



REPORT OF STUDY TOUR *DEALU FRUMOS*

Transylvania, where many villages established by Saxons in Middle ages, is now famous for its fortified churches and special landscape. It has great potential to develop tourism.

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9 ~ 13 July, 2018

DAY 1 - 9. July

SIBIU
HERMANNSTADT

Fortified Churches Foundation

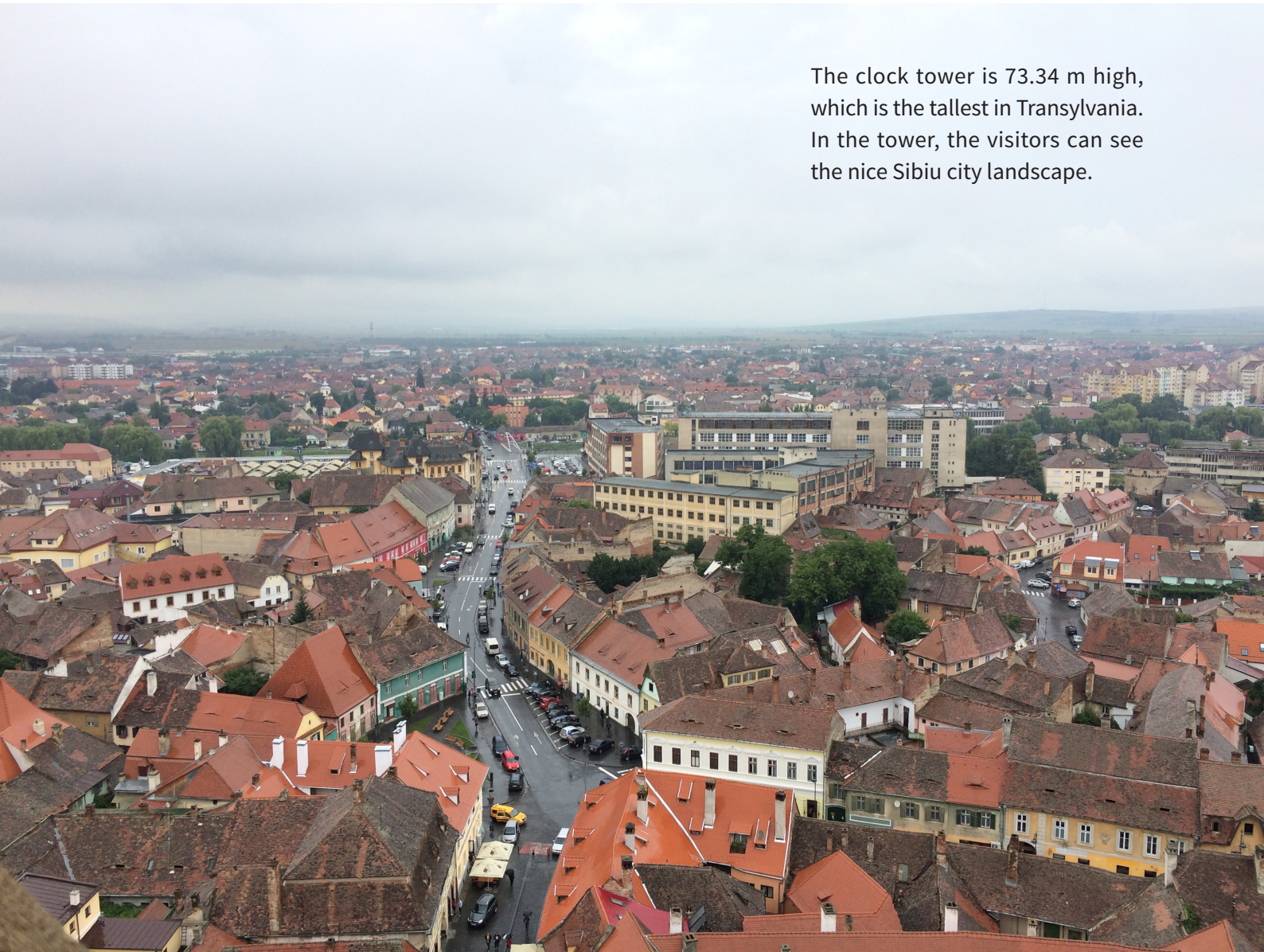
input lectures

The lectures by Sebastian Bethge and Hanna Derer gave us the first impressions about fortified churches before we actually visited them: The history and the development of fortified churches, different site planning and structure of fortified churches, different functions inside the fortified churches, the relationships between fortified church and its surrounding neighborhood, the architecture of Saxons villages in Transylvania, different ethnic groups change the population in the Saxons villages and the current villagers wishes about their community...etc. All these contents are very helpful for our further study tour and design.

Sibiu Evangelic Church

Sibiu Evangelic Church as a Gothic style cathedral built in the 14th century, is located in the old city center. Unfortunately, the church was under construction at the day we visited, but still, the gallery of tombstones, temporary chapel on the first floor and the Clock tower are open for public.

The clock tower is 73.34 m high, which is the tallest in Transylvania. In the tower, the visitors can see the nice Sibiu city landscape.





There is a wall dividing the main hall of cathedral as two parts due to the structural reinforcement. In 1853, the tombstones placed originally in the nave were removed and then incorporated in this wall and surroundings, thus a unique gallery with 67 tombstones appeared.



The clock tower is with 4 sub-towers on the corners.



inside one of the sub-tower



inside the clock tower



the temporary chapel



The flying buttress (arch buttress) combined a private living house, underneath, there is a walking path.



There is a German high school opposite the church.

ASTRA Museum

ASTRA Museum is an open-air museum including 4 ethnology and civilisation museums. It is total 96 hectares and around 400 buildings. These buildings represent the vernacular architecture in Romania that introduce not only the traditional living houses, but also the hand crafts workshops and facilities for production, such as windmills and watermills, so that visitors can imagine the traditional living style of different ethnic groups, that are basically Romanian, Saxons and Roma.

