Mihaela Groza

A TALE OF TWO SITES: JEWISH HERITAGE PROTECTION AND INTERPRETATION IN A TRANSYLVANIAN CITY

MA Thesis in Cultural Heritage Studies: Academic Research, Policy, Management.

Central European University

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By

Mihaela Groza

(Romania)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,

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Management.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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I, the undersigned, **Mihaela Groza**, candidate for the MA degree in Cultural Heritage Studies: Academic Research, Policy, Management declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

This study discusses how minority heritage is used to attain certain goals, be they political, social or historical, in the Transylvanian city of Alba Iulia. It seeks to do so by discussing perceptions of Jewish heritage sites in the above-named city, from a spatial and temporal point of view. The author approaches these issues by collecting oral data, such as interviews and surveys, and analyzing the impact collective memory had on the interpretation and protection of Jewish heritage sites. Results show that when included in a larger local historical narrative, the Jewish heritage sites trigger automatically different meanings, at times incompatible with the everyday realities and the historical past of Alba Iulia. The author concludes that for a better protection of the Jewish heritage sites it is needed a holistic approach of the idea of heritage, approach rooted in shared concerns and not divided interests.

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Introduction

The present study examines the impact of local collective memory on the representation and usage of Jewish tangible heritage in post-communist Romania. A specific feature of Romanian Jewry, at the end of the Second World War, was that compared to other European countries, many of its members survived. Regardless the causes of the survival rate (430.000 people in 1947), this population decreased in numbers during and after the fall of communism. According to the census of 2011, in Romania live 6000 Jews who can no longer be the keepers and protectors of an important tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Subjected to degradation and disregarded by the Romanian government, Jewish heritage is slowly disappearing, thus causing an unacknowledged part of the country's history to be erased. Memory might be feeble but historical traces are not.

My research concentrates on the Transylvanian city of Alba Iulia, once an important urban, administrative, ecclesiastical and military center, which for centuries was also the capital of Transylvanian Jewry. Nowadays the city is Romanian to more than 95%, while the once strong populations of Hungarians, Germans, and Jews have decreased to tiny minorities. With Romania's acceptance as a member of the European Union in 2007, small cities, such as Alba Iulia, went through a process of re-branding themselves, often by revindicating their multicultural past.

Imagining the city as a "shared locus of memory, affiliation and self-identification"[1], in recent years, the local authorities fashioned a new cultural self-image, which also claims Jewish heritage as a part of the city's joint history. To what extent this image changes or

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[1] Daniel Monterescu, Dan Rabinowitz, *Mixed town, trapped communities, Historical Narratives, Spatial Dynamics, Gender Relations and Cultural Encounters in Palestinian-Israeli Towns*, Aldershot : Ashgate, 2007, p.3

continues the earlier historical narrative of the city, remains open to debate. The issue is not that such a past did not exist, but that it was not acknowledged until recently. Moreover, the image that is claimed by the city seems to be artificial, out of step with the present cultural identifications of the inhabitants.

The reality is that at times creating new identities under the umbrella of the European Union clashes with local and national historical narratives. And myths, ideas, die hard. Memory is similar to a spider web: sometimes it keeps us on the right path, it validates our choices, it makes us move forward. But other times, it draws us back, it keeps us prisoners of outdated ideas, it gains on us. And then, there are instances when people forget, either by choice, either by design. Forgetting is, after all, of human nature.

My study is not that much about forgetting as it is about remembering and how the process is build up in an institutionalized framework. What this study will reveal is how urban memory is used to create a brand for a city which aims to be perceived as European, by its inhabitants but especially by its tourists. The study also questions the very nature of national historical narratives and the faults they bear within them. But above all this it is a study about heritagization processes and how heritage is used to attain certain goals, be they political, social or historical. It deals with the transition of a heritage perceived to be minority heritage, unacknowledged in the past and which now is desired as a part of the local patrimony.

The study focuses on the heritage sites of the Jewish community of Alba Iulia and the two adjacent groups (Romanian and Hungarians) which are interconnected with it. Alba Iulia's Jewish heritage retains two important built sites: it has one of the oldest dated Jewish cemeteries in Romania, used continuously from the 18th century until today, and the first synagogue built in stone from Transylvania. If not for their historical aspects, the Jewish heritage sites of Alba Iulia convey a particularity which is of order in other eastern and central European cities as well, namely they are the only physical remnants of a culture and of a people

for which Europe is now a departed home. And, yet, roots cannot be so easily cut off. They are similar to Ariadne's ball of thread, always reclaiming their masters in the great labyrinth of memories.

I constructed the research in four parts, of which the first two discuss the perception of Jewish heritage from a temporal and a spatial point of view, since I consider that time and place are essential in the understanding of patrimony. I start by anchoring the study in a spatial perspective, by presenting an overview of the urban evolution of the city and how Jewish heritage sites relate to it. I continue with the second chapter, in which I give an overview of the Jewish presence in Alba Iulia and how this presence has been interpreted from the point of view of the historical narratives of the three groups taken into consideration in this study. I considered space before time because I wanted to maintain a chronological framework. The third part of this study discusses the symbolism with which Jewish heritage sites are charged when creating a city brand and the different actors involved in the process. In the end, I conclude by offering a set of recommendations on how minority heritage should be included in a local narrative in a way that is not artificial and rather organic and holistic.

