The Saxons’ Lutheran heritage
Starting from the Middle Ages the Saxons had been transforming their environment. A very good example of this transformation tendency is the structure of the villages. The center of a village is usually big, with a square shaped market place. This is the place where the main street village is heading to, together with at least one parallel smaller street. These two streets are normally linked with several narrow streets giving thus a lined structure to the complete picture of the village. In the case of bigger villages the church stands on a higher place, on the main street, and it is often a fortified one.

The interiors of the houses:
In most cases a house has three rooms. From the porch we enter the kitchen/larder, called haus by the Saxons. From this enclosure we step into the first chamber situated on the street side of the house, called stube. The stube has two windows with a view on the street and two windows looking on the yard. The stube is a nicer room, with better furniture and it is used as a guest room, or as the room for hosting special celebrations. The most decorative furniture of the room is the four poster bed, decorated with embroidered pillows and the Luther stove with its tiles with blue on white reliefs on it.

Traditional costume
The legal and social freedom of the ethnic minority, the situation in Central and Eastern Europe at the time, the fact that Saxons had their relations with the luxury loving Hungarian nobles, and their good taste are the reason that the Saxon
traditional costume is really varied. Their belief that every virtuous Saxon family has to have a lot of clothes resulted in a high intensity in their clothing.

From the old Saxon inheritance we can mention: the long mantel wore by women on their backs, not wider than the shoulders, (krausel mantel), the sleeveless mantel made of white leather, rimmed with a long fur having a wide and stiff collar (kürschen), the borten, which was a long and cylindrical poling and the girls were allowed to wear it only after their confirmation, the brooch worn on the chest (heftel) and the decorated hair pin used for fixating the bonnet. The men wore a sleeveless vest made of leather (brustlatz) or white baize (postav Karaisa).

**The history of the Lutheran Church of Romania (Augsburg Confession - Augsburgischen Bekenntnisses)**

The roots of the Saxon’s religious history are going back to the 12th century, when German colonists came to Transylvania. The colonists were given economic, political and religious privileges by the King of Hungary and they had to defend the eastern borders of the Hungarian Kingdom in exchange. Due to this fact, the colonists have built a lot of fortified churches, which are characteristic of the Transylvanian landscape until today.

In 1550, shortly after the German Lutheran Reformation, the political administrative authority decided the reformation of the Saxons. In the following centuries the Evangelical Church played a central role in the life of the society. In 1876, when the Saxons lost their right for political autonomy, the economic and cultural issues were taken over by the Church. After the Second World War, during the dispossession processes the church lost all its schools and a amount of lands, and even all the religious organizations were liquidated.

The Theological Institute, based in Cluj was moved to Sibiu in 1955, together with the German Department.

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1990, 87% percent of the Lutheran Church has been immigrating to Germany. The new constitution of the Lutheran Church is taking into consideration the possibility of becoming a Church of the Diaspore instead of being a National Church.

At the moment 38 priests are serving within 242 community for about 12500 believers. The main responsibilities of the church are: to spread the words of God and to serve the sacraments, spiritual assistance and diaconia, the education of
children, youth and women, community building, the preservation of the cultural heritages, ecumenical cooperation with domestic and foreign churches. Despite the fact, that the number of the believers is decreasing, the Church is preserved well by reliable and active partners in its ecumenical environment. In a social and political context it is trying to help prosper the Lutheran Denomination and pass on the doctrines of the Reformation.

The Szekler heritage

The Szekler came here from different areas of the Kingdom of Hungary and settled on the territory of today’s Szeklerland during the last decades of the 12th century and the first decades of the 13th century. They organized their territory into seats.

The main duty of the Szekler was military service, which they performed individually on their own expenses. They were not paying taxes, but with the occasion of the coronation, or the wedding ceremony of the Hungarian king or the birth of his heir each family gave an ox to the royal family as a gift. Due to their legal autonomy they had named Szeklerland the Szekler country several times.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the modernization transformed Szeklerland as well: counties took the place of the seats and privatization occurred. In the twentieth century the Szekler territory was torn apart from Hungary and added to Romania. The fight for the preservation of their national identity had begun.