the roofs of romanian vernacular housing were very steep, so that snow can slide down faster. This kind of roof design can be seen in many countries, such as Japan.

for storage or cattles

Small residential unit

Main residential unit



In order to protect the private livestock such as goats and donkeys, this kind of tall, privacy-orienting wall was developed, therefore, people from outside cannot directly stare the private garden, they have no idea what the property inside is. Before this, it was only short fences as the household barrier. The blue paint can keep away insects, as time passed, it will become lighter.



The Frankfurt Kitchen 1926

Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky

The similar concept of blue can be seen in MAK museum in Vienna. Architect Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky designed an archetype of the modern kitchen, which is famous for its rational simplicity and streamlining of work processes. Blue is also used for insect isolation.





The traditional interior decoration of Saxons family



The colorful holy crosses were nailed to the trees to pray for the safety of travelers.



Romania and Bulgaria are the first time in history that Roma have settled down. They used the easiest and cheapest way to build their houses, they also lived in tents for wandering.

Wood was chopped according to its fiber to wood chips to make roof, and the chimney of kitchen stove was set up indoors, so that the smoke from chimney can keep the roof dry, in addition, the bacon was also hung on the roof beam smoked.



Painting with the Colors of the Earth

lecturer : Milan Racek

Based on egg tempera, Milan showed us how to mix soil colors with different amounts of water and yolk to create a variety of colors. He also told us that Beer, milk and even honey can be used as binding agent. This painting method was often used in the Middle Ages.



HOSMAN HOLZMENGEN

The fortified church in Hosman is well protected and remain good condition. It still maintains double ring of fortification wall. There are Volunteers here and artists also visit here dedicating to improving the living condition of community. This August there will be hold a music festival called "Holzstock", based on the name "woodstock", because the german name of this village called Holzmengen, which means " a lot of woods".



The "bacon tower" has good ventilation, so that the meat hung inside will not become mouldy. Villagers used to store their meat here, when they hid from the wars.