In terms of sources, the study is primarily based on oral data collected from field research, including interviews with Jews and non-Jews. Interviews shed light on different narratives of the general public in understanding the creation (or absence) of representations and projections concerning "the other". It also relevant to understand the collective self-perception of the Jewish community and its relationship with the so-called majority. Interviews were informal and unstructured, thus trying to grasp the normality of every day's existence. They were conducted with Alba Iulians, local historians and municipality representatives. Eyewitness evidence and oral tradition was confronted to various categories of written sources. Site observation was conducted by visiting the locations. Other sources such as visual collections, photos of cultural events, maps were employed as to show the evolution of the

urban space. Promotional videos and websites were considered as to understand how the city is branded by the local authorities.

Secondary literature was used in order to contextualize the events at a European scale, to generate a comparative framework and to propose different perspectives to the issues of cultural and social construction of minorities as well as towns where population shifts emerged, resulting in new population identities, different from the ones in the past.

While writing this study my intention was never to claim that I might have the right solutions for how heritage should be interpreted and protected. I merely played the role of the outsider, not taking sides and trying my best to understand people's intentions. If one thing remained in my mind, after researching, it is that heritage is always about emotions and without them, the notion itself becomes meaningless.

Chapter 1

Am I my brother's keeper? Jewish Places and their Perceptions

Am I my brother's keeper? is in the context of this chapter a symbolical question. It seeks to explore the perception of Jewish places in the minds of non-Jews. To do so, I start by discussing those elements (mainly political issues, ethnic character, settlement structure, monuments) which influenced and to some extent still influence the role and history of the Jewish community of Alba Iulia. I conclude that Alba Iulia is a place which comprises different layers of heritage, among which Jewish sites retain their spatial centrality. I also assert that the Jewish heritage is a part of a larger complex, which today has shrunk to a synagogue and a cemetery, which became of interest, from an official point of view, only starting with 2006. Moreover, this heritage is included in rebranding the city as multicultural, a notion that fits the past, not the present. I continue by questioning this image and asking different groups that have interest in managing the Jewish sites and Alba Iulians: what is their level of awareness in respect to Jewish heritage sites? Are the synagogue and the cemetery spatial points of reference for Alba Iulia's inhabitants? Is their existence noticeable? I conclude that despite the efforts of the municipality to promote the Jewish sites, Alba Iulians are unaware of them. Furthermore, I suggest that only through a better integration of the Jewish sites in the conscientiousness of Alba Iulia's inhabitants, they have a better chance to survive and to be protected.

Am I my brother's keeper? transcends symbolism and becomes reality.

When in 1993 Elie Wiesel was interviewed by Richard Heffner on his television program *The Open Mind* he was asked the very same question for which he gave a thoughtful answer:

"Am I my brother's keeper?" And the answer, of course, is, we are all our brother's keepers. Why? Either we see in each other brothers, or we live in a world of strangers."[2]

Before this study is conducted one must position it into the context of the Romanian-Hungarian political and historical relationships. Transylvania is a territory disputed by Romania and Hungary especially after the creation of the Romanian state in the 19th century. This conflict came from the fact that Romanians in Transylvania have been subjected to a process of Magyarization and refused equal rights with other groups when the region was under the Austro-Hungarian ruling and before that. After the Trianon Treaty and the union of Transylvania with Romania, Hungary lost two thirds of its territory and the Hungarians in Transylvania either fled Romania or stayed in the country but witnessed an inverse nationalization process in terms of institutions and heritage. This conflict continues to this very day, fueled by nationalists and revisionists from both countries.

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[2] Elie Wiesel, "Am I my brother's keeper?", Richard Heffner's *Open Mind* video, March 9, 1993, http://www.thirteen.org/openmind-archive/history/am-i-my-brothers-keeper/, Accessed 13.04.2017

1.1. A city and its projections

The earliest mention of a settlement in the region of Alba Iulia belongs to the Greek geographer Ptolemy, who describes a Dacian fortress by the name of Apulon, at 20 km distance from the present-day city. After Dacia[3] became a Roman province, the fortress was incorporated in the Roman fort Apulum, where the 13th Twin Legion (*lat*.: Legio tertia decima Geminia) was stationed. During the reign of emperor Marcus Aurelius, the fort was declared a municipium and became an important military, economic and Romanization centre of the region. In 165 years of Roman rule, the city developed into two parts, separated by the river Ampoi: the first, called Municipium Aurelium Apulense (economically important) and the second, the residence of the Roman governor of Dacia, identified as Municipium Septimium Apulense. After the Roman retreat from Dacia, there is not significant historical data as to understand how the region developed, mainly due to the migration period which meant the movement of a significant number of people from one territory to another, a state of permanent military conflict and demographic fluctuation.

