

Fortificația bisericii parohiale evanghelice din Sebeș. Problematica datării

Abstract:

The parochial Evangelic church from Sebeș was surrounded by a fortification whose dating proves to be a difficult issue, due to lack of certain documentary information or some substantial material evidence to validate one of the two assumptions that were made along time. Researchers as Ferdinand Baumann, Gheorghe Anghel or Paul Niedermaier propose XIIIth century as dating for the fortification, after 1241, its building being a consequence of the Tartar invasion that also affected Sebeș. Radu Heitel, who shortly after at the beginning of the 60s from the last century, archaeologically researched the architectural ensemble of the Evangelical church, asserted that its precinct may be dated to the second half of the XVth century. A similar opinion had also Theobald Streitfeld, who did not excluded the possibility that the fortification of the church to may have been built in parallel with that of the town, at the end of XIVth century and beginning of the XVth century. Similarly, Adrian Andrei Rusu remarks the fact that there is no evidence to support its dating to the second half of the XIIIth century. Discovery made by Radu Haitel in the infrastructure of the southeastern tower of a chapel foundation that may be dated to the last quarter of the XIIIth century, complicated even more the issue of dating the precinct of the church, due to location of this building in relation to the precinct and its orientation towards east-west axis. There are arguments to support both suppositions, but even more question marks. If we admit the fact that the precinct was built in parallel with the fortification of the town, there are several aspects that must be clarified. On analyzing a plan of the town from 1769, on which the fortification of the church is also represented, a detail intrigues: deviation that the wall shows in the approach of the chapel (which is dating from the beginning of the XVth century) from the northeastern part of the church's choir, shows as if an extension of a pre-existent precinct would have been made, to include on the inside also the new construction. Similarly, a question may be posed whether it was necessary and possible at this moment the fortification of the church, in parallel with that of the town and in conditions in which important works were carried out also at the parochial church; now was the time when the joint of the choir with the basilican body was realized, which was previously extended and transformed. A last supposition supports the idea according which there existed around the Romanic basilica a precinct dating from the second half of the XIIIth century. The northeastern and eastern parts of it were demolished when the construction of the Gothic choir began (in the second half of the XIVth century) and was restored in the first half of the XVth century or, rather, in the half of the same century. Subsequently, the enclosure was extended so that to include also the choir and the new chapel built in the northern side of it and the plan's shape from elliptic to rectangular was modified. The southern chapel was deallocated now and transformed into tower of the new fortification. This last supposition seems to answer, most conveniently, majority of questions that appeared in the case of the other suppositions. But it does not exist, either in its case, material or documentary evidence to support it.

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