The entrance door has very beautiful stone carved decorations, they all have metaphors, for example, "the key to the heaven", "the devil grabs people" and "the priests". The decoration of the chapters of the doorjamb are lions with wings. There are also decoration of cats below.



NOCRICH LESCHKIRCH

The fortification walls of this church were unfortunately burnt down, now we can only see the church and a tower.

Next to the church is the nocrich scout centre, where recruits volunteers worldwide. Just like the volunteers in Hosman, they try their best to improve the living condition of the village and attract tourists in different ways, such as pottery workshop, providing camping area and holding various events. The most urgent issue right now is to solve the WC and bath problem, the modern toilets and shower rooms need to be built in order to attract tourists. Because actually all these kinds of previous Saxons villages lack basic infrastructure.



Although the church inside and outside have been repaired, the former Protestant church has lost its function, because now there are about 90% of villagers' religion are Orthodox here.



Classroom, shop or exhibition hall of hand-craft?!

the potential use inside the church?

Nowadays, how could we activate these kinds of unused spaces is a big topic. The pottery workshop organized by the scout centre sells their works in a small cabin presently, could they sell their potteries inside the unused church in the future? While making it an exhibition hall? Furthermore, transforming it into a different kind of hand-craft classroom, such as painting plates in traditional way.

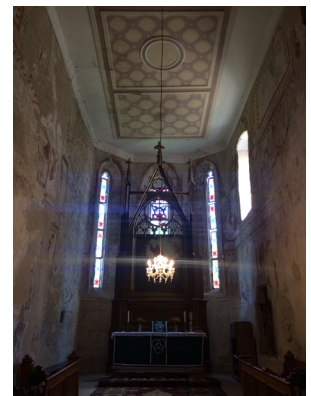


ALȚÂNA ALZEN

The fortified church here is still being use as a protestant church, this is uncommon in other fortified churches in Transylvania now, most of them are either unused or abandoned.

According to the introduction of the villager, in their village still many houses owned by Saxons, where they have vacation in Summer. These "former inhabitants" live in Germany or Austria now.

There are many well-preserved medieval murals inside the church. The wall on the left side of the altar was painted a tree of the saints of Bible; on the right side, there is an indentation, where the Virgin Mary was drawn, the priests used to sit here to rest. In the church, the Virgin Mary was painted in several different positions, because at first in 13th century it was built as a catholic church, and later changed into a protestant church.



IMPRESSION

The church doesn't lose its function

This church is probably my favorite one during the excursion because of these significant murals, I have never seen things like that.

The house beside the church is a social space, where people take a rest, eat something and chat with each other after masses.



PELIȘOR MAGÉRAU

Unfortunately we could not find the entrance, but on the hill we can still see the location of the second ring of fortification wall in the grass.



Vărd WERD

When we arrived Vărd, several children sitting in front of the church, looked at us curiously. I wonder could the church be used by the kids as a community's social space?



**VESEUD
ZIED**

There is an association in the village looking forward donation to maintain and repaired the church as well as the former german school (yellow building) in front of it. Some parts of the church have been renovated piece by piece; take the gate tower for example, it has already been re-applied mortar and re-painted.



When the association has enough money, the german school will be rebuilt as a museum, but what to exhibit? For me, it's a big question. All these villages with the cultural heritages want to attract tourists obviously, however, they need infrastructure to create an integral traveling spot.



Since 2003 the fortified church in Dealu Frumos has been rented out to the University of Architecture and Urbanism ION MINCU as a study centre in vernacular architecture, i.e. university campus of UAUIM. Since then, a series of rehabilitation have been taken place, and now the church comprises a meeting hall and some rooms as hostel, where various conferences have been held and it has also received students from different countries. Next to the church is a school, so this area is the center of the village, the context of historical landscape planning still can be seen today. The fortified churches were always a center "heart" of the villages, they not only protected the villages from wars, but also afforded the villagers' faith and spiritual support. According to the conversation with the local villagers, weddings and festivals are held here.