In the 11th century, Transylvania became a part of the Kingdom of Hungary and different colonizers such as Saxons, Székelys, Teutonic Knights or Pechenegs were invited to settle in the area marking the multi ethnic character of the region for centuries to come. The Hungarian king, St. Stephan, established at Alba Iulia, then called Gyulafehérvár, the Roman Catholic Bishopric of Transylvania in 1009. At the same period, the construction of the St. Michael Cathedral began. The first phase in the construction of the cathedral belongs to the 11th century and there are even traces of church buildings, probably from the 2nd half of the 10th century.

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[3]Dacia is a former Roman province, inhabited by Dacian tribes, part of the Thracians. The province comprised territories from the following countries: Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia, Poland, Ukraine and Slovakia

The first phase of the present Cathedral is dated to the turn of the 11th and 12th century and later changes happened in Romanesque and Gothic style. The city survived the Tatar invasions of 1241 which according to the Franciscan monk, Rogerius of Apulia, caused significant damages[4]. Even so, urbanistically speaking, between the fourteenth and sixteenth century, two areas were developed, one fortified (matching the Roman castrum rebuild into a medieval fortress) and an open area, situated around 20 meters above the flood plain of Mureş[5]. After the emergence of the Principality of Transylvania in 1570 under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire, Alba Iulia became the capital of the Principality. A series of Hungarian princes succeeded to the throne, each one committed to different causes such as Germanization of their subjects or spread of the Protestant religion. The city was then known under its German name Weissenburg, due to the Saxons who had been invited to settled the region since the 12th century. Due to its multi-ethnic character, Transylvania was one of the few regions in Europe, where different religions such as Catholicism, Calvinism or Lutheranism were officially accepted and Eastern Orthodoxy tolerated.

In 1690, the Hapsburg monarchy took control over Transylvania and replaced the princes with imperial governors. A strong process of recatholicization began. Alba Iulia entered the attention of the Emperor Charles IV of Hapsburg who decided to create a strong defence system against the Turks and orders the erection of a fortress in the Vauban military architectural style. Until the 18th century, Alba Iulia was composed merely of the old medieval citadel, situated in the upper region of the city. According to the Hapsburg military plans of the period preceding 1716 when the erection of the fortress began, the upper region was populated by 2000 people who inhabited 467 houses and edifices[6]. Because of the construction of the

4   Gheorghe Anghel, „Despre evoluţia teritorială a oraşului antic, medieval şi modern Alba Iulia" in *Acta Musei Apulensis, Apulum*, XXXI, Alba Iulia, 1994, p. 284
5   C. Popa Liseanu, *Izvoarele istorie românilor*, V, Bucureşti, 1936, p.96
6   Gheorghe Anghel," Organizarea administrativă şi teritorială a oraşului în secolul XVII", in *Alba Iulia 2000*, Alba Iulia, 1975, p. 183

fortress, completed in 1735, 90 % of the houses were demolished and the citizens were threatened with cannons to leave their abodes. The newly fortified city was renamed Karlsburg after the emperor. The affluent ones were compensated for their loses, and a rather significant part, formed by craftsmen, moved to a nearby city, Aiud. The ones who remained resettled south of the fortress and formed there two quarters, Maieri and Lipoveni[7]. Maieri was preponderantly inhabited by Romanians most of them being specialized with the transport of salt on the Mureş river, while Lipoveni was settled by freed serfs who formerly dug the trenches of the new fortress and now received from the emperor land to build their houses[8]. Having a low economic status determined the construction of insanitary houses subjected many times to the flooding caused by the local rivers, Ampoi and Mureş. Authorities tried to provide relief by building a canal between 1715 and 1731, to drain the swamps. Despite the unwelcome land, a structured plan of the lower city begun to develop.

