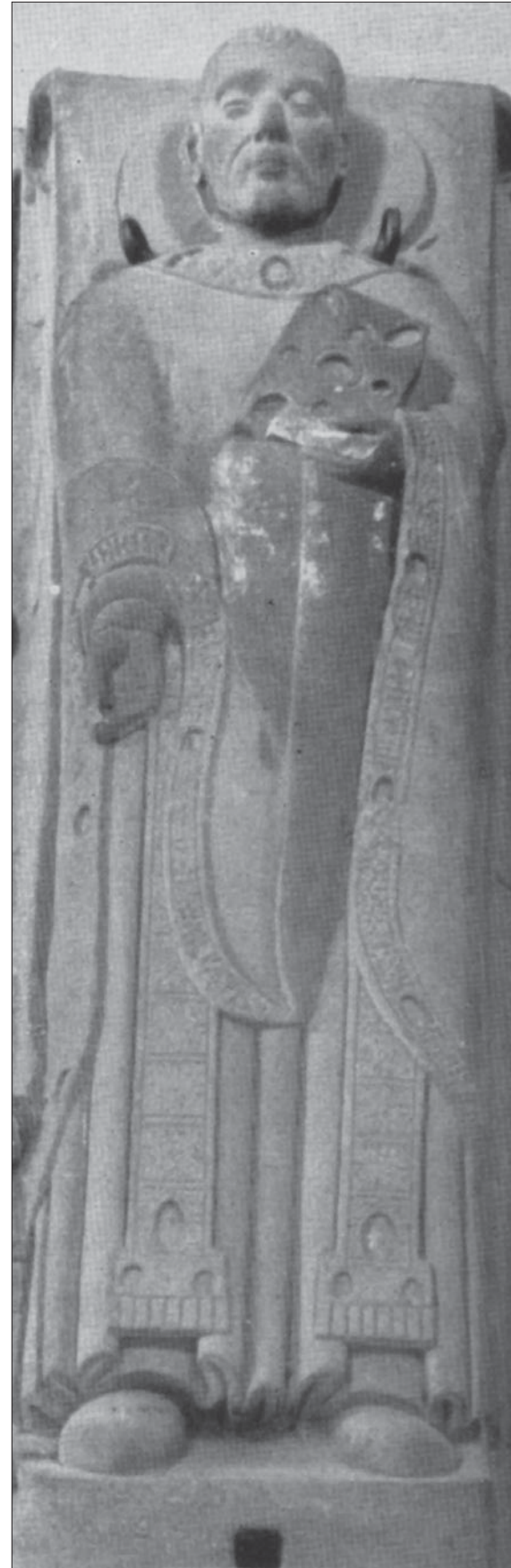


Figure 8.
Tomb effigy of Saint Morandus, ca. 1115, stone, Altkirch (Sundgau), abbey church of St. Morand. Illustration from Joseph Braun, *Tracht und Attribute der Heiligen in der Deutschen Kunst*, Stuttgart, 1943, p. 542.



Figure 9.

Altar frontal from Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles, 12th century, 118 x 218 cm, tempera on wood, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Jordi Camps i Sòria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guia visual arte romànic*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1st ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 96.

clear, that they correspond to Romanesque «bell-chasubles», which are not provided with decorating braids at the vertical front seam, but at the lower seam and the head-opening only. Suchlike braided chasubles were no rarity in the 11th/12th century, in contrast to chasubles, which show a distinct forked cross upon the front seam, like the one from Regensburg (fig. 7)²². Pictorial representations of these centuries also verify this. The stone tomb effigy of Saint Morandus in St. Morand in Altkirch (fig. 8), which must be dated after 1115 and which shows the dead in under-tunic, stole and priestly chasuble, is a good example²³. The front side of the «bell-chasuble» doesn't show a vertical braid or a forked cross upon the main seam, respectively. Instead, wide braids decorate the head-opening and the hem of the garment.

In medieval Catalonia of the late 11th and 12th century such simply braided chasubles might have been in frequent usage, as important panel and mural paintings suggest²⁴. For example, each of the eight canonized bishops shown on the famous 12th century altar frontal from Sant Serni de Tavèrnoles (fig. 9), which are led by Saint Saturnino, are wearing a blue chasuble without a middle braid and no forked cross²⁵. Only the opening for the head and the seam of the vestment are emphasized by braids or by a decorative stitching, respectively. The priest in the middle register of the apse fresco from Santa Maria d'Esterrí d'Àneu (fig. 10) also is dressed with a similarly made blue «bell-chasuble», which is even adorned with a decorative white braid in the part of the opening for the head only.

The iconographic supplements of the sedes sapientiae Madonna type in the High Middle Ages

In the Romanesque period the sedes sapientiae statues more and more show additional iconographic motifs or attributes, respectively, which reach beyond Mary's main significance as Throne of Wisdom and allude to other theological aspects of the meaning of the Mother of God²⁶. Thus, since the 12th century many statues, as for example the ones from Ix and Targasona (figs. 2-3) show both the Infant Christ and Mary crowned, which refers to the conception of Mary as Queen of Heaven, which was fully developed not until that century²⁷. The apple, which identifies Mary as «Alterra Eva» (New Eve) and relatively seldom appears on Throne of Wisdom statues of the 12th century, is rather characteristic for late Romanesque exemplars of the 13th century. The same is true of the sceptre and the imperial orb, which, on the other hand, again allude symbolically to Mary's regal majesty²⁸.

It is mainly the dominant iconographical motif of the sacerdotal chasuble of the referred high Romanesque Madonna statues from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4), which alludes to an important theological aspect of the meaning of Mary beneath the sedes sapientiae conception, as it will be discussed in the following paragraph.

22. Not until the course of the 13th century a trimming, which is shaped like a forked cross —the so-called chasuble-cross— became frequently common and began to dominate the decoration of the chasubles with braids in the following period. Cf. BRAUN, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient*, p. 213.

23. «Auf seinem Grabmal des 12. Jh. ist er [Morandus] als Priester in priesterlicher Messkleidung dargestellt [...]» (Joseph BRAUN, *Tracht und Attribute der Heiligen in der Deutschen Kunst*, Stuttgart, 1943, p. 542).

24. Early and high medieval chasubles have not survived in Catalonia. Only fragments of oriental cloths are preserved, which must have been used for liturgical paraments. Cf. JUNYENT, *Catalogne Romane*, vol. 2, p. 301.

25. See Jordi CAMPS i SÒRIA and Montserrat PAGÈS i PARETAS, *Guia visual...*, p. 96.

26. Büchsel already has proved the tendency of accumulating different «names» or significances for Mary, respectively, for the pre-Romanesque Mariology in Ottonian times. See Martin BÜCHSEL, *Ottomische Madonna* (Liebighaus Monographie, vol. 15), Frankfurt/M., 1993, p. 54-57.

27. See Brigitta SCHMEDDING, *Romanische Madonnen der Schweiz. Holzsulpturen des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, Ph. Diss., Freiburg/Schweiz, 1974, p. 78.

28. Here it has to be remarked however, that the Marian figure at 12th century Madonna statues

normally holds no attributes in the hands, which could evoke a new aspect of the meaning of Mary. Cf. Ilene H. FORSYTH, *The Throne of Wisdom. Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France*, Princeton, 1972, p. 22.

29. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 23-24.

30. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 24.

31. It is possibly a Byzantine palla, which had been wrongly interpreted by the artist, because the paenula wasn't worn any longer in the 12th century. Even at Carolingian times a paenula-like vestment was still only used as a very coarse raincoat. See for this problem Manuel TRENS, *Iconografía de la Virgen en el arte español*, Madrid, 1946, p. 616-618.

32. Cf. also the black-and-white reproductions at René LAURENTIN and Raymond OURSEL, *Romanische Madonnen*, Würzburg, 1989, plate of illustrations.

33. See for example *ibid.*, p. 24.

34. «Über ihrem weiten vielfaltigen Rock trägt sie [Maria] einen Obermantel, der auffallend betont an eine romanische Priester-Kasel erinnert. Selbst deren goldenes Kreuz ist ganz klar eingesetzt. Die Kasel ist am rechten Unterarm aufgestülpt. Kopf und Hals umhüllt ein Schleier» (Michael HARTIG, «Unsere Liebe Frau von Ruhpolding», in *Erdkreis. Eine katholische Monatsschrift*, 5 (1956), p. 165). Another Romanesque Madonna sculpture, which most probably shows Mary in a contemporary



Figure 10.

Depiction of a priest in the apse from Santa Maria d'Estervi d'Àneu (see also fig. 17), end of the 11th century, fresco, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Jordi Camps i Sòria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guia visual arte romànic*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1st ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 46.



Figure 12.

Madonna statue from Ruhpolding, ca. 1230-1240, H. 62 cm, wood, polychromed, Ruhpolding, parish church of St. Georg. Illustration: Photo: Petra Richter (Tübingen).