DEALU FRUMOS

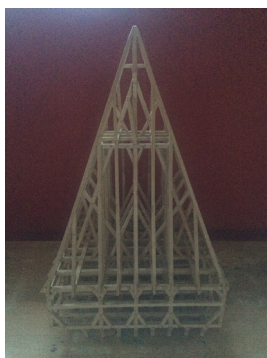
DAY 4 - 12. July

DEALU FRUMOS SCHÖNBERG

On the top of the clock tower, you can see another fortified church of the village called Merghindeal (German: Mergeln) at the south-east side. The distance between these two villages is only 3km. During the wars, these towers had another function, which notified each other that the enemies were coming.

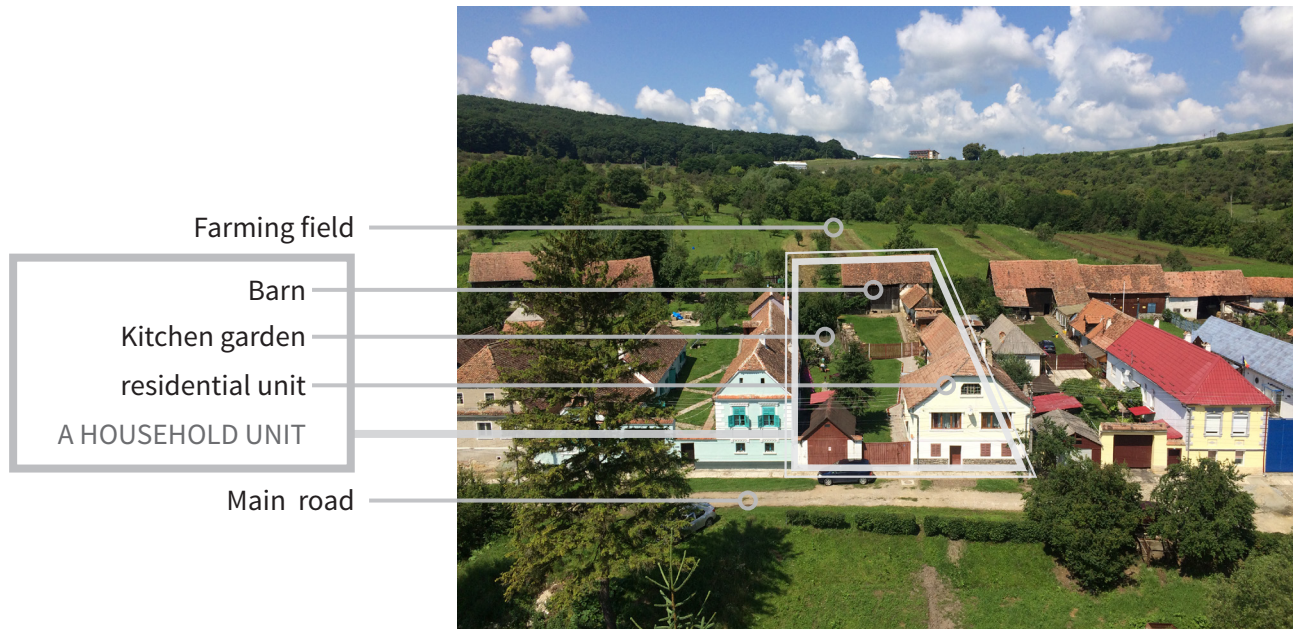
In order to reinforce the structure, some wood beams and columns of the roof of the tower were new rebuilt, the surfaces of which were not polished, so that people can clearly recognize the combination between old and new wood structure. Another point is, the new ones were sawed by machines; on the contrary, the old ones were cut with axe based on their wood fibers due to the structural mechanics. That means, the old wood beams were cut along their longitudinal fibers in order to increase structural strength; furthermore, there were also some nicks on some particular side of the surface representing the position of this wood beams in the whole structure.