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[7] Ibidem. p. 294
[8] Aurel Baruţă, "Dezvoltarea economică a judeţului Alba şi a oraşului Alba Iulia în secolul XVIII şi prima jumătate a secolului XIX", in *Alba Iulia 2000*, Alba Iulia 1975, p. 218
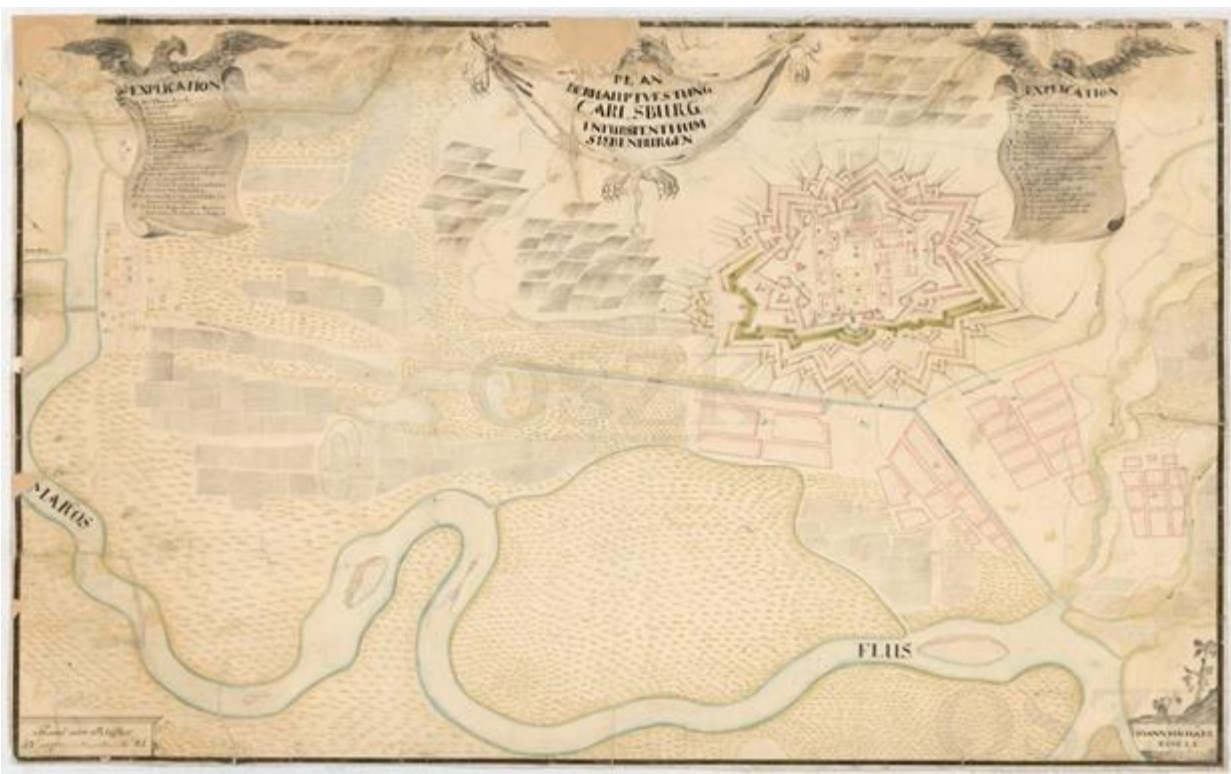
Figure 1:   Map of Alba Iulia, dated 1741[9],

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[9] Johann Michael Eisele "Gyulafehérvár térképe (1741)",

Source: *http://szechenyiterkepek.oszk.hu/hu/gyulafehervar-terkepe* accessed 17.05.2017

Figure 2 : Josephinische Landesaufnahme, 18th century[10]

During the period of the Hapsburg monarchy (1715-1918), there were two spatial nuclei in Alba Iulia. One was in the upper town of the city, in the former medieval fortress, inhabited mainly by the representatives of the Austro-Hungarian authorities and various wealthy Catholic families. The other nucleus, formed outside the medieval fortress walls in the lower part of the city, proved to be more ethnically diverse, comprising Romanians, Hungarians, Jews, Germans, Armenians, Italians and later, Roma. The ethno-religious diversity of the neighbourhood can be traced after the places of worship built by the inhabitants which might suggest us the confession they belong to and by extrapolation their communities. The Sf. Treime Church, belonging to the Romanian-Greek Catholic Church, was built in 1711. Around 1751, the construction of the Franciscan church (today on Ferdinand Boulevard, no.19 -21) begins, and

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the building is mentioned in the city plans of 1771. Around the same time (1757-1761), the Reformed church was built (seen today on Simion Bărnuţiu str.) and the German Lutheran community, in 1793, inaugurated in the northern part of the town a wooden chapel, not preserved today[11]. The Hungarian contribution extended to the erection of the Batthyaneum Library in 1780 which encompasses rare books and valuable manuscripts. The Romanian population extended at the end of the 18th century through the centre of the lower city, with the construction of the Feast of the Annunciation church (Iaşilor Str., 69) between 1783-1788. The Jewish community also contributed to this cross-cultural environment.. The first Synagogue built in stone in Transylvania (today on Tudor Vladimirescu Street, no. 21) started to function in 1840.

Throughout the lower city, houses were built and a vivid economic life started to take shape. A document, dated 1996 and preserved at the National Museum of Unification in Alba Iulia, presents a consistent number of houses declared historical monuments and protected by the Romanian Ministry of Culture. The document dates the building of these houses (18thand 19th centuries) but not the name of the proprietors. The addresses are specified also but the street names changed over the years. In trying to reconstruct a certain type of spatial planning, I compared the list with old photographs and discovered that many of these buildings survived the passage of time. Their architectural style is eclectic, incorporating elements of the neoclassical, the Secession, and the Neobrancovenesc styles (the latter in an attempt to express the ethno-national loyalty of their owners). Some were poorly restored, others were abandoned. Nevertheless, the multitude of the worship edifices and the eclectic styles of the houses built in the period of the 18th and 19th centuries, exudes a self-image of the city which emphasizes a hierarchic form of ethno-religious pluralism. The following statistics reveal the religious

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[11]G. Anghel, „Despre evoluţia…", p. 297

composition of the city's population and they show the long-term changes towards ethnic unification[12]:

Religion in %	1880	1930	2002
Reformed	35.7	14.7	1.2
Roman Catholic	35.6	10.5	2.5
Greek Catholic	13.8	21.4	2.6
Jewish	5.4	6.5	-
Lutheran	4.3	7.2	-
Unitarian	3.5	-	-
Orthodox	1.5	38.3	80.0

After the First World War, the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed, and as such territories that once belonged to it, were incorporated into different new nations. Therefore, Transylvania became a part of Greater Romania, and Alba Iulia became the city were the Romanian national desideratum was achieved. Transylvania continued to remain a reason for contention between Romanians and Hungarians.