Houses: The traditional Szekler house originally had only one room for living completed with a porch and a larder when needed.

In old times the living room was the place to live in for the entire family during winter, and it also served as a guest room; but today it is a commonly used place by the entire family. It has two windows: one with a
view on the street while the other with a view on the yard. It has a typical interior: in the corners of the walls on the street side and the yard side there is a trunk bench, in front of the bench a table with chairs. In the other corner of the street side there is a bed put along the wall (without windows) with pillows on it. A traditional painted chest is standing at the legs of the bed.

Traditional costume: The Szekler traditional costume’s basic material is kersey (a homespun woolen material), hemp, line and sheepskin. Different villages and regions have their own set of motifs. The main parts of the women’s traditional costume are: the skirt, the bodice, the apron and the boots. The unmarried women do not wear a headsquare and they embraid their hair into two braids.

The most known elements of the male traditional costume are: skin-tight white baize trousers (szekler tights), semi-hard black boots, and white linen shirt with closed collar. Over the shirt a black, grey or red waistcoat is worn.

In the summer men are wearing a black hat or a straw hat, in the winter a lambskin cap.

THE UNITARIAN HERITAGE

The Hungarian Unitarian Church is part of the universal Christian mother-church, it is the love based community of the followers of Jesus, who are trying to live according to God’s country.

The Unitarian religion is a monotheistic religion, which can be traced back to the teachings of Jesus and his disciples. The Unitarian Christianity’s institutionalized church form was created in the age of the Reformation, and it grew representing the progressive values of history. Its vocation was to serve God and mankind and to help prosper the life of the community.

The Hungarian Unitarian Church believes in God as one entity, sets as an example the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, teaches us to respect the created world, life and families. Unitarians believe in the original goodness of humans, in their individual responsibility and in their capacity of self-salvation by means of their own characters. They believe in eternal life and say that religion, reason and conscience are important. Unitarianism claims and practices the freedom of conscience and religions, openness in the discovery of new religious and ideological differences, interdenominational tolerance and social justice.

Its missional areas are: religious life, charity, education, tutoring, community culture and social responsibilities.

The Unitarians can practise their religion freely since 1568, when the Transylvanian congress has issued a regulation on ecclesiastical matters and allowed them to do so.

Today’s form of organization was created by the reunion of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church and the Hungarian Unitarian Church in 2012.

The name Unitarian comes from the Latin Unus (est Deus), which means One (God
is one). Its historical importance can be followed more or less through the 2000 years long history of Christianity. The founder of the church and its first bishop was Ferenc Dávid, who was in charge with the making of the edict for the Transylvanian Diet in 1568. This edict was the first to codify the right for religious freedom and moral sense.

Due to this edict Transylvania became the land of religious freedom and tolerance at the time, giving shelter for many people who were considered as heretics in other countries of Europe and sent in exile.

Unitarianism is free of dogmas, it is a liberal religion which focuses on the relationship between God and men. Its main doctrine is the Unity of God, it sets Jesus as an example to follow, it believes in the immortality of the soul, it teaches unconditional respect for life and for the created world and it helps humans in their development, because they were born to be good.

In the last two centuries similar doctrines came to life on other parts of the world as well (USA, Great Britain, Czech Republic, India, Philippines, etc.). The different national Unitarian Churches do not form an organizational unity, but they do maintain a lot of relationships with each other.

**Famous Unitarians:**

**Recommended sources:**
www.unitarius.org
www.unitarius.hu
www.facebook.com/magyarunitariusegyhaz
The village is located in the ethnographic area of Burzenland, on a flat, marshy area, approx. 10 km north from the Întorsurii Mountains and 5 km south from the Olt Valley. It has direct connections with Braşov and Sfântu Gheorghe on road and railway and through the Buzău Pass with Moldova and Wallachia.

It is the result of colonization. Its first attestation is from the year 1213. Prejmer was founded by the Teutonic Knights. After the expulsion of the chivalric orders from Burzenland, in 1225, the locality enjoyed the patronage of the Cistercian monks from Cărța (Kerz).