Tour of cultural heritage - FORTIFIED CHURCHES



DEALU FRUMOS SCHÖNBERG

From the top of the clock tower, we can see clearly the typical site planning of the vernacular Saxons households, which contain the "kitchen garden" in the yard, where the villagers plant vegetable and fruit. Behind the household unit, there is bigger field for growing crops.



It is pleasure to have an interview with a local family, we got plenty of useful information about the situation and development of Dealu Frumos. First, like the village Alțâna, the Saxons emigrants still come back for vacation or holidays, who also try to help improve the current conditions of the village by different ways, instead of directly giving money. For example, they prepare some gifts such as stationery or toy for children at Christmas, now every child in the village have their own bicycle because of that. Second, although there are a lot of prejudices about Roma, the Romas here are farmers and sometimes they also work as a "day labor", which is a kind of contingent work. In general, Dealu Frumos has a certain level of economic basis. Third, almost every household make their own liquor, of which main material i.e. fruit grow in their kitchen garden.



Fourth, this is the most urgent requirement needing to be solved — tap water. Few years ago, the local government charged every household around 150 Euro to set up the water pipeline, but till now still nothing happened. The villagers use pumping motor or well to get water. Some villages like Pelişor we visited has already built the water pipeline. These kinds of basic infrastructure including traffic network should be solved or improved to increase the living quality of the villages. At last, the villagers are pleased that some associations held conferences in their village, yet they want to create more opportunities to gain incomes and then contribute to the community.

Dealu Frumos's main traffic road connects Merghindeal and Agnita, which is the nearest big town. However, there are some dead-end streets.

These former Saxons villages have their own Orthodox church as well. Most of people are Orthodox at present.



Lease to universities

the possibility of cooperation

The successful case of rehabilitating the fortified church in Dealu Frumos by UAUIM university. Would that be possible that other architecture department of universities have this kind of contract with the fortified churches? Therefore, the fortified churches will be better promoted and renovated; the students can also learn the Saxons vernacular architecture and landscape planning. It a win-win solution.



DAY 5 - 13. July

Tour of cultural heritage - FORTIFIED CHURCHES

APOLD TRAPPOLD



SIGHIȘOARA SCHÄSSBURG



Sighișoara is a very famous scenic spot, and its walled old town is listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, where is also the birthplace of Vlad III Dracul, who is known as vampire Count Dracula. Fictional story attracts many tourists, as a result, the surrounding area of the city has good developed.

BIERTAN
BIRTHÄLM



Biertan is also listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, which has a special "marriage prison" for couples who want to get divorce in the past, for centuries no couple had divorced. There is also a room displaying the tombstones of successive bishops. The fortification wall rings are well protected, people can still see the Zwinger.



MOȘNA MEȘCHEN



Moșna suffered a big earthquake once, which caused the fortified church a certain degree of damage. Because the village used to produce wine and made fortune by that, it has money to repair the church and adds a museum of traditional hand-craft manufacturing, where displays spinning wheels and the old equipment of making wine...etc.



New possibilities instead of museum?!

Some fortified church we visited also want to establish a museum. The idea of introducing the traditional Saxons living style is important, but still needs more attractions to promote village and the culture. Take Moșna for example, the descriptions of the exhibits are in fact not comprehensive and clear, that needs to be improved.

**MOȘNA
MEȘCHEN**

Willy Schuster Bio Farm

Transylvania has good quality of soil for farming, it has great potential to develop agriculture.

Willy Schuster, a local farmer who studied value-added agriculture in the USA, came to Romania to develop bio agriculture. Additionally, his wife is a Romanian. Their farm also invites volunteers from all over the world, who are interested in small family bio farming. The Schuster family not only plant fruit and vegetable, but also manufacture several processed agricultural products, such as honey, cheese and jam...etc. It is a successful example of small family agriculture.



The house next to the Schusters is opened for hostel, of which the interior decoration presents the traditional Saxons style, it can be booked on Airbnb.



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The Frankfurt Kitchen 1926

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Nocrich scout centre

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Pelişor

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