After 1918, the ethnic division of the public space slightly changed, being more visible in the upper city where a nationalization process started. Austro-Hungarian authorities were replaced by the Romanian ones and a competing national narrative was imposed on the urban space. Streets were renamed after Romanian Transylvanian historical personalities, the Coronation Cathedral was built as a response to the St. Michael's Cathedral, and the foundation of a National Museum of Unification was set in what once was the building of the Historical and Archaeological Society of Alba, previously directed by Adalbert Czerny. In the lower part

[12] Cornelia Guju, „Karlsburg (früher Weißenburg)/Alba Iulia". In: *Online-Lexikon zur Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa*, 2013. URL: ome-lexikon.uni-oldenburg.de/54273.html http://ome-lexikon.uni-oldenburg.de/orte/karlsburg-frueher-weissenburg-alba-iulia/, accessed 12.05.2017

of the city, life took its ordinary course, Romanian authorities claiming the public space by renaming streets or by erecting statues, but the ownership of different building or the edifices that belonged to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese, was not revoked. In fact, the interwar period was one of economic boom, the city expanding its population which in turn meant enlargement of the urban area. In the same time, this period witnessed a raising in fascist movements.

The Second World War did not cause significant damages in Alba Iulia, from an architectural point of view, but it was a period of tensions between the different ethnicities of the city.

The historical cityscape changed dramatically in the communist years; and Alba Iulia, a small provincial town, had no other alternative but to align to the new order. Houses were demolished to make space for the apartment buildings, necessary for the new working class that immigrated from the southern parts of the country. However, residences of various Jewish personalities of that period can still be located. In the upper town of the city, for example, on the corner of the Post Street, was located the cabinet of the physician Abraham Mandel, an important member of the Jewish community[13]. Discussions with today's Alba Iulia's inhabitants reveal names of distinctive members, such as the caricaturist Eugen Handelsmann, the painter Abraham Mentzel or the physician Tanner (his house has been demolished and a new building, known as 280 Block, was erected in its place)[14]. The Communist years and the progressive Romanian appropriation of the buildings replaced the ethno-religious pluralistic image of the city with a hegemonic one which reduced minorities to invisibility.

Despite their spatial centrality, the Jewish heritage sites in Alba Iulia have not been part of a constant and consistent plan of protection or integration into a larger heritage narrative, neither from a policy perspective nor a touristic one. Until 2006 when the first signs of interest

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[13] "Unirii Street", in *Alba Iulia, a history in images*, http://edu.kindergraff.ro/BBB/single.php?lang=en&storyid=17   last accessed October 6th, 2015
[14] Gabi Mircea, interview by Mihaela Groza, August 17th, 2015

(namely funding restoration work at the synagogue) were shown by the Romanian authorities (2007 being the year Romania adhered to the European Union), Jewish heritage was believed to be the exclusive concern of its community. The history of the Jewish population of Alba Iulia was perceived as separate from the local history. It was not seen as belonging to a common history but as a foreign history lived "in common", precisely because of local and national identity politics of the communist and post-communist years. This type of discourse was detrimental for the protection and conservation of heritage and in the end led to neglect. The shift in integrating Jewish heritage sites in rebranding the city can be seen as an attempt to create an authorized heritage discourse in which heritage is used to construct and maintain identities in an institutionalized framework and with institutionalized tools[15].

Figure 3 : Current map of Alba Iulia[16]

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[15]   Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006, p. 34
[16] This map serves as a comparative tool in understanding the vicinity of Jewish sites in regard to the Christian and public ones. The red dots are representing the main touristic attractions in the city, number 26 representing the Synagogue and on a parallel street, but not mentioned on this map, the Jewish cemetery.

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Figure 4: Map of Alba Iulia which indicates the location of the synagogue and the cemetery and their vicinity to one another. The red circle indicates the synagogue, the black one, the cemetery [17]

Source:
https://www.google.hu/searchq=alba+iulia+gyulafehervar&espv=2&biw=1242&bih=535&source=lnms&tbm=i
sch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwijidGZ7vbRAhWFB5oKHRyJAnYQ_AUIBigB#imgrc=C8P8gaTJ65C5GM
Accessed 11.02.2016

[17]"Synagogue and Cemetery of Alba Iulia", Google Maps, Source:
https://www.google.hu/maps/place/Sinagoga+(Unirea)/@46.0750348,23.5741762,16z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x474
ea80b72e6c87b:0x3143c19143249f17!8m2!3d46.07371!4d23.58012?hl=ro   Accessed 20.05.2017

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1.2. What is Jewish Heritage in Alba Iulia?