Prejmer obtained a temporary right for fair organization and it was in the possession of „jus gladii” controlled by the Magistrate of Braşov, it had the right of choosing its representatives freely.

It is a compact settlement where the historical parcels are well preserved. The front of the houses are continuous, they are usually facing the street with their shorter sides. A special value of the village is the old channel system on the Broaştei and Morii streets and the laundry rinsing places preserved on the Izvoarelor street and at the extension of the Cetății street.

The village had been divided into districts based on ethnical criteria and this division was respected till the start of the Saxons’ massive migration.

The central place of the village is the market, with its most important building, the Evangelical fortified church. The enclosure is surrounded by a strong oval shaped defensive wall, with five towers, doubled with a second defensive wall completed in the 16th-17th century and a barbican for the defense of the southern entrance.
The enclosure has rooms for supplies, house for the priest, school, fountains and a graveyard. Thus it can be considered the strongest fortified ensemble of the rural areas in southeast of Europe.

The church, dedicated to the Holy Cross has a Latin cross on the top. Stylistically it bears the imprint of the early-Gothics and late-Gothics, but elements of the Renaissance and Baroque can also be discovered on it.

In the mid-fifteenth century, due to the royal order from 1427 about defensive systems to be built in the Burzenland, high, strong walls were built around the church, with four semicircular towers and a southern gate tower, surrounded with a water filled moat with a movable bridge over it. The enclosure’s wall has a protective walkway on the top with shooting holes and battlements. The access to the protective walkway is through the stairs built as part of the thick wall. The gate tower is short with a longitudinal half cylindrical vault, on double arches, its gates have hers and it has two floors with rooms.

On the interior side of the wall are the rooms and storage spaces of the community on four levels backed by the battlement and they have partially kept their historical bipartite and tripartite windows. The connection between the rooms was ensured by wooden galleries and exterior stairs.

Visit the fortified church:
Lutheran Parish of Prejmer, Phone no. +40268362042
Hours:
Tue-Sat 9:00-18:00
Sunday at 10:30
Monday closed
Religious service every Sunday at 9:30

Programs:
„Diletto musicale” Festival
„Musica Barcensis” Concert series
The village is situated 6 km south from the E 85 national road which connects Rupea and Sighişoara.

It is situated at the watershed between the drainage basins of Târnava Mare and Olt rivers. The relief is mainly composed of deforested hills of medium height.

On one hand, the landscape of the village is dominated by the fortress with its defensive towers and the high tower of the Lutheran church, on the other hand the vegetation of the western and northern hills is remarkable as well.

Viscri was established by colonization. In contrast with many other localities, the Saxon colonists had replaced the Szekler, who were put here by the Kingdom of Hungary to defend the borders. Around the year 1185 the ethnic German Saxon colonists overtook the locality and its old chapel.

The ensemble of the Lutheran Church consists of a hall-type church with a semicircular apse having an irregular shape at the basis and polygonal at the top. The pipe organ is placed behind the altar on the gallery which was built in 1723. The choir is trapezoidal, the sacristy has a rectangular basis. The church has only one trapezoidal shaped nave. It can be accessed through three embrasures on the southern side, two of them being on the first level preceded by two aediculae with semicircular openings and one on the second level of the gallery, next to the steeple. Another access point can be found on the northern side of the choir, through the sacristy. The tower of the church has a square basis, it has seven levels and it is constructed of stones. The first and the second levels are vaulted with cylindrical vaults, the rest of the floors are separated with wooden beams. The entrance to the tower is from the nave through a small hall with a simple Gothic styled frame. The stairs to the second and third floor were made as part of the thick wall while the access to the upper floors is assured by interior wooden stairs.

Amongst the artistic components of the church the Gothic gate of the southern...
The main entrance is remarkable. The semicircular Gothic archivolt is also remarkable.

Furniture are represented by the Classicist altar, the galleries from the XVII-XIX centuries in style of painted folk furniture, the Baroque baldachin pulpit 1791 and the baptistery is from the 13th century.

The pipe organ placed on the stands above the altar is from 1817. The tower has three bells.

