

THE CORVINIAN RENAISSANCE IN CENTRAL EUROPE:
TURNING-POINT OR EXCEPTION?

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The usual art-historical evaluation of the significance of art in the court of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary considers the end of late Gothic to be the result of the

reception of the art of the Italian Renaissance. It also considers Hungarian Renaissance art to be pathbreaking and a model for a sweeping change in Central Europe. The acceptance of this change of paradigms seems to be derived from the evaluation of the humanists of events in Italy to have little to do with the particular standard of values in central Europe. Hungarian court art under Matthias proved itself to be a continuation of the late Gothic tradition and in fact about 1470 inaugurated a last golden age of Gothic art in Hungary. The reception of Italian art of the *Quattrocento*, particularly in the 1480s, appears to have been colored by a humanist ideology of imperial character. It represents a rather limited appearance of the elite, during which the king, supported by his representation of broad national characteristics, never abandoned late Gothic artwork.