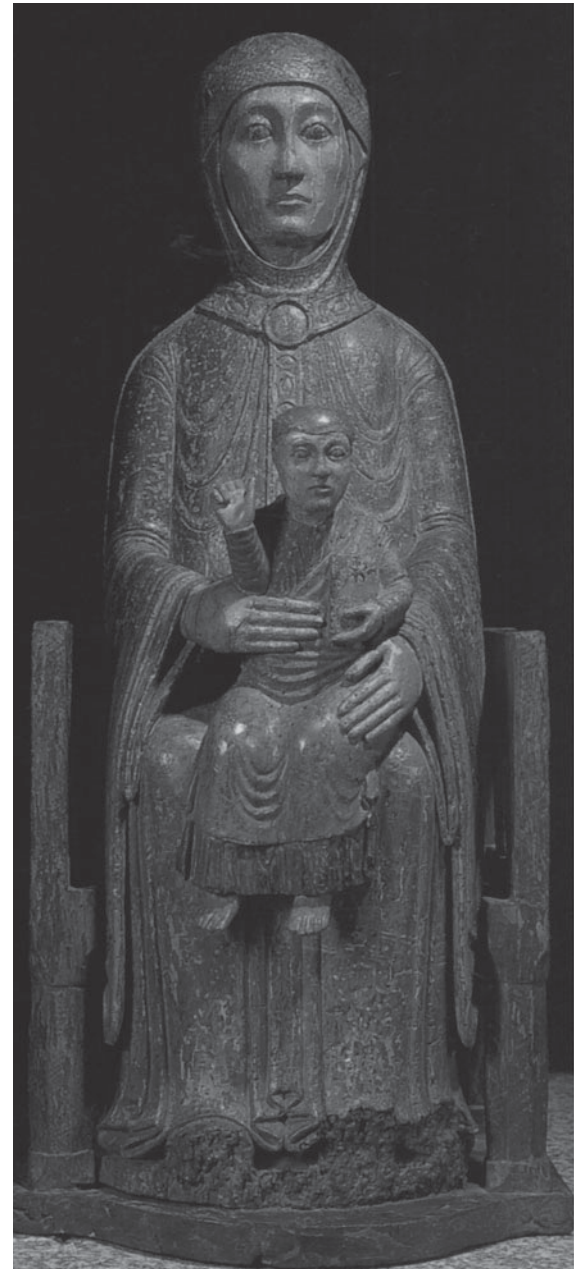


Figure 11.

Madonna statue from Saugues, second half of the 12th century, wood, polychromed, Saugues (Haute-Loire), parish church. Illustration from François Graveline, *Virgines romanes. Auvergne — Velay — Bourbonnais*, (Éditions Debaisieux), Beaumont, 1999, cover illustration.

The iconographic motif of the sacerdotal chasuble

According to Ilene H. Forsyth the motif of Mary's chasuble, which not only sporadically can be determined at Romanesque Madonna statues, alludes to Mary's significance as symbol of the church, which should not be underestimated²⁹. Unfortunately, Forsyth cites a 12th century sculpture from the Auvergne (fig. 11) and its regional copies as prime examples for such Madonna statues, which just do not show Mary in the priestly chasuble in con-

trast to the ones discussed here (figs. 1-4)³⁰. The depicted outer garment of the Saugues-Madonna (fig. 11) is in my opinion rather a paenula-like vestment, whose hood covers the Virgin's head³¹. Furthermore the band-like configurations, which vertically mark the garment's middle on the front and on the back side and which seem to be fixed up beneath Mary's neck at a collar band of the same quality, aren't components of a separate bishop's pallium (pallium episcopale), that, according to Forsyth, additionally underline the Mary-Ecclesia aspect of the Virgin. The reason for this conclu-



Figure 13.
Madonna statue from Chur, early 12th century, wood, polychromed, Zurich, Swiss National Museum. Illustration from Brigitta Schmedding, *Romanische Madonnen der Schweiz. Holzskulpturen des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts*, Ph. Diss., Freiburg/Schweiz, 1974, p. 130.

sion is the fact, that two other bands are added at the collar band, which run on the left and on the right across Mary's shoulders and the lateral upper arms³². The band-like configurations are therefore rather decorative braids, which are sewed on the outer garment³³.

Forsyth does not cite additional examples for Romanesque Madonna statues, which show Mary in priestly garments. Neither does she refer to the presently discussed Catalan Madonna sculptures (figs. 1-4), nor, for example, to the late Romanesque Madonna statue from Ruhpolding (fig. 12), where

Mary is also dressed undoubtedly with a medieval «bell-chasuble» and a separate veil³⁴. Nevertheless Forsyth's interpretation of the sacerdotal garments on Romanesque Madonna statues due to their allusion to Mary's function as a symbol of the institutionalized church is coherent, as it shall be pointed out in the following paragraph chiefly with the support of the theological exegesis. The same goes for the authors relating to the Catalan «Chasuble Madonnas» and interpreting the sculptures' chasuble in a similar way. In contrast to Forsyth, who refers to the medieval Mary-Ecclesia concept at least in a footnote, these authors didn't give further explanations for this problem at all³⁵. In my opinion, a reason for this could be the omission of the authors to identify the Marian outer garments of the statues as realistic representations of Romanesque chasubles of the 12th century³⁶.

In the following paragraph of the present article the chasuble of Romanesque Throne of Wisdom statues shall be described in detail as allegorical image for the Mary-Ecclesia parable of the Middle Ages, whose origins go back to Early Christian times already.

Mary as symbol of the hierarchical church

In the theological treatises of the Carolingian times the Holy Virgin Mary was more and more compared with the church, which was personified as Bride of Christ since Early Christian times³⁷.

From the 12th century on Mary was already described consistently as type of the «Ecclesia Mater». The following lines from the «Rationale divinorum officiorum» of John Beleth (died ca. 1185), written about 1160, to which Adolf Katzenellenbogen refers in his often quoted expositions to the medieval Mary-Ecclesia concept³⁸ verifies this very impressively:

At this feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, therefore, psalms and other chants were sung especially about the Blessed Mary, which were in general recited on the day of the consecration of the church. As the church is the mother of all saints and holds the name of virginity, that is to say the virginity of mind and faith, which should be preferred to the virginity of the body, she is called the Bride of Christ. That is why it was said: «I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ» (II Cor. 11, 2), and so the Blessed Mary is named both Virgin and most saintly of saints³⁹.

It was mainly the virginal motherhood of Mary, which gained increasing influence on this

«bell-chasuble», but which shall not be examined here in detail, is kept today in the Swiss National Museum in Zurich (fig. 13). See SCHMEDDING, *Romanische Madonnen der Schweiz*, p. 73-75.

35. «[La Virgen de Ger] [v]iste traje rojo, y lleva encima una especie de casulla cerrada de color azul verdoso que evoca probablemente la identificación ideológica de la Virgen Maria con la Iglesia» (Juan AINAUD DE LASARTE, *Museo de Cataluña. Arte románico* (Grandes Pinacotecas/Museos de España), Museu d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona (Exh. cat.), Madrid, 1980, p. 124). In such a way see also, for example, CARBONELL I ESTELLER and PAGÈS I PARETAS et al., *Romanesque art guide*, p. 67-68; CAMPS I SÒRIA, *Imatge de la Mare de Déu de Ger*, p. 149; LLARÀS USÓN, *Marededéu de Ger*, p. 282.

36. Here it has to be remarked, that the research on the Madonna from Ruhpolding curiously doesn't suggest any iconographical interpretation of the chasuble at all. Cf. HARTIG, *Unsere Liebe Frau von Ruhpolding*, p. 165.

37. Since Early Christian times Ecclesia was depicted as female figure with imperial traits in the visual arts. The female figure, which is enthroned on the top of a church building, from the mural painting-program from St. Quirze de Pedret (fig. 21), can be seen as an example for such an Ecclesia personification in Romanesque Catalonia. Cf. Agathe SCHMIDDUNSER, *Die Wandmalereien von St. Quirze de Pedret. Das ikonologische Programm und dessen Einbindung in das historische Umfeld*, M.A.-Thesis, München, 1990, p. 47-52 (Schriften aus dem Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität München, 50). For the Carolingian Mary-Ecclesia typology see Leo SCHEFFCZYK, *Das Mariengeheimnis in Frömmigkeit und Lehre der Karolingerzeit*, Leipzig, 1959, p. 390-428, *Erfurter theologische Studien*, 5.

38. See Adolf KATZENELLENBOGEN, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, Baltimore, 1959, p. 59-61.

39. «In hoc itaque Assumptionis festo psalmi atque alia quae generatim diei consueverunt in Dedicatione ecclesiae, speciatim de B. Maria cantatur. Ut enim Ecclesia mater est omnium sanctorum, nomenque tenet virginitatis, videlicet mentis ac fidei, quae corporis praefertur virginitati, sponsa Christi dicta. Unde illud, Despondi vos uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo (II Cor. XI), sic profecto B. Maria dicta et Virgo est, et sanctissima sanctorum» (Rationale divinorum officiorum, PL, vol. 202, col. 150). Cf. also KATZENELLENBOGEN, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, p. 60.

40. «Indem Maria Geburtswehen erleidet, bildet sie jenen vitalen Akt vor, in dem die Kirche durch das Hervorbringen neuer Glieder fruchtbar wird» (SCHEFFCZYK, *Das Mariengeheimnis in Frömmigkeit und Lehre*, p. 405). For the female aspect of this conception see Caroline WALKER BYNUM, *Jesus as Mother. Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 1982, p. 147.

41. «Sicut enim Christi mater virgo concepit, virgo peperit, virgo permansit, sic mater Ecclesia, Christi sponsa, lavacro aquae in verbo Christianos populos quotidie generat, ut virgo permaneat» (*De Nativitate Domini*, PL, vol. 162, col. 570). Cf. also KATZENELLENBOGEN, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral*, p. 59-60.