The fortress consists of two fortified enclosures constructed of river rocks and quarry-run stones. The first enclosure’s route is a polygonal irregular one, adapted to the configuration of the ground and it englobes the south, east and northeast side of the wall, which was built in the 13th century. It can be accessed through a massive wooden gate lined with metal strings and through a small gate situated between the Gate Tower and the Southern Tower.

Visit the fortified church:
Contact person: Mrs. Gerhild Gross,
Phone number: +40742077 506 or +40742069 477
gerhild.dwk@gmail.com
www.deutsch-weisskirch.ro

Hours:
Monday-Saturday 10:00-13:00 and 15:00-18:00
Sunday with appointment.
From November until April the summer schedule is no longer valid, but visiting is possible upon request.

Information for visitors:
There are more than one possibilities for accommodation and gastronomy in Viscri:
www.deutsch-weisskirch.ro
gerhild.dwk@gmail.com
The locality is situated southeast of Transylvania, on the Plateau of Târnava Rivers, close to the confluence of Târnava Mare and Târnava Mică, at the eastern end of the Saxon colonization area of the Târnava plateau, 20 km east from Sighișoara.

In the nineteenth century the locality named „Kezdi“ was founded by the Szekler who were defending the eastern border of the Hungarian Kingdom. The first Saxons were settled between the years 1161-1241 in addition to the already colonized Szekler. The locality’s first attestation is from the year 1309. In 1366 the settlement obtained legal autonomy.

It is a compact settlement with well-preserved historical parceling. The center of the village is the Main Square, a trapezoidal spacious place, where the most important buildings of common interest are standing: administrative headquarters (including the city hall, police station, library, and post office), commercial and public alimentation units, pharmacy, medical clinic, kindergarten, primary school, veterinary sanitary cabinet and community center.

In the old times the village was split into neighborhoods based on ethnical criteria: thus it use to have a Saxon, a Romanian, a Szekler and a Roma neighborhood.

The most important building of the square is the Lutheran Church with its spire. The site is dominated by hills, from where we can have a great view on the monument.
The Lutheran church in Saschiz is a typical fortified church, an exemplar of the architectonic movement combining the religious and defensive roles of buildings.

'The Saschiz model' had been re-created in the construction of the Saxon churches in Cloaşterf, Dupuş and Boz and it had its influence in the fortification of tens of churches built on the east side of the Târnava plateau in the first quarter of the 16th century. It also had a great influence on the construction of other buildings too, like in the case of the church in Dârjiu, for instance.

The actual church dedicated to Saint Stephen was built in 1493 – 1525. It is a simple late Gothic hall (41/14m), with no tower on the west side and a fortified level. In 1878 a lateral stand was built on the western side of the nave, where a new pipe organ was installed. In 1878-1879 the arch of the chorus was replaced with a cylindrical arch and the nave was vaulted with cylindrical vault bearing ceramic decorations.

The spire standing today was built in the 17th century. It was transformed into a spire in 1677, getting the same decoration and the same kind of roof as the Clock Tower in Sighişoara. In 1830 the roof got its final look.

The Refugees’ Fortress (built before 134, having three enclosures) is located at approx. 400 m west-north-west from the village, on the Burgberg hill. On northwest, northeast and southeast the peak is surrounded by deep ravines and steep slopes. From here we can have an excellent view on the surrounding valleys. The access to the fortress is from south, southeast, village direction on a carriage road.

Visit the fortified church:
Contact: Katharina Ziegler
Phone no. +40744179039
Open: May to November daily from 14:00 to 16:00
From November until April the summer schedule is no longer valid, but visiting is possible upon request.
Ticket: 4 RON/adult, 2 RON/kind

ADEPT Touristic Information office, Saschiz:
-open: May to October daily from 09.00 to 18.00,
November to April daily from 09.00 to 16.30.
-address: Saschiz, Main street no. 166 (next to the church, on the main road)
-phone no. +40265711 635
-email: info@fundatia-adept.org,
-website: www.adeptfoundation.org

Accommodation:
in the village and its neighborhood.
The village is situated on the southern part of Transylvania, amongst hills, at almost the same distance from the two important localities of the neighborhood Mediaș (Mediasch) and Sighișoara (Schässburg). This part of the Transylvanian plateau called the Târnavelor Plateau is famous of its wines, even its historical name was Weinland.