The two heritage sites that I concentrate on, the cemetery and the synagogue, are what remains of a larger number of religious, communal and private buildings, which are partly destroyed and partly unidentified. This heritage complex included a Sephardic synagogue of which construction started in 1774, when the Jewish population belonging to this rite asked for permission from the imperial authorities to erect a place of worship since the old one was of wood and in ruins. The request was denied and only 100 years later, the Sephardim received approval of erecting a brick synagogue, built on two floors, with a surface of 293,94 square meters. In 1908 electricity was introduced, and from 1933 this synagogue was used only during winter times. The synagogue was in the proximity of the Ashkenazi synagogue. In 1983, under the Decree 49/12 of 1982, it was demolished and its place taken over by a store[18].

Another Jewish site was the Gizela House (or Gizela Palace) built in 1905, the only private building in the city, at that moment, that incorporated two floors and a tower, situated on the Novák Ferenc tér, known today as Iuliu Maniu Square. It belonged to the Glück family, distinctive members of the Jewish community. The patriarch of the family, Jacob Glück, started his business by producing wines and later owning an alcohol distillery. His fortune incorporated a cereals processing business, known as Johanna's Mill (nationalized in 1940, but still present today in a precarious state) and the "Europa" restaurant, later demolished. The palace was nationalized after the Second World War. According to the 247 Law of 2005[19], which stipulates that every proprietor unlawfully dispossessed between March 6, 1945 and December 22, 1989 should be compensated either by regaining his property, or by requital, the Gluck's family

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[18] Ana-Maria Caloianu, *Istoria comunităţii evreieşti din Alba Iulia: sec. XVII – 1948,* Bucureşti: Hasefer, 2006, p. 207

[19] Law no. 247, July, 2005, http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htp_act?ida=58107, last accessed September 23rd, 2015

successors were reimbursed in 2006 with 30 hectares of land[20]. Today, the house is an office building belonging to Alba Iulia's municipality and it is known as *cladirea cu ceas* (the clock building). Besides it, another building stood the test of time and politics, and that is the shop of Nándor Fuchs, which kept its primary function until this very day.

In Alba Iulia, there was not a Jewish quarter in the strict sense. The clustering of Jewish inhabitants in a certain prosperous part of the city responded to economic reasons[21]. Even so, according to Ms. Lia Borza, the president of the Jewish community of Alba Iulia, the houses on the George Cosbuc Street (located on the Google map that I provided, behind the synagogue) belonged preponderantly to members of the Jewish community[22]. The 1929 city's monograph of a local historian, Virgil Cucuiu, allows to recognize the religious division of the urban space by naming the local business owners and their shops. Names such as Bernard Weiss, M. Schachter, Lipot Klein, Izso Hermann, Iosif Hinger, Iosif Mendel, Fritz Roth, appear on firms which no longer exist[23].

1.2.1. The Jewish Cemetery

Of the 810 Jewish cemeteries registered in Romania, 750 are located in settlements where Jews are no more present[24] I find this information significant as to signal an issue which is not exclusive to Transylvania and certainly not only to Romania. The ownership of these cemeteries belongs to the Jewish Romanian Federation (FEDROM). The main concern here is that the cemeteries, abandoned by their Jewish keepers, became a heritage, recognized or not, of the population who inhabits the respective settlement.

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[20] "Teren insufficient pentru retrocedări" in *Romania Liberă*,05.12.2006, http://www.romanialibera.ro/actualitate/proiecte-locale/teren-insuficient-pentru-retrocedari--12742, last accesed September, 23rd, 2015

[21] Daniel Dumitran, Ana Dumitran, Valer Moga, *Mărturii tăcute. Situaţia patrimoniului cultural într-o comunitate multietnică: Alba Iulia*, Altip, Alba Iulia, 2013, p. 38

[22] Lia Borza, interview by Mihaela Groza, July 2015.

[23] Virgil Cucuiu, *Alba Iulia: din trecutul şi prezentul oraşului : cuprinde 50 fotografii şi un plan al oraşului,* Alba Iulia : Sabin Solomon, 1929, p. 17-25

[24] Federatia Comunitatilor Evreiesti, *Memoria Cimitirelor Evreieşti,* Editată cu sprijinul Ministerului Culturii şi Cultelor, Bucuresti, 2007, p. 6

The Jewish cemetery of Alba Iulia is the oldest in Transylvania and has been used continuously from the 18th century until the present. Since the Jewish community is documented in Alba Iulia starting with the 17th century, a previous cemetery existed since according to a contemporary document a certain "Josef the Jew" bought a piece of land from the supreme town judge, János Csizmaczia Makai[25]. Its location is unknown. Nevertheless, after the Vauban fortress was erected, the cemetery was moved to the lower part of the city, where a document shows the acquisition of land around 1764[26].

At the time of the acquisition, the cemetery was located at the northern end of the new emerging city. In present times, though, the city has engulfed the cemetery which stays hidden behind houses and building blocks. According to Ms. Lia Borza, the cemetery extends over 21.520 square meters and contains 2,038 tombs, of which 1,960 still bear tombstones with inscriptions in Hebrew, Yiddish, Hungarian, German and Romanian. Professor Daniel Dumitran, from the Alba Iulia University, divided the cemetery into five zones, based on chronological order. The tombs that are considered for restoration are prior to the First World War and are submitted to a rapid degradation. Mrs. Borza authorized a Romanian family to take care of the landscape of the cemetery and to stop any acts of vandalism in order to avoid events such as the disinterment of several interwar tombs, in February 1998, when a group of teenagers searched for gold and jewellery, perpetuating ancient stereotypes of how the Jewish community was perceived[27].