42. See Marie-Louise THÉREL, *Les symboles de l'Ecclesia dans la création iconographique de l'art chrétien du IIIe au VIe siècle*, Rom, 1973, p. 12 and p. 62.

43. Cf. Alois MÜLLER, *Ecclesia-Maria. Die Einheit Marias und der Kirche*, 2nd rev. ed., Freiburg/Schweiz, 1955 (first 1951), p. 181-208, Paradosis, Beiträge zur Geschichte der alchristlichen Literatur und Theologie, V.

44. «Et si consideres, Christum parit: quia membra ejus sunt, qui baptizantur. Vos estis, inquit Apostolus, corpus Christi et membra (I Cor. XII, 27). Si ergo membra Christi parit, Mariae simillima est» (sermon 213, PL, vol. 38, col. 1064). Cf. also MÜLLER, *Ecclesia-Maria*, p. 198.

45. «Quomodo autem non ad partum Virginis pertinetis, quando Christi membra estis? Caput vestrum peperit Maria, vos Ecclesia. Nam ipsa quoque et mater et virgo est: mater visceribus charitatis, virgo integritate fidei et pietatis. Populos parit, sed unius membra sunt, cujus ipsa est corpus et conjux, etiam in hoc similitudinem gerens illius virginis, quia et in multis mater est unitatis» (sermon 192, PL, vol. 38, cols. 1012-1013). Cf. also MÜLLER, *Ecclesia-Maria*, p. 199.

46. See for example Joseph BRAUN, «Presbyterat», in Joseph BRAUN (ed.), *Handlexikon der katholischen Dogmatik*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1926, p. 233.

47. See René LAURENTIN, *Marie. L'Eglise et le Sacerdoce*, vol. 1, Paris, 1952, p. 206. Cf. also SCHMEDDING, *Romanische Madonnen der Schweiz*, p. 75.

48. «[...] [V]idi dominam meam, stantem secus altare, in veste, qualis est casula sacerdotalis [...]» (ECKBERTUS, *Vita Sanctae Elisabeth* (dated ca. 1152), PL, vol. 195, col. 130). Cf. also LAURENTIN, *Marie. L'Eglise et le Sacerdoce*, p. 206; Stephan BEISEL, *Geschichte der Verehrung*



Figure 14. Madonna of the cathedral from Poreč, 6th century, mosaic, Poreč/ Parenzo (Istria), Euphrasius Basilica, conch of the middle apse. Illustration from Milan Prelog, *Die Euphrasius Basilika von Poreč* (Monumenta Artis Croatiae, first series/vol. 4), Zagreb, 1986, plate of illustrations.

equation of Mary with Ecclesia of the High Middle Ages, because in the eyes of many contemporary theologians it could symbolize allegorically the fertile aspect of the church, which becomes apparent by preaching and performing the sacrament of baptism⁴⁰. Thus Ivo of Chartres (1040-1116), for example, writes in a sermon script on the nativity of Christ:

In such a way as the Mother of Christ conceived as Virgin, gave birth as Virgin and remained a virgin, so shall Mother Church, the Bride of Christ, which brings forth Christian peoples by the word in the bath of water, remain as a virgin⁴¹.

The idea of comparing the church's mission of «giving birth to godly peoples» with Mary's Immaculate Conception, had already been developed in the Patristic period⁴². In the 4th/5th century it was chiefly Augustine (354-430), whose complex theological explanations were much-admired in the High Middle Ages, who already had formulated this conception multifariously in a very impressive manner⁴³. Augustine's sermon number 213 may serve as a striking example:

And when you look at it precisely, she [the Church] gives birth to Christ, because the baptized are his limbs. «You are the body of Christ and his limbs», says the Apostle (I Cor. 12, 27). If she [the Church] therefore gives birth to the limbs of Christ, she is exceedingly similar to Mary⁴⁴.

The following quotation of a Christmas sermon from Augustine focuses this Early Christian typology of Mary-Ecclesia even more aptly:

How could you [the faithful] not belong to the child-birth of the Virgin, when you are the limbs of Christ? Mary gave birth to your Head and the Church gave birth to you. For she [the Church] is also both mother and virgin: she is mother by means of deeply love, virgin by means of the integrity of faith and piety. She gives birth to peoples, but these are all limbs of the sole one [Christ] whose body and bride she is. In that respect, too, she is similar to that Virgin, because in many she is the mother of unity⁴⁵.

As for the equation of Mary-Ecclesia in Romanesque and even in Patristic times the Mother of God thus symbolized without a doubt the primary task of the church institution, which becomes evident mainly by preaching, as already remarked. Due to the fact, that this task of the institutionalized church is above all a ministerial-priestly one⁴⁶, the hypothesis of the Romanesque Madonna sculptures' chasuble serving as a symbol in order to give in the visual arts a pictorial expression to the significance of the Virgin as type of the hierarchical (priestly) church is, in my opinion, reinforced. According to René Laurentin, anyhow, the conception of Mary as a sacramental priest had already been developed in the 12th century, although the problem of Mary's ministerial priesthood did not emerge until about 1245 under Albert the Great (died 1280), when it penetrated intensive theological discussion in the context of the «Systematic Mariology»⁴⁷. Among other things, for example, the vision of Elizabeth of Schönau (ca. 1129-1164), which Laurentin is citing, verifies this:

I have seen my Mistress (Dominam meam) in a vestment, which is identical to the priestly chasuble, standing next to the altar⁴⁸.

This interpretation of the chasuble motif of the Romanesque sculptures is also backed up—in my opinion—by the fact, that—according to Alois Müller—Mary already has clear ministe-



Figure 15.
Episcopal cathedra from Girona, ca. 1038, white marble, Girona, cathedral. Illustration from Marcel Durlat, *Hispania Romanica. Die hohe Kunst der romanischen Epoche in Spanien*, Wien/München, 1962 (Reprint 1967), plate of illustrations.



Figure 16.
Apse conch from Sant Joan de Tredós, end of the 11th century, fresco, New York, The Cloisters Collection. Illustration from Jordi Camps i Sòria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guía visual arte románico*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1st ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 40.

rial-priestly traits⁴⁹ in the Mary-Ecclesia concept of the Church Fathers:

Doch haben wir die Identität Marias und der Kirche und deren innerstes Wesen in der Begnadigung, in der Gottvereinigung erkannt. Und dort sprach Maria und spricht die Kirche kein ministerielles, amtliches, sondern ein durchaus eigenes Wort, ihr persönliches Ja. Darin erfüllt sich Maria und die Kirche, und das amtliche Priestertum ist etwas, das sich daraus ergibt, das keimhaft darin enthalten ist⁵⁰.

That the ministerial-priestly aspect of the Virgin concerning the equation of Mary-Ecclesia of Early Christian times most probably must be lent an even greater importance, than Müller has assumed, shows the fact, that in this period Mary was not only occasionally given a priestly dignity, for the reason of her descent from the line of the Levi Priests of the Old Testament⁵¹. The Early Christian Madonna representation from Poreč/ Parenzo (fig. 14) reinforces this hypothesis, too. In my opinion, Marie-Louise Thérél namely has realized correctly, that the Virgin has to be seen mainly as a symbol of the church apart from her significance as Theotokos (Dei Genitrix), because she gathers together the faithful, which are personified by Euphrasius, the Saints and the deacon with his son, around Christ or around the incarnated Word of God, respectively⁵². In my opinion, this ministerial-priestly function, which Thérél indirectly ascribes to the Mother of God, is above all clearly underlined by the bishop's pallium, which can be seen beneath Mary's outer garment⁵³.

Conclusion

Almost certainly, the chasubles of the Madonna statues from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4) symbolize allegorically Mary's function as symbol of the hierarchical (priestly) church, as should be pointed out above all by the theological exegesis. The Marian figures embody therefore even the High Middle Ages' theological conception of interpreting the Mother of God as prototype of the sacramental ministerial priesthood, even if in a smaller extent as Christ⁵⁴.

Curiously, just the hieratical form of composition of Romanesque Madonna sculptures in general backs up, in Laurentin's opinion, this hypothesis, though Laurentin did not seem to realize that some Romanesque Madonna statues show Mary in the chasuble⁵⁵.

In the subsequent paragraph it will be pointed out, that almost certainly the formal-stylistic shape of the throne representations of the

Marias in Deutschland während des Mittelalters. Ein Beitrag zur Religionswissenschaft und Kunstgeschichte, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1909 (Reprint Darmstadt 1972), p. 280-281.

49. See MÜLLER, *Ecclesia-Maria*, p. 237-238.

50. Ibid., p. 238 («But we have realized Mary's and the church's identity and their innermost character in the act of grace and in the uniting with God. There Mary spoke and the church speaks not a ministerial word, but quite an own one, her per-

sonal answer in the affirmative. In this Mary and the church find their fulfillment. The ministerial priesthood is something, which follows from this, and which is included therein in an embryonic form»; translation: author).

51. Cf. John WIJNGAARDS, «The Devotion to Mary as Priest», in John WIJNGAARDS, *The Ordination of Women in the Catholic Church*. Unmasking a Cuckoo's Egg Tradition, New York, 2001, p. 159-160.

