

Reconstitution of an Absence: The Jewish Community of Alba Iulia in the Context of Urban Development

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Abstract:

The study addresses the issue of reconstituting the heritage of the Jewish community in Alba Iulia (Romania), starting from several documentary and topographical sources from the first part of the 20th century. The choice of this case study is justified by the importance of the city for the history of Jews in Romania, as the only city in Transylvania (historical province integrated into Romania in 1918) where Jews received the right to settle as early as the 17th century. The main documentary source used is a list of Jewish properties in Alba Iulia declared confiscated in 1941, in the context of the anti-Semitic policy promoted by the regime of Marshal Ion Antonescu (Leader of the Romanian state during 1940-1944). Correlating it with the cadastral plan of the city drafted in 1914 and applying the georeferencing method reconstitutes the position of the still existing buildings and those that disappeared as a result of the systematization policy during the communist regime, in the central area of the city. A more complex approach is also proposed, based on the use of the GIS methodology, whereby the topographic information can be associated with the documentary and epigraphic sources referring to the Jewish cemetery in the city. The issue of the relevance of the Jewish heritage for the current urban strategy is also discussed, starting from the city's development documents in force.

Keywords: *Alba Iulia, Jewish heritage, Romanianization, georeferencing, urban history*