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[25] Daniel Dumitran, "Jewish Cemeteries of Romania", in *Places of Memory: cemeteries and funerary practices throughout time*, edited by D. Dumitran and M. Rotar, Alba Iulia : Editura Mega : 2015, p. 240
[26] Ibidem
[27] Andrei Oisteanu, *Inventing the Jew: anti-Semitic stereotypes in Romanian and other Central East-European culture*, incoln : Published by the University of Nebraska Press for the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (SICSA), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009, p. 78
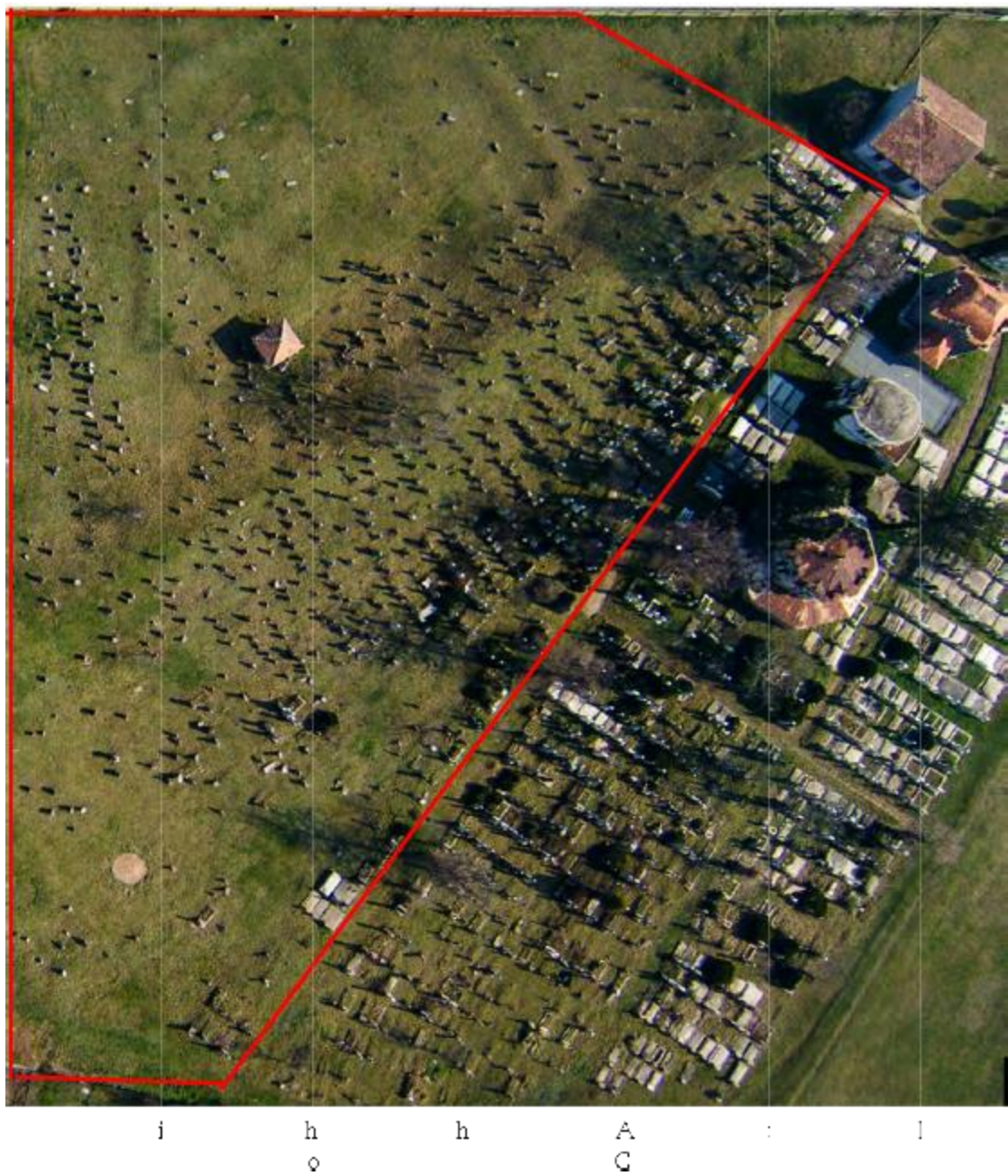
Figure 5: Jewish cemetery of Alba Iulia[28]

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[28] Daniel Dumitran, "Jewish Cemeteries of Romania", p. 249 The red line delimitates the oldest part of the cemetery which has gravestones from the 18th century (1714). Arial photo.