52. See THÉREL, *Les symboles de l'Ecclesia dans la création icono-*

graphique, p. 148-149; Marie-Louise THÉREL, *A l'origine du décor du portail occidental de Notre-Dame de Senlis: Le triomphe de la Vierge-Église*, Paris, 1984, p. 105.

53. Schubert thought to recognize an allusion to Christ's Sacerdotium in Mary's pallium episcopale. Cf. Ursula SCHUBERT, «Christus, Priester und König. Eine politisch-theologische Darstellungsweise in der frühchristlichen Kunst», in *Festschrift für Endre von Ivánka*, Salzburg, 1973/74, p. 201-237, Kairos. Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft und Theologie, XV, No. 1-4.

54. Not until the 20th century the theological conception of Mary's priesthood inevitably lost importance, because in 1913 the Holy Office forbade, for example, the usual practice of portraying Mary in priestly garments. Since 1926 it was furthermore forbidden to adore Mary as a priest any longer. See WIJNGAARDS, *The Devotion to Mary as Priest*, p. 162-163. Cf. also René LAURENTIN, *Mutter Jesu – Mutter der Menschen. Zum Verständnis der marianischen Lehre nach dem Konzil*, Limburg, 1967 (original: *La Vierge au Concile*, Paris, 1965), p. 135-136.

55. See LAURENTIN, *Marie. L'Eglise et le Sacerdoce*, vol. 1, p. 206. Cardile mistakenly assumes that iconographic motifs, which refer to the conception of Mary's priesthood, continuously developing since Early Christian times, can be seen on the panel paintings of the 15th century for the first time. Cf. Paul Y. CARDILE, «Mary as priest: Mary's Sacerdotal position in the Visual Arts», in *Arte Cristiana*, LXXII (1984), p. 199-208.

56. See FORSYTH, *The Throne of Wisdom*, p. 90.

57. Cf. Francis WORMALD, «The Throne of Solomon and St. Edward's Chair», in Millard MEISS (ed.), *Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, vol. 1, New York, 1961, p. 537, *De Artibus Opuscula*, XL.

58. «La Madone [la Vierge d'Hix] est assise sur un coussin posé sur une trône dont le dossier est semi-circulaire. Les montants vus de face sont décorés de rinceaux, comme à Ger et de façon analogue au trône épiscopal de Gérone d'époque romane» (DELCOR, *Les Vierges romanes de Cerdagne et Conflent*, p. 54). In such a way also see Antoni NOGUERA I MASSA, *Les marededéus romàniques de les terres gironines*, Barcelona, 1977, p. 96, *Artstudi*, Art Romànic, 5. For the bishop's throne from Girona see André GRABAR, «Trônes d'Évêques en Espagne du Moyen Age (first 1954)», in André GRABAR, *L'art de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age*, vol. 1, Paris, 1968, p. 395.

59. Cf. James J. RORIMER, *Medieval Monuments at the Cloisters as they were and as they are*, revised by Katherine Serell Rorimer, New York, 1972, p. 45-47.

60. See Peter K. KLEIN, «The Romanesque in Catalonia», in John P. O'NEILL (ed.), *The Art of medieval Spain a.d. 500-1200*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Exh. cat.), New York, 1993, p. 194.



Figure 17. Apse from Santa Maria d'Esterrí d'Àneu, end of the 11th century, 760 x 460 x 240 cm, fresco, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Jordi Camps i Sòria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guia visual arte romànic*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1^a ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 37.

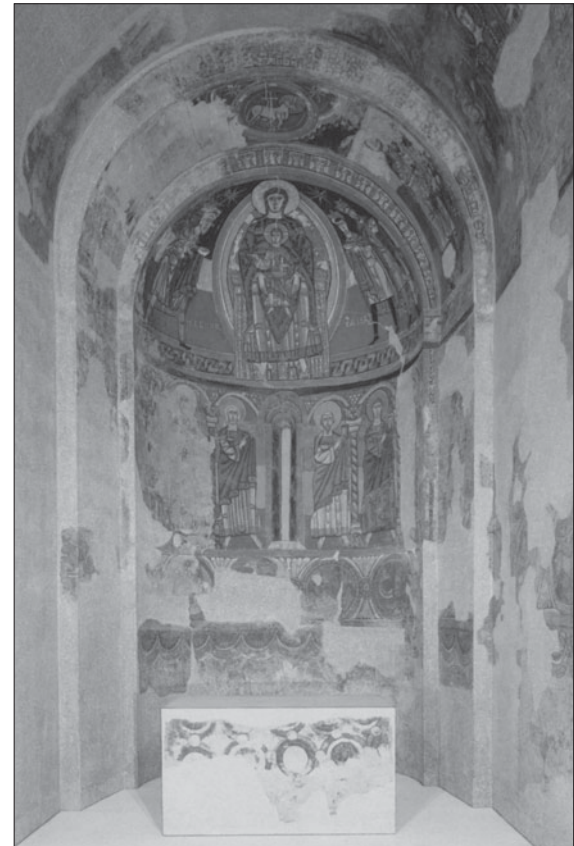


Figure 18. Central apse from Santa Maria de Taüll, ca. 1123, 655 x 370 x 500 cm, fresco, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Jordi Camps i Sòria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guia visual arte romànic*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1^a ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 75.

«Chasuble Madonnas» from Ger and Ix (figs. 1-2) meaningfully backs up Mary's significance as type of the hierarchical church.

Is the iconographic motif of the throne chair an episcopal cathedra?

During the Romanesque period the ivory throne of Solomon (III Kings 10, 18-20, Vulg.), as described in the Old Testament, has not only been exclusively associated with the theological Marian sedes sapientiae concept, but sometimes also with contemporaneous, secular royal thrones⁵⁶. Because of the fact, that this secular interpretation of Solomon's throne was commonly used at least since the late 12th century⁵⁷, the throne representations of Romanesque Madonna statues also ought to be more and more alluded to the regal, majestic traits of the Virgin, which —as already noted— were especially emphasized at the Marian depictions not until the High Middle Ages. Due to

Mathias Delcor's researches mainly, in my opinion, this hypothesis most probably is not true of the concerning wooden «Chasuble Madonnas» (figs. 1-4). As Delcor correctly realized, the throne depictions of the two oldest «Chasuble Madonnas» from Ger and Ix (figs. 1-2) namely show clear analogies to the episcopal throne from Girona Cathedral (fig. 15), dated about 1038. In addition to the similar construction scheme it is mainly the tendril motif of the episcopal cathedra, which decorates the front side of the rectangular throne posts, and which finds its equivalent in a slightly modified form, in the throne depictions of the sculptures (figs. 1-2)⁵⁸. Delcor and Noguera i Massa, who associates himself with Delcor, however didn't offer an interpretation of this fact. Because of the fact, that the throne chairs of the sculptures allude to the famous episcopal cathedra from Girona with the utmost probability, they refer, in my opinion, not only to the main significance of Mary as Throne of Wisdom, but also to her function as type of the hierarchical church. The throne representations of the sculptures from Ger and Ix (figs. 1-2) supplement, in contrast to the ones



Figure 19. Apse conch of the central apse from Santa Maria de Taüll (see also fig. 18), fresco, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Jordi Camps i Sòria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guia visual arte románico*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1st ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 76.

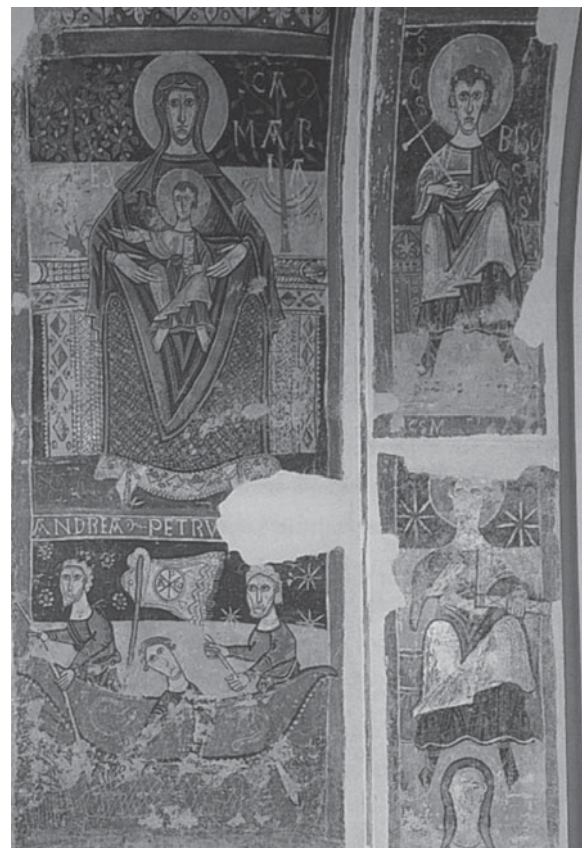


Figure 20. Madonna depiction from Sant Pere de Sorpe, middle of the 12th century, fresco, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Eduard Carbonell i Esteller, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, et al., *Romanesque art guide*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 3rd ed., Barcelona, 2003, p. 121.

from the Targasona- and Talló-Madonna (figs. 3-4), therefore particularly this meaning dimension of Mary, which, however, is presented primarily by the concise motif of the priestly chasuble to the viewer.

