

# ***Biserica și mănăstirea franciscană bulgară de la Vințu de Jos. Date istorice și valori patrimoniale***

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## **Abstract:**

*The ensemble of the Franciscan monastery in Vințu de Jos is one of the lesser-known historical monuments in the Mureș Valley, receiving only brief and tangential treatment in historical and specialized literature. The main aims of our study were to reconstruct the the historical development of the ensemble by researching the preserved written sources (Blasius Kleiner's Archivium tripartitum, which details the history of the monasteries of the Bulgarian Franciscan province; some documents in the Archive of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Alba Iulia; canonical visitations of the parish, etc.) and analysing the architecture of the historical monument and its decorations, of which the rococo furniture of the church is the most remarkable. From historical sources and the analysis of the monument, we established that the Franciscan monastery of Vințu de Jos was built in several stages, the most important of which was the construction of the church around 1726. This was followed by the construction of the cloister in the early 1730s. During those years, in parallel with the work on the cloister, the sanctuary was also expanded. Both the church and the monastery underwent a series of important transformations in the years 1760–70. The church interior acquired its current late Baroque appearance and Rococo furniture during these last interventions.*

*Aesthetically, the most important element of the monument is the Rococo furniture in the church (the three altars and the pulpit). Written sources suggest that it probably came from the workshops of the craftsmen brothers (carpenters and sculptors) who were active in the second half of the eighteenth century in the monasteries of the Bulgarian Franciscan province. By checking the written sources and various data from the specialised literature, we tried to identify the most important craftsmen brothers who worked in the eighteenth century in the Transylvanian monasteries of the Bulgarian Franciscan province – among them the carpenters and sculptors who most probably made the furniture in the church of Vințu. We hope that future restoration work on the building and the art and furnishings it contains will contribute further to the understanding of the ensemble of Vințu de Jos and its broader historical and artistic context.*

**Keywords:** *The Franciscan Order, the Bulgarian Franciscan province, monastic art and architecture, Transylvania, Baroque sculpture*