The settlement’s first written mentioning is from 1283 and it was established at the time of the beginnings of the colonization.

It is a compact settlement which has kept well the original historical network of its streets. The village had been built along the two main streets, located on the terraces of the Richișului and Biertanului brooks’ valleys and it has been divided into districts based on ethnical criteria, which was the typical structuring way of the Transylvanian Saxons at the time. The placement of the Saxons and their development are illustrating the social relationships in the frame of the settlement.

The fortress of the village and the Lutheran church are in the center of the locality. The settlement is surrounded with hills which offer a great view over the monuments. The first written mentioning of the church is from 1402. Between the years 1572 - 1867 it was an episcopal church. It is a hall church with three naves of the same width.

The naves have four bays and are separated from each other by three pairs of massive octagonal pillars. Above the vaults and the choir there is a defensive level.

The fortress has an irregular planimetry adapted to the configuration of the ground structured into three concentric enclosures with fortified bastions and loopholes.

Visit the fortified church:
Contact person: Rev. Ulf Ziegler
Phone: +40745246485,
e-mail: bezirkmediasch@yahoo.com
Hours:
Summer schedule:
The months June - August daily, from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 14:00 to 19:00
The months April, May, September and October daily, from 10:00 to 13:00 and 14:00-17:00
first wall has an oval shape with extensions towards the area of the northwest corners of the church and on the northern side between the Clock Tower and the Tower of the Mausoleum. The second wall was built at an approx. 15 m. distance from the first one, its shape is oval on the northern, eastern and southern sides. It is fortified with two bastions: the Tower of the Bacon and the Tower of the Old Mayoralty. The third curtain wall defends the east, south and west side of the fortress and it is fortified with two bastions: the Gate Tower having three levels, of which the bottom part is vaulted and the upper has shooting holes, and the Tower of the Weavers, a three leveled building also with embrasures.

**Winter schedule:**
Daily upon request on phone no. +40749231199, except holidays.
Tourists cannot visit the church during religious service. Evangelic service twice/month.
In the summer: Organ concerts

**Accommodation:**
Possibility to stay in the parsonage
Citadel Pension Casa Dornröschen
https://www.facebook.com/

**For reservations:**
+40773841223
traditional meal, wine tasting and picnics for groups by prior announcement
contact: Rev. Ulf Ziegler, e-mail: udfz@yahoo.com, phone: +40745246485 or +40269843483
there are accommodation possibilities in the village as well, and there is a wine cellar to visit
The locality is situated 5 km south from the DN 14 road, on the way to Sibiu (47 km) and Mediaș (18 km), right to Copșa Mică town. It is part of the Târnava plateau and it is located in the narrow valley of Vorumloc, an influent of the Târnava Mare.

The village is surrounded by hills with wine yards, the landscape is typical for the northwestern side of the Hârtibaciului plateau of Land of the Wine.

It was mentioned for the first time in 1263 as “possessio Barwmlak” and this was its first written attestation.

The village is concentrated around three streets: the Sommergrasse, the Wintergrasse and the Kotgrasse (Summer Street, Winter Street, and Muddy Street). The streets are running into each other in a small square on which the Lutheran church and fortress are standing.

The enclosure has an oval shape and it is fortified with four bastions, embrasures and orifices to which access can be made on a watch road on masonry columns linked with arches. The gate of the fortress was defended by herses, the remaining can be still seen. Three towers are placed outside the enclosure and the East tower is partially (two third) outside.

The church stands in the center of the locality at the crossing of the main streets, on a flat area, crossed by the Heveș brook from the east side of the fortress, which flows into the Vorumloc brook located at the south side of the fortress.

In the year 1414 the Saint Peter church was attested as a church built on the place of an earlier Romanesque chapel.