The iconographic relation between the statues and the Madonna depictions of the Romanesque mural paintings in the Pyrenean Valleys of North-West Catalonia

Until now, research has failed to relate the wooden «Chasuble Madonnas» (figs. 1-4), which are under discussion in this article, to the Madonna depictions of the Romanesque mural paintings in the Pyrenean Valleys of North-West Catalonia (figs. 16-20). Due to the fact that these Madonna depictions show Mary also with a chasuble, as it shall be verified, for example, by the example of the depiction of the Madonna

from Sant Joan de Tredós (fig. 16), there must be, in my opinion, a direct iconographical relation between the painted Madonna depictions and the wooden sculptures from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló.

The Madonna of the apse conch from Sant Joan de Trédos (Aran Valley)

The fresco of the apse conch (fig. 16) from the church Sant Joan de Tredós, situated in the Aran Valley, is kept today at The Cloisters (Metropolitan Museum of Art) in New York⁵⁹. According to recent research this mural painting, which is related to the circle of the school of the Pedret Master⁶⁰ by stylistic features, has to be dated already to the end of the 11th century⁶¹.

The depiction (fig. 16) is preserved in fair condition and shows in a rigidly frontal pose a Throne of Wisdom Madonna as *Majestas Mariae*⁶² in the context of the Adoration of the Magi⁶³. The guardian figures of the archangels Michael and Gabriel, which must be interpreted as Italo-Byzantine motifs, flank the scenery on the left and on the right⁶⁴.

61. See CAMPS I SÒRIA and PAGÈS I PARETAS, *Guia visual arte románico*, p. 40. In such a way already see Anne COURTILLÉ, «Les majestés mariales dans la peinture monumentale à l'époque romane. Signification, contexte et style», *Revue d'Auvergne*, 1 (1997), p. 76.

62. On the depiction of the *Majestas Mariae* the enthroned Virgin and Child are framed by a mandorla, which is derived from the *Majestas Domini* iconography and which alludes above all to the divinity of the Infant Christ. Cf. André GRABAR, «The Virgin in a Mandorla of Light (first 1955)», in André GRABAR, *L'art de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Âge*, vol. 1, Paris, 1968, p. 535-541.

63. The invention of this special iconographical apse-scheme, which can be found only in the sphere of the Catalan mural painting, is attributed to the Pedret school. See KLEIN, *The Romanesque in Catalonia*, p. 194.

64. See Florens DEUCHLER, «A propos des absides de San Juan de Tredós et de Santa Maria de Tahull», in *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa*, 5 (1974), p. 31.

65. The information, that the graphical structures on the right side of Marian figure's shoulder part verifies the existence of a separate blue veil, was given to me by Christina Alphonso from The Cloisters (Metropolitan Museum of Art) in New York. Previous research, as for example DEUCHLER, *A propos des absides de San Juan de Tredós et de Santa Maria de Taüll*, p. 29; COURTILLÉ, «Les majestés mariales dans la peinture monumentale», p. 76 don't make any statement concerning the clothing of the Marian figure at all.

66. In such a way see DEUCHLER, *A propos des absides de San Juan de Tredós et de Santa Maria de Taüll*, p. 29.

67. Literary sources belonging to the context of the foundation of the church in the year 1085 suggest such an early dating of the mural paintings. Cf. CARBONELL I ESTELLER, PÀGÈS I PARETAS et al., *Romanesque art guide*, p. 51.

68. [...] [L]e maître de Santa Maria d'Àneu avait reproduit sa composition dans une église voisine, celle de Tredós, dans le Val d'Aran» (Marcel DURLIAT, «L'Iconographie d'abside en Catalogne», in *Les Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa*, 5 (1974), p. 111).

69. See DURLIAT, *L'Iconographie d'abside en Catalogne*, p. 112.

70. Research assumes, that the Master from Santa Maria de Taüll has derived the iconographical basic scheme of the apse conch from the depictions of the Pedret school (figs. 16-17), which have been described previously. Cf. KLEIN, *The Romanesque in Catalonia*, p. 194.

71. See Juan AINAUD DE LASARTE, *Art Romànic. Art Guia*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), Barcelona, 1973, p. 109.

72. «[La Mare de Déu] [v]esteix una ampla túnica i casulla sacerdotal. Porta també un vel curt que cau damunt les espatlles sota un nimbe groc» (Juan VIVANCOS PÉREZ, «Santa Maria de Taüll», in *Catalunya Romànica*, vol. 1, *Introducció a l'estudi de l'art romànic català*. Fons d'art romànic català del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona, 1994, p. 329).

73. COURTILLÉ, «Les majestés mariales dans la peinture monumentale», p. 75. («The Virgin Mother, the Virgin of the Epiphany, doubtlessly is seen here as Virgin-Ecclesia, too. The wide cassock, which she is wearing over a long tunic and which is decorated with a wide braid in the breast area, can indeed suggest an ecclesiastic vestment»; translation: author).

74. The depiction of Cain's offering has not survived. Possibly the depiction of Abel's offering

By examining the enthroned Mother of God, which is set on a chest-like seat with cushion, with regard to her clothing it becomes apparent, that she must be related to the Marian figures of the wooden «Chasuble Madonnas». In addition to the red under-tunic and a separate veil the nimbed Mother of God almost certainly specifically wears a blue «bell-chasuble», which is gathered up by her arms. However, it has to be remarked at this point, that the separation of the blue veil from the chasuble at the present state of preservation of the mural painting is hardly discernible, even at the original. Thus, graphical structures today can be made out at the right part of Mary's shoulder only, marking the ending of the veil, which is decorated by a white hem⁶⁵.

To sum up, you can say, that the uncrowned Virgin from the fresco of the apse conch from Sant Joan de Tredós must be understood as symbol of the hierarchical church, apart from her foremost significance as Theotokos or Throne of Wisdom⁶⁶, respectively. Mary's priestly garment suggests this hypothesis.

The Madonna of the apse conch from Santa Maria d'Esterri d'Àneu (Àneu Valley)

Another depiction of a sedes sapientiae Madonna in the sphere of the Catalan mural painting, though unfortunately heavily damaged, is from the apse paintings of Santa Maria d'Esterri d'Àneu (fig. 17), which today is kept in the National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC) in Barcelona. The fresco of the apse conch of these mural paintings from the Àneu Valley, dating back to the end of the 11th century, shows a Madonna edged by archangels and Magi⁶⁷. Due to its bad condition of preservation no provable statements can any longer be made upon the blue outer garment of the Marian figure. However, research is assuming that the painted apse conch was almost identical with the apse vaulting from Tredós (fig. 16) by stylistic and iconographic features and has perhaps been done by the same master of the Pedret school, as the preserved fragments suggest⁶⁸. In my opinion, one might therefore rightfully assume that the Marian figure from Santa Maria d'Esterri d'Àneu was dressed with a high medieval chasuble, too and had also been received as symbol of the hierarchical church apart from its foremost significance as Throne of Wisdom. It cannot be ruled out that this ecclesiological priestly connotation of Mary is even reinforced possibly by the two donor clerics from the left apse wall located on the top of each other. Moreover, the one cleric, who is presenting the Holy Bible to

the observer in his left veiled hand (fig. 10), is also dressed in a blue priestly chasuble⁶⁹.

The Madonna of the apse conch from Santa Maria de Taüll (Boi Valley)

The painted central apse from the parish church Santa Maria de Taüll in the Boi Valley (fig. 18), which was consecrated on 11th December 1123, shows in the apse conch (fig. 19) a frontally arranged sedes sapientiae Madonna in a mandorla, which on the left and on the right is surrounded by the adoring Magi⁷⁰. Since the exact date of the consecration of the church is known, the apse frescoes, which today can be seen in the National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC) in Barcelona can be dated with certainty about the year 1123⁷¹. The nimbed figure of Mary (fig. 19) is wearing a Romanesque sacerdotal chasuble in addition to a red under-tunic and a separate blue veil, as for example Juan Vivancos Pérez has correctly realized⁷². In the opinion of Anne Courtillé it is evident, that this chasuble, which is decorated with little stars and a broad breast braid, alludes to Mary's significance as symbol of the hierarchical church:

Vierge mère, la Vierge de l'Épiphanie est sans doute considérée ici aussi comme Vierge Ecclesia. L'ample chape qu'elle porte, brodée sur le buste d'un large galon sur la longue tunique, peut suggérer en effet un vêtement ecclésiastique⁷³.

In my opinion, not only the «bell-chasuble» in Santa Maria suggests the hypothesis, that the Virgin from the Marian church at Taüll (fig. 19) must be also considered as a type of the institutionalized church. Additional iconographic motifs of the apse program, which have to be seen in the closest context of the «Chasuble Madonna» in the apse conch and which give the program a dominant Eucharistic and ecclesiological character, must be cited here as well. Thus, in 1974 Florens Deuchler, for example, could prove convincingly, that the apse program is characterized by a dominant idea concerning the sacrificial offering, which already becomes clear by the confrontation of the Adoration of the Magi and the offering scenes of Cain and Abel of the Old Testament on the intrados of the preceding apse arch⁷⁴. However, mainly the depiction of the offering of Abel and the depiction of the Lamb of God (Agnus Dei) on the crown of the arch clearly connect the apse program, as Deuchler has realized correctly, with the Eucharist as prefigurations of Christ's sacrifice (fig. 18)⁷⁵. A meaningful iconographical linking of this dominant Eucharistic symbolism

with the institution of the church is, in my opinion, not only achieved by the apostolic college —led by Peter and Paul⁷⁶— which is depicted on the apse wall below the conch, but mainly by the «Chasuble Madonna» in the apse vaulting.

