

### ***The fortified church from Drăușeni***

Country or territory:  
ROMANIA

Name of organisation  
compiling the information:  
National Institute for Historical Monuments  
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Name and address of building(s) or site: THE FORTIFIED CHURCH FROM  
DRĂUȘENI  
DRĂUȘENI (Germ. DRAAS, Hung.  
HOMORODDAROC), village  
CAȚA, commune, BRAȘOV county

Inventory reference number(s): Position 08B 0403 of Historical Monuments  
List / 1992

Bulding type(s): Church and fortification

Main date(s): St Nicholas Church - second part of the 13<sup>th</sup>  
century  
Fortification - before 1494

Current use(s): former Evangelic-Lutherian church,  
abandoned

Significance:

The village Drăușeni is documented by King Andrew II of Hungary's Diploma from 1224, as the eastern limit of the "royal earth" given to the Saxon (Gernâman) colonists invited in Transylvania by his ancestor Geza II.

The first written document about the fortress dates back to 1494. The historians generally consider this year as a reference point for the construction of the stronghold and the fortification of the basilica (built during the 13<sup>th</sup> century). The church of the fortress was built in late Romanesque style, influenced by Cistercian architecture, mainly in the ornamental work.

This church connects the two great Transylvanian 13<sup>th</sup> century building sites: the Roman-Catholic cathedral from Alba-Iulia and the ex-Cistercian monastery of Cârța, by which the Gothic style penetrated this region of Europe.

The inside ornamentation was completed during the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when the church was painted in a linear narrative Gothic style. This mural painting counts among the ancient and best preserved in Transylvania. Its importance considerably increased by the

main iconographical theme: a hagiographical legend of Saint Catherine from Alexandria, specific to Central Europe.

At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the basilica in Drăușeni was fortified, suffering major transformations, becoming the core of the stronghold, one of the most advanced of its kind.

Categories of significance:

Of outstanding national importance

Categories of ownership or interest:

The Evangelic Lutheran Church is interested in the preservation of the church, but there are no believers in the village.

The ancient school and one or two towers of the fortification could be turned into social buildings. The church could be a very interesting tourist attraction, entering in a Fortified church from the southern Transylvania circuit.

Documentation and bibliographic references:

1. Horwath, Walter, *Siebenbürgen-sächsische Kirchenburgen*, Hermannstadt, 1940
2. Vătășianu, Virgil, *Arta feudală în Țările Române*, București, 1959, p.
3. Oprescu, George, *Bisericile-cetăți ale sașilor din Ardeal*, București, 1961, p. 61-62
4. *Istoria artelor plastice în România*, vol. I. București, 1968
5. Vasile Drăguț, Vasile, *Arta românească. Antichitate. Ev Mediu, Renaștere, Baroc*, București, 1982
6. Fabini, Hermann, *Siebenbürgische-Sächsische Kirchenburgen, baugeschichtlich untersucht und dargestellt*, Hermannstadt (Sibiu), 1999, Band I, p. 155-159, Baand II, Photos 95a-95o

Condition:

Very bad

Risk:

Condition risk:

- The church presents advanced state of deterioration.
- The wooden framework of the roof is strongly deteriorated.
- The system of stone and brick structural walls and vaults is affected by specific degradations due to seismic movements.
- The lack of longitudinal rigidity and carrying capacity is worsening the church's tendency of separating into pieces.

Condition risk:

Slow decay; no solution agreed.

Technical assessment and costing:

There is a technical expert's report drafted in 1993. It has to be updated and completed with a feasibility study and a restoration project.

From the point of view of the structural configuration, the objective of the main intervention is to eliminate sources of decay and remedy to degradations by a set of restoration and consolidation interventions which aim at restoring the original appearance of the edifice, according to preliminary research. Gothic frescoes, of great interest, also require restoration.

Estimated financial value by the feasibility study is about 750, 000 EUR.

Ownership:

The church is the property of the Evangelic Lutheran Church A.C. in Romania.

Occupation:

Abandoned. The Saxon (German) population left the village after the World War II. The village is now inhabited by a majority of Roma.

Management:

Funds for restoration would be managed by the National Office for Historical Monuments.

Summary:

This church connects the two great Transylvanian 13<sup>th</sup> century building sites: the Roman-Catholic cathedral from Alba-Iulia and the ex-Cistercian monastery of Cârța, by which the Gothic style penetrated this region of Europe.

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Slow decay; no solution agreed.

The potential priority level for intervention is *high*.

Sign and date:

Ph.D. archeologist Voica Maria Puscasu  
08.03.2004