In the 16th century the church was fortified, the western gate was disbanded. Above the southern gates the naves were completed with balconies, defended with herses amongst which the one on the northern entrance is still kept. The vaults were also constructed in this period,
the nave was raised and 3 defensive levels were built above the choir, which resulted in the fortification of the interior walls of the choir. There were also buttresses added to it, and in front of the western gate another buttress was built. On the right side of the second level of the tower a defensive stand with arches was built.

To the southern side a spiral flight of stairs was added to the tower. The tower was raised and a wooden defensive gallery was added to it.

The Choir Tower, which is characteristic for the fortified churches of Târnava plateau is higher than any other tower in the region. It has three defensive levels, each of them having 7 narrow loopholes. On the upper level the buttresses are united into arches camouflaging the throwing holes on the perimeter of the choir.

Amongst the artistic objects we have to mention the Baroque altar from 1779, a piece of art created by Stephan Folbarth, a sculptor from Sighișoara, the Baroque baldachin from 1746 and a Romanesque baptistery from the fourteenth century.

The tabernacle is decorated with the motif of „Vir dolorum“, which is in correlation with the dated tabernacles in Bazna (1504) and Ighișul Nou (1491). Under the bas-relief „Christus Salvator Mundi“ is written with small Gothic letters.

Amongst the furniture the stall with seven decorated seats is remarkable, its style being characteristic to the transition period between Gothic and Renaissance, the baldachin is decorated with plant motives on its polychrome bas-relief, the central panel bears a cartridge with the date 1528 on it.

The pipe organ is the work of master Melchior Achs from 1807-1808 and in 1908 it was repaired by the manufacturer Einschenk from Brașov.

Visit the fortified church:
Contact: Mrs. Johanna Schneider,
Phone: +40269515266 or +40269843483
bezirkmediasch@yahoo.com
The village is located in the south-western part of Transylvania among the low hills of the Secașelor plateau, favorable especially for grape cultivation. On the east, south and west side it is surrounded with the forested peaks of the Cindrelului Mountains, of which fact the German name of the region was concluded (Unterwald). It is crossed by two important rivers and their tributaries.

An important antique road (linking the Mureș and the Olt, two big Transylvanian rivers), which has been one of the main commercial roads since the Middle Ages connecting the region of Sibiu/Hermannstadt with the rest of Europe is at only 3 km distance from the locality. Today it is named E15 European Road.

Câlnicul (Kelling) is approx. 14 km far from one of the main cities of the Medieval Transylvania, Sebeș (Mülbach).

Câlnic had appeared during the first phase of the colonization process, on ex-royal territories. With the occasion of an archaeological digging in 1941-1942 the following objects were discovered on the territory of the village: a Neolithic settlement (approx. 15 homes with two rooms, a collection of ceramic tiles and tools), traces of the Bronze Age, traces of the Roman invasion period and bricks with the stamp of the XIII. German Legion.

The first written attestation of the village is from the year 1269 and it is related to the de Kelling family.

Normally the most accentuated point of a German colonized village is the fortified church, but not in the case of Câlnic, where the settlement itself and the fortified noble residence took over this role as they are fortresses themselves.
The ensemble of the fortress (Burgviertel), composed of the wall with a circular route and the Donjon tower was built in the last third of the 13th century. It is placed in the center of the locality on a small peak with the Câlnic brook at its feet. The fortress has two oval shaped walls. On the northern side of the first wall there is an exterior, square based tower, while on the southeastern side of the exterior wall there is semicircular tower. Inside the enclosure, on the north there is a tower, on the northwest a chapel while on the northern side, there are storage rooms added to the wall of which the ones on the northwestern part are ruins. The most important building is the tower house, built at the beginning of the Gothic period, and called “Siegfried” by the locals.

The church on the hill was built in the fifteenth century by the Saxon community. The Hill Church of Câlnic was consolidated and transformed into Neo-Gothic style in 1868-1869. The church has kept many sculpture elements of its initial phase: two tabernacles, the Gothic styled door of the sacristy. Two Baroque painted stalls are from the second half of the 18th century. The heritage of the Lutheran Church of Câlnic includes the Karl Hesse pipe organ from 1867, which is one of the 130 pipe organs built by a famous organ maker from Wien.