As already mentioned, previous research has missed to link the Marian depiction from Santa Maria de Taüll with the wooden «Chasuble Madonnas» (figs. 1-4), which are the topic of this article. Nevertheless, it has to be remarked here, that some authors had already assumed a connection between the Marian figure from Santa Maria and contemporaneous Madonna statues, but didn't examine this problem further and didn't bring up the wooden «Chasuble Madonnas» from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4) for discussion. Thus, for example, Courtille curiously thinks, that the mandorla, which frames the Madonna with Child, is an allusion to the candlelight, which usually lightened up medieval Madonna statues in the church building⁷⁷. Recent research in the circle of the National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC) relates the figure of Mary to contemporaneous wood sculptures, too. According to their opinion, the compositional stiffness of the enthroned Marian figure (fig. 19) suggests this hypothesis and makes it credible, that wooden Madonna sculptures could have served as models for the fresco of the apse conch from Santa Maria⁷⁸.

The Madonna depiction from Sant Pere de Sorpe (Àneu Valley)

Today the fresco fragment with the Madonna depiction from the church Sant Pere de Sorpe in the Àneu Valley (fig. 20) is located in the National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC) in Barcelona. Originally it decorated the intrados of the first of the two triumphal arches, which separated the nave of the Romanesque parish church from the choir or from the apse, respectively⁷⁹.

In addition to a red under-tunic and a blue «bell-chasuble» the nimbed Virgin is dressed with a separate veil that falls widely over her shoulders. On closer examination one notices that the Madonna depiction, which is dated to the middle of the 12th century⁸⁰, refers to the artistically more valuable Madonna depiction from Santa Maria de Taüll (fig. 19) with regard to its formal-stylistic structure. It must be therefore assumed that the Madonna depiction from Santa Maria had been served as a model for the almost contemporaneous fresco from Sorpe, which was done by a late member of the Pedret school⁸¹. The fresco on the intrados from Sant Pere doesn't show Mary as Majestas Mariae in connection with the Adoration of the Magi, but shows her enthroned between two little trees. Hélène Toubert has proved credibly, that these representations of the

trees refer to the arbor-bona-ecclesia/arbor-mala-synagoga iconography⁸².

The tree with a strong root, dense foliage and coloured fruits stands for the triumphant Ecclesia⁸³. The rootless, almost non deciduous, withered tree, which evokes the form of the seven-branched Jewish candelabrum to the left of the Madonna, symbolizes the Synagoga, the allegorical image of the Old Covenant, which had been overcome⁸⁴. In Toubert's opinion, the enthroned Mother of God must be therefore understood as mediator between the two Testaments, because of the fact, that Mary as New Eve bears Christ and through this founds the New Covenant or the institution of the Holy Church, respectively⁸⁵. The fact, that another symbol of the church —the ship of the miraculous haul of fish— is located below the Madonna depiction (fig. 20), backs up this thesis according to Toubert⁸⁶. These dominant iconographical motifs, which refer to the institution of the church and stand in the closest context of the Madonna depiction, confirm, in my opinion, very plausible the hypothesis, that the Virgin from Sorpe (fig. 20), dressed with the chasuble, must be understood as symbol of the hierarchical church apart from her meaning as Throne of Wisdom⁸⁷.

Conclusion

As it should have turned out in the last part of the article the iconographic type of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna» doesn't find its earliest representatives in the art of wood carving, but in the Romanesque mural paintings from the Pyrenean Valleys of North-West Catalonia (figs. 16-20), which must be dated roughly between the end of the 11th and the middle of the 12th century. The Madonna depictions from Sant Joan de Tredós, Santa Maria de Taüll and Sant Pere de Sorpe give evidence to this⁸⁸. Because of this fact, which was overlooked by previous research, Edouard Junyent's hypothesis, that there must have been most probably very early wood statues of the Madonna, which showed Mary in the priestly chasuble and a separate cover for the head, is backed up⁸⁹. The iconographic Madonna type of the sculptures from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4) isn't therefore a iconographical invention of the end of the 12th century, as Noguera i Massa wrongly assumes⁹⁰.

In my opinion, these sculptures furthermore were of special importance in Romanesque Catalonia in contrast to other contemporaneous Madonna statues, which do not show Mary in the sacerdotal chasuble, but in the fully developed habit of the Queen of Heaven. This is manifested by the fact that the type of the «Chasuble Madonna», as the stock of monuments suggests,

was fixed falsely at the reinstallation of the mural paintings in the museum (MNAC) on the right side of the apse arch, as seen from the position of the viewer. Cf. DEUCHLER, *A propos des absides de San Juan de Tredós et de Santa Maria de Tabull*, p. 30.

75. See *ibid.*, p. 30.

76. Cf. CARBONELL I ESTELLER, PAGÈS I PARETAS et al., *Romanesque art guide*, p. 99.

77. «[...] [La mandorle] [...] pourrait suggérer la lumière de cierges qui vellaient en général autour des statues [...]» (COURTILLÉ, «Les majestés mariales dans la peinture monumentale», p. 75).

78. See CARBONELL I ESTELLER, PAGÈS I PARETAS et al., *Romanesque art guide*, p. 98.

79. See *ibid.*, p. 122.

80. Dating by DALMASES and JOSÉ I PITARCH, *Els inicis i l'art romànic*, p. 278.

81. Cf. KLEIN, *The Romanesque in Catalonia*, p. 195, note 88.

82. See Hélène TOUBERT, «Une fresque de San Pedro de Sorpe (Catalogne) et le thème iconographique de L'Arbor Bona-Ecclesia, Arbor Mala-Synagoga (first 1969)», in Hélène TOUBERT, *Un art dirigé. Réforme grégorienne et iconographie*, Paris, 1990, p. 65-89. Cf. also DURLIAT, *L'iconographie d'abside en Catalogne*, p. 113-114.

83. The inscription —EX— beside the left tree-trunk, as seen from the position of the viewer, must be related —in Toubert's opinion— to the inscription ECREXIA, which is assigned to the female personification of the church in the right side absidole from Sant Quirze de Pedet (fig. 21). Cf. TOUBERT, *Une fresque de San Pedro de Sorpe*, p. 71.

84. See *ibid.*, p. 71-72.

85. See *ibid.*, p. 83.

86. See *ibid.*, p. 85.

87. It has to be remarked here, that Toubert doesn't take into consideration, that Mary is depicted in a priestly garment. Toubert doesn't pay attention to the garment type of the Madonna depiction.

88. That the Madonna from Santa Maria d'Esterri d'Àneu showed Mary in the chasuble can be taken for granted but must remain hypothetical in last consequence.

89. Cf. JUNYENT, *Catalogne Romane*, vol. 2, p. 270.

90. See NOGUERA I MASSA, *Les marededéus romàniques*, p. 93.

91. However, it has to be remarked, that in the big abbeys and cathedrals of Catalonia (cf. for example the abbey church of Ripoll) no Romanesque mural paintings have survived.

92. See JUNYENT, *Catalogne Romane*, vol. 2, p. 270.

93. Cf. Hélène TOUBERT, «Les Représentations de l'Ecclesia dans l'art des Xe-XIIe siècles», in Hélène TOUBERT, *Un art dirigé. Réforme grégorienne et iconographie*, Paris, 1990, p. 37-63.

94. BÜCHSEL, *Ottonische Madonna*, p. 61 («In the Investiture Controversy the authorization of royal supremacy was disputed. Church herself proclaimed as true Bride of Christ and his sole representation. Mary herself became the epitome of this ecclesiastical image»; translation: author). For the enhanced position of Mary during the time of the medieval church reform movements see Daniel Russo, «Les représentations mariales dans l'art d'Occident du Moyen Âge. Essai sur la formation d'une tradition iconographique», in Dominique IOGNA-PRAT, Eric PALAZZO and Daniel Russo (eds.), *Marie. Le Culte de la Vierge dans la société médiévale*, Paris, 1996, p. 232-249.



Figure 21. Ecclesia depiction from Sant Quirze de Pedret, right side absidiole, end of the 11th century, fresco, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Eduard Carbonell i Esteller, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, et al., *Romanesque art guide*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 3rd ed., Barcelona, 2003, p. 45.

plays an important and almost dominant role in Romanesque mural painting of Catalonia regarding Marian depiction⁹¹.

Junyent's hypothesis, that the iconographic motif of the chasuble possibly could have been a feature of all the not surviving Madonna statues of Catalonia in general⁹², must remain unconfirmed up to now. However, it seems to be verified, that the assumed prototype of the wooden «Chasuble Madonna», like the Madonnas from the mural paintings and the Madonna statue from Ger (fig. 1), showed Mary without an additional crown above the veil.

Moreover, this comparison between the thematized wooden sculptures and the Madonna depictions of the Catalan mural paintings makes clear, that the Marian figure, dressed with the chasuble must be interpreted most probably as a symbol of the hierarchical church apart from its significance as Throne of Wisdom. It is for the most part the iconographical context of the Madonna depictions from Taüll (fig. 18) and Sorpe (fig. 20), which refers to the institution of the church or the Eucharist, respectively that backs up this hypothesis.

In the following paragraph of the present arti-



Figure 22. Madonna depiction from Sant Quirze de Pedret, vault of the right side absidiole, end of the 11th century, fresco, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Joaquín Yarza Luaces, Sant Quirze de Pedret, in: *Catalunya Romanica*, vol. 1: Introducció a l'estudi de l'art romànic català. Fons d'art romànic català del Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona, 1994, p. 351.

cle it shall be closer examined, if the iconographic type of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna» has possibly been conceived in the historical context of the contemporary church reform of the 11th and 12th century in Catalonia. At least, Toubert has already related the dominant ecclesiological motifs, which are placed around the Madonna depiction from Sorpe (fig. 20) to the Gregorian reform movement, which tried to renew the institution of the church morally⁹³.

The iconographic type of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna» and the church reform of the 11th and 12th century

In Romanesque art great attention was paid to the iconographic type of the enthroned Madonna. Martin Büchsel associates this development with the Investiture Controversy of the Gregorian church reform, which started at the end of the 11th century and in whose course Mary was made to a symbol for the striving for reform:

Im Investiturstreit wurde [...] [die] Legitimation der königlichen Macht bestritten. Die Kirche selber proklamierte sich als die wahre Braut Christi, als die einzige Vertretung Christi. Maria selber wurde zum Inbegriff dieses Kirchenbilde⁹⁴.



Figure 23.
Majestat Batlló, beginning of the second half of the 12th century, figure: 92 x 97 cm (without the part of the feet), cross: 155 x 120 cm, wood, polychromed, Barcelona, National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC). Illustration from Jordi Camps i Soria, Montserrat Pagès i Paretas, *Guia visual arte románico*, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (Exh. cat.), 1st ed., Barcelona, 2004, p. 87.



Figure 24.
Volto Santo, ca. 1200, figure: 278 x 245 cm, cross: 434 x 265 cm, wood, polychromed, Lucca, cathedral of San Martino. Illustration from Reiner Haussherr, *Das Imervardkreuz und der Volto-Santo-Typ*, in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstwissenschaft*, XVI (1962), p. 131.

95. Here it has to be remarked again, that previous research has not proposed any interpretation for the development of the iconographic type of the Romanesque «Chasuble Madonna» at all. The following attempt of explanation by the present article must therefore be understood as a first approach to this problem.

96. See KLEIN, *The Romanesque in Catalonia*, p. 185. Cf. also Ursula VONES-LIEBENSTEIN, *Saint Ruf und Spanien. Studien zur Verbreitung und zum Wirken der Regularkanoniker von Saint-Ruf in Avignon auf der Iberischen Halbinsel (11. und 12. Jahrhundert)*, 2 vols., Paris/Turnhout, 1996.

97. In this way for example KLEIN, *The Romanesque in Catalonia*, p. 194.

98. See SCHMIDDUNSER, *Die Wandmalereien von St. Quirze de Pedret*, p. 70-81. The church reforming program of Sant Quirze de Pedret had been probably conceived by the monastery of Ripoll, which was the religious centre of the high medieval Catalonia and which was subordinated to the reform monastery Saint-Victoire in Marseille in Southern France. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 79.

99. See *ibid.*, p. 47-52.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 70. («Mary in the vault functions as an example of virginity and at the same time as «Typus Ecclesiae», but with the emphasis on her motherhood»; translation: author).

101. Cf. Johannes LAUDAGE, *Priesterbild und Reformpapsttum im 11. Jahrhundert*, Ph. Diss., Köln/Wien, 1984, p. 251-304, Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte, 22.

In my opinion, it is therefore quite plausible, that the iconographic type of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna», which alludes to the ministerial church apart from the dominant conception of Mary as God bearer, could have its origins in the context of the church reform movement of the 11th and 12th century⁹⁵. After all, its ideas, which emanated from reform centres in Southern France like, for example, the collegiate church of Saint-Ruf in Avignon or the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Victor in Marseille, widely spread in Catalonia in the second half of the 11th century already⁹⁶. The fact, that the earliest preserved depiction of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna» at Sant Joan de Trédos (fig. 16) is ascribed to the Pedret school and must therefore be seen in close correlation with the mural paintings of the Romanesque church Sant Quirze de Pedret (Berguedà), also can back up this hypothesis. Agathe Schmiddunser was able to prove convincingly, that the eschatological-ecclesiological program of the mural paintings from Sant Quirze, which originate from the end of the 11th century⁹⁷, had been developed from the historical context of the endeavours of Gregorian reform in Catalonia and impressively glorifies the institution of the church⁹⁸. Thus, for example, the side apse to the right shows a female figure seated at the top of a

church building in royal garments (fig. 21), which, as Bride of Christ, is assigned to the depiction of the parable of the five wise and the five foolish Virgins, as a personification of the hierarchical church (Ecclesia)⁹⁹. According to Schmiddunser, the Mother of God and the Child, who are depicted in a medallion (fig. 22) in the vault of the same absidiole, belong to this context, too:

Maria im Gewölbe fungiert als Vorbild der Jungfräulichkeit und zugleich als «Typus Ecclesiae», wobei der Akzent auf ihre Mutterschaft gelegt ist¹⁰⁰.

Because of the almost complete destruction of the Madonna depiction (fig. 22) it is no longer possible to find out, if the Marian figure of Pedret possibly was dressed in a chasuble, even if the fragments of the Marian outer garment perfectly remind of the shape of the «bell-chasuble», falling over the forearms.

The subsequent paragraph of this article shall face the question, whether the «Chasuble Madonnas» from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4) could symbolize not only the contemporary church reform in general but also, in a closer sense, could stand for the new priestly ideal of the church reformers of the 11th and 12th century¹⁰¹.

102. Cf. Herbert KURZ, *Der Volto Santo von Lucca. Ikono-graphie und Funktion des Kruzifixus in der gegürteten Tunika im 11. Jahrhundert*, Ph. Diss., Regensburg, 1997, p. 99-102.

103. For the priestly ideal of Petrus Damiani see LAUDAGE, *Priesterbild und Reformpapsttum*, p. 185-206.

104. Cf. KURZ, *Der Volto Santo von Lucca*, p. 101.

105. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 133-134.

106. See WIJNGAARDS, *The Devotion to Mary as Priest*, p. 160.

107. «Plane sicut concipienti Deificae Virgini non virile semen influxit, sed virtus sancti Spiritus obumbravit; ita nunc in altari positum sacramentum eadem sancti Spiritus virtus est, quae vivicat: et necesse est, ut hoc pudica manus, et impolluta contingat» (Petrus DAMIANI, *Op. 18: Contra intemperantes Clericos*, PL, vol. 145, col. 388). Cf. also LAUDAGE, *Priesterbild und Reformpapsttum*, p. 199.

108. Dating by DALMASES and JOSÉ I PITARCH, *Els inicis i l'art romànic*, p. 255.

109. Even if it seems to be questionable in some points, that the author derives the whole motif stock of the sculpture from literary sources, which belong to the context of the priestly and canonical reform, respectively, and which, for example, should also explain the specific shapes of beard and hair, adequately verifies—in my opinion—his theory that this iconographic crucifix type stands for the new priestly ideal of the canonical reform. See KURZ, *Der Volto Santo von Lucca*, p. 71-87.



Figure 25.

Masaccio: Madonna with Child, 1426, provenance: Santa Maria del Carmine (Pisa), 135,3 x 73 cm, panel painting, London, National Gallery. Illustration from Paul Y. Cardile, *Mary as priest: Mary's Sacerdotal position in the Visual Arts*, in: *Arte Cristiana*, LXXII (1984), p. 203.

Must the wooden statues be related to the contemporary reform of the priesthood?

The distinctive priestly traits of the Marian figures raise—in my opinion—the question, if the «Chasuble Madonnas» (figs. 1-4), which are discussed in this article, even must be related to the closer context of the church reform of the 11th and 12th century, namely with the contemporaneous reform of the priesthood.

In medieval Catalonia this reform was mainly pushed by the canonical reform movement, which was adopted successfully from Italy and which came out against the concubinage of the priests and the usual practice of simony¹⁰². The Catalan reformers therefore called for communal life in chasteness and celibacy for the state

of clergy modeled on the Apostles, according to Petrus Damiani (ca. 1006/7-1072), who was one of the leading theoreticians of the Reform Papacy¹⁰³. As of the end of the 11th century chapters of Augustinian canons were founded in Romanesque Catalonia with increasing frequency, in which such a priestly ideal of life was led in the «vita communis»¹⁰⁴. During the 12th century the canonical reform movement maintained its importance, too. This resulted in further foundations of chapters of canons regular¹⁰⁵.

Because of these church-historical circumstances the theological concept of Mary as a concrete model for the ministerial priesthood¹⁰⁶, which was evolving during the 12th century, suggests the hypothesis, that, apart from their significance as Throne of Wisdom, the Madonna statues in priestly garment had been really conceived as an allegorical image of the reformed priesthood. There is a lot to be said for it when paying attention to the fact, that Petrus Damiani in a letter written in 1069 associated the chastely living of the reformed priest, which was demanded in the first place, with Mary's Immaculate Conception. In his opinion namely it should be allowed to touch the altar sacrament with chaste hands only, because it was the strength (virtus) of the same life-giving spirit that had overshadowed the divine Virgin, too¹⁰⁷.