Visiting hours:
- The fortress and the museum: daily from 10 to 17 (winter) 9 - 19 (summer)
- Entry fee: 6 lei, Reduction 3 lei
- Evangelical church (approx. 300 m), Historical monument 14th-19th century
- Parking for visitors

Expo Stand with selling:
Crafts, brochures, albums, books, art objects, souvenirs.
Tourist information: text panels and leaflets for sale (Romanian, German, English, French).
Phone: +40745828872; +40762465014;
Fax: +40264594470
E-mail: marpoacd@yahoo.com
The village is situated on the plateau of the Sub-Carpathian Mountains of Transylvania, between the Târnavă Mare and Homorodul Mic rivers. Its relief is fragmented with both mountain peaks and valleys.

The history of this community began after the Tatar invasion. For the first time the village was mentioned in 1334, in the Papal Tithe Register under the Latin name “Ers”. In the Middle Ages Dârjiu was a part of Odorhei Seat (Udvarhelyszék), one of the most important of the seven Szekler administrative territorial units of Transylvania. The Szekler were the descendants of colonized military troops which were in charge with the defense of the eastern borders of the Feudalist Kingdom of Hungary starting from the eleventh century.

The ensemble formed by the Unitarian fortified church and the wall of the fortress are the most dominant elements of the site and play an important role in the Szekler inhabitants’ historical identity. On the other hand, this church is an exception from the Szekler defensive architecture – it is a rare example of the typical Saxon fortified churches of Szeklerland.

The Gothic church is a typical hall church with a nave and a choir ending in a polygonal apse. It was built before the year 1419 in the place of a Romanesque chapel, of which a brick with runic inscription indicating the year 1274 was kept.

The present configuration of the building is due to a significant fortifying renovation carried out in late Gothic style (late sixteenth century). As a result of this renovation the church has got ample windows, the west stand on three arcades and the vaults in the structure of the nave and the choir.

The ribs of the vaults are supported by decorated corbels representing both Catholic and laic symbols.

The ensemble consisting of the eastern stand’s choir (1800), the organ (1837) and the pulpit (1759) in Provincial Baroque style are bearing the Unitarian symbols, which were adopted by the Szekler after 1568. The Gothic gates on the southern
and on the western fronts are defended by porticos hosting the Renaissance styled tombstones.

Around the year 1520 the whole building was raised with a defensive level with a inverted keyhole embrasures. The unitary and high roof completes the monolithic appearance of the monument.

In 1887, during a renovation large mural paintings were discovered. On the northern wall, the paintings are telling the legend of Saint Ladislaus in five successive scenes. On the southern wall of the nave there are pictures of saint bishops, Michael Archangel wearing a coat of mail and holding a spear, and pair of scales for the Last Judgement.

The last scene is picturing the conversion of Paul the Apostle: Saul fallen off his horse has the revelation of Jesus. One of the three soldiers from the Saul’s group of has a flag bearing an inscription.

This church is the most impressive example of the dissemination of the fortified church model developed in Saschiz ever built on a Szekler territory. It is similar to the churches in Cloașterf and Dupuș and also to the churches located close to Beia and to Archita.

The similarity also shows that since the 18th century the inhabitants of Dârjiu have been keeping their grains inside the ensemble while their bacon, ham and sausages are kept in the larders of the bastions.
Visit the fortified church:
Contact person: Rev. Sándor Lóránd Demeter
Phone: +40/744-557 659 or +40/266-222 183
E-mail: unitariusderzs@gmail.com
Website – church: www.1419.ro
Website – congregation: www.szekelyderzs.ro
Facebook: www.facebook.com/szekelyderzs.unitariusvartemplom
In the bastion of the church visitors can eat a traditional meal and taste bacon. For reservations contact at unitariusderzs@gmail.com

Hours: Summer schedule: daily from 10:00 to 19:00
Winter schedule: daily, after announcing it on the telephone. The church cannot be visited by tourists during the religious service. The Unitarian service is on Sundays, from 11:30.
Ticket: 6 RON/adult, 3 RON/kind

Accommodation:

Nagy Tünde guesthouse
Dârjiu, no. 290
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