That the enthroned «Chasuble Madonnas» from Ger, Ix, Targasona and Talló (figs. 1-4) could have been actually developed in such a way is reinforced—in my opinion—mainly by a result of the research of Herbert Kurz, concerning the contemporaneous Catalan monumental crucifixes, the so-called «Majestats».

This type of crucifix, which is not widely spread outside of Catalonia shows the Crucified alive in a long-sleeved tunic. The sculpture from the Collection Batlló (fig. 23), which has to be dated to the second half of the 12th century¹⁰⁸ and which can now be found in the National Museum of Catalan Art (MNAC) in Barcelona, is probably the most prominent exemplar of these monumental crosses. Kurz has proved convincingly, that the «Majestats», which correspond with the iconographic Volto-Santo type from Lucca, show Christ in the liturgical under-garment of the ministerial priest and therefore emphasize the priestly aspect of the Crucified in particular. In Kurz's opinion this iconographic type of the crucifixes had been developed at the end of the 11th century by the canonical reform movement from Lucca as an allegorical image of the reformed canon¹⁰⁹. It has to be remarked however, that the Volto-Santo crucifix (fig. 24), which today is kept in the cathedral of San Martino of Lucca, could not have been made before 1200 because of stylistic features. As survived literary sources verify, it must go back,

however, directly to a not preserved predecessor from Lucca, which dated from the second half of the 11th century and which showed the same iconographic type¹¹⁰. The Catalan «Majestats», of which already two exemplars from the first quarter of the 12th century have survived¹¹¹, must therefore be close to the Lucca sculpture and reflect the successful adoption of the canonical reform in Catalonia as Kurz has made out correctly¹¹².

Because of this historico-cultural positioning of the «Majestats» it seems reasonable to assume, that the contemporaneous Catalan «Chasuble Madonnas» (figs. 1-4) refer explicitly to the reformed priesthood as well. Nevertheless this special significance of the Madonna statues should not be overrated in my opinion. Even if Mary, because of her function as symbol of the hierarchical church, was increasingly granted ministerial priestly traits, it was first and foremost Christ, who remained the prototype of the current priesthood of the institutionalized church, as the wooden «Majestats» verify. In addition to this it has to be remarked again, that Mary's significance as bearer of God and Throne of Wisdom, respectively dominates all Madonna depictions of the Romanesque period.

Résumé and prospect

The Romanesque Madonna statues from Santa Coloma de Ger, Sant Martí d'Ix, Sant Sadurn de Targasona and Santa Maria de Talló (figs. 1-4) show the figure of Mary —as already assumed mainly by Catalan research— in high medieval chasubles. The iconographic term «Chasuble Madonna», chosen in this article, should have testified to this phenomenon.

The elementary meaning dimension of the wooden sculptures —of which the Ger-Madonna, dated to the second half of the 12th century, has been determined as earliest exemplar— however is the sedes sapientiae iconography, developed in Early Christian times. This iconography first was transferred to the sculptures in the round of the occidental Early Middle Ages and alludes basically to the significance of Mary as Theotokos (Dei Genitrix) or Throne of Wisdom, which had become important since the Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451).

The motif of the sacerdotal chasuble must be interpreted as an iconographical supplement of the iconography of the Early Christian Throne of Wisdom in the Romanesque period. The chasuble represents most probably Mary's significance as symbol of the hierarchical or institutionalized church. According to the present article it is mainly the popular analogy in the

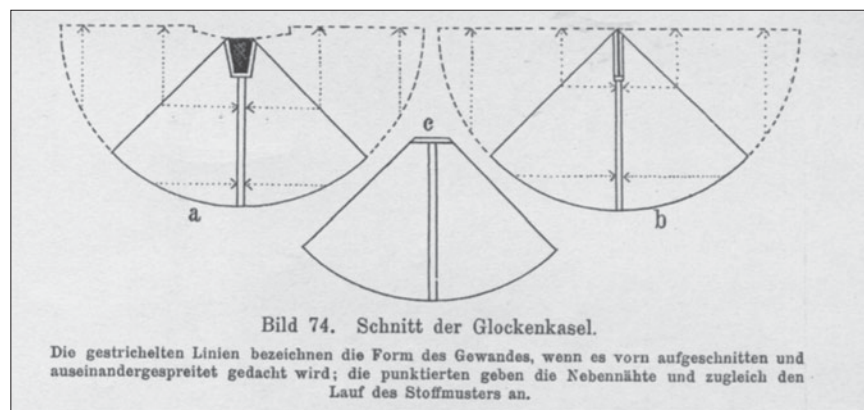


Figure 26.

Pattern of the «bell-chasuble». Illustration from Joseph Braun, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Verwendung und Symbolik*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1907 (Reprint Darmstadt, 1964), p. 183.

theological exegesis of the 12th century of Mary's virginal motherhood and the priestly mission of creating goodly peoples by baptizing and preaching, which makes this interpretation plausible. Previous research has not discussed this topic in actual necessary breadth.

This is also true for the conception of Mary being interpreted as priest or ministerial priest, which became more and more popular in the 12th century. Again it must be remarked here, that the art-historical discipline —in contrast to theological or religious research— has not closer thematized this special Marian concept, which can partly be traced back to the Patristic age¹¹³. The throne representations of the statues from Ger (fig. 1) and Ix (fig. 2), for example, which refer undoubtedly to the famous episcopal throne from the Girona Cathedral (fig. 15) by its formal structure, has for the first time been related to this meaning dimension in this article.

Another important result of the iconographic analysis of the sculptures, which has not yet realized by previous research, is the fact that the type of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonna» can be found in Romanesque mural paintings of North-West Catalonia, which were made between the end of the 11th and the first half of the 12th century. The mural paintings from Sant Joan de Tredós (fig. 16), Santa Maria d'Esterri d'Àneu (fig. 17), Santa Maria de Taüll (figs. 18-19) and Sant Pere de Sorpe (fig. 20) not only support the hypothesis that there must have been statues before the second half of the 12th century, none of which have survived, which showed Mary in the chasuble, a hypothesis, which already had been taken into consideration by the older literature. In addition the prototype of the wooden «Chasuble Madonnas», which is conceivable because of the parallel between mural painting and sculpture,

110. Cf. Hansmartin SCHWARZMAIER, *Lucca und das Reich bis zum Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts. Studien zur Sozialstruktur einer Herzogstadt in der Toskana*, Tübingen, 1972, p. 337-353, Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom, 41.

111. See DALMASES and JOSÉ I PITARCH, *Els inicis i l'art romànic*, p. 255.

112. It can be proved, that two «Majestats» were kept originally in a chapter of Augustinian canons regular. See KURZ, *Der Volto Santo von Lucca*, p. 101.

113. In such a way see already Cardile 1984: «In the history of the visual arts as opposed to theology, Mary's priesthood has received little attention [...]» (CARDILE, «Mary as priest», p. 199).

114. See CARDILE, «Mary as priest», p. 206.

115. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 206. Here it has to be remarked, that the figure of Mary at Masaccio's altar-piece from Santa Maria del Carmine isn't dressed in the sacerdotal chasuble.

116. Beside of this question, the Catalan Madonna statues, which don't show Mary in the chasuble but, for example, in the habit of the Queen of Heaven, shall be examined in my doctoral dissertation project concerning the different iconographic Madonna types in the art of wood carving in Romanesque Catalonia. The contemporary function of the Madonna statues and their position in the context of the fittings and decorations of the church buildings, respectively, shall also be taken into consideration by this project, which is directed by Prof. Claudia Rückert (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin).

showed the figure of Mary, most probably without a crown or diadem above the veil, as observed at the representations of the mural paintings and at the Ger-Madonna.

Another result of this iconographic parallel backs up the assumed Mary-Ecclesia symbolism of the statues. The iconographic context of the Madonna depictions from Santa Maria de Taüll (figs. 18-19) and Sant Pere de Sorpe (fig. 20), which is characterized by dominant ecclesiological, Eucharistic motifs, mainly verify this. The historico-cultural sphere of the Catalan «Chasuble Madonnas», which could have been responsible for the development and dissemination of this Madonna type respectively, has been discussed in the present article in the context of the church reform of the 11th and 12th century in Catalonia, which has probably made the Mary-Ecclesia symbolism to a sign of its own will for reforming. Like the Catalan «Majestat»-crucifixes (fig. 23), the wooden Madonna statues most probably even have to be located to the sphere of contemporaneous priestly and clerical-reform, respectively. Thus, the statues probably symbol-

ize the reformed priesthood allegorically in a similar way as the «Majestats» do, as it has been tried to point out in this article. Future research, however, has to examine this fact more intense, because up to now it has been assumed, that not until the 13th century did Mary's role as a model for the current ministerial priesthood come into extensive theological discussion. Previous art-historical research assumed, that this Marian significance could even be identified first at the Marian altar-pieces of the 15th century, on which the priest should orientate himself at the celebration of the mass¹¹⁴. Thus, for example, Paul Y. Cardile identified the grapes of Masaccio's Madonna depiction for Santa Maria del Carmine in Pisa (fig. 25), being a symbol of the Eucharist, as an evident allusion to Mary's priesthood¹¹⁵. In addition to this, it has to be remarked in conclusion, that the image of Mary-Ecclesia should be examined more concentrated regarding the direct context of the Catalan church reform in the High Middle Ages, which was disseminated especially from the abbey church of Ripoll, the spiritual-cultural centre of Catalonia¹¹⁶.