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1.2.2. The Ashkenazi Synagogue

In the 17th century, after their first arrival to Alba Iulia, the Jewish community prayed in a rented house. Apparently in 1656 there was even a synagogue in the upper city on a street named the Jewish Street, fact documented by the Swedish traveller Conrad Jacob Hildebrand[29]. Until 1757, both Ashkenazim and Sephardim used the same prayer house, but after this date, since the number of the former grew in numbers, the two branches separated[30]. Starting with the Josephine reforms, the members of the Jewish community were able to perform different crafts and their new economic growth allowed them to resort to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Alba Iulia of which the community belonged, in order to rent land so that a synagogue could be erected. Since the lower part of the city started to shape itself, in 1827 the Diocese rented for a period of 99 years the land on which the first synagogue in stone from Transylvania was built[31]. The architectural style used was Neo-Baroque and the synagogue was inaugurated in 1840, lack of funding having delayed the construction.[32] The building incorporated a room used as a prison cell and had an upper gallery reserved for women. Besides its religious purpose, the Ashkenazi Synagogue was the scene of an historical rally for all the members of the community after the communist regime demolished in 1983 the other functioning synagogue in order to build a universal store. The synagogue building is still located to this very day on Turdor Vladimirescu str. An important aspect to mention is that the building is not state owned and it is not declared a historical monument, the local authorities having little to say in its conservation, restoration or tourist promotion. In other cities of Romania, such as Timişoara, Iaşi or Dej, the synagogues are listed as historical monuments and under the control of the

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[29]   Caloianu, *Istoria Comunitatii…*, p. 209
[30]   Ladislau Gyémánt, *The Jews of Transylvania in the Age of Emancipation (1790–1867)*, Bucharest, 2000, p. 132
[31]   Caloianu, *Istoria Comunitatii…*, p. 210
[32] Mózes Richtmann, "Alba Iulia" [in Hebrew], in *Pinkas Hakehillot: Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities*, *Romania*, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1969), p. 277-279, here p. 278.

Jewish communities of the respective cities. The synagogue of Alba Iulia is the only cult edifice for the Jews of Alba's county. There is another synagogue in Aiud but it is used as a storage deposit and it is kept in deplorable conditions.
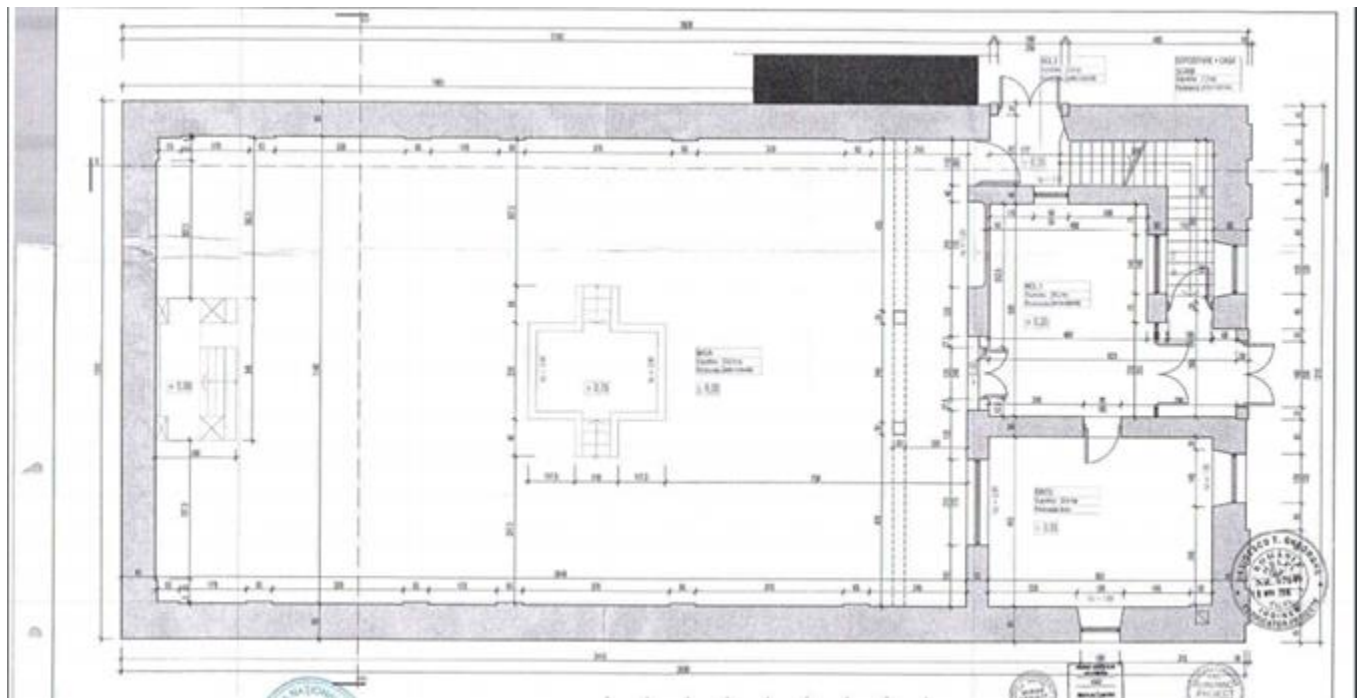
Figure 6 : Plan of the synagogue, 2017[33]

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[33] Courtesy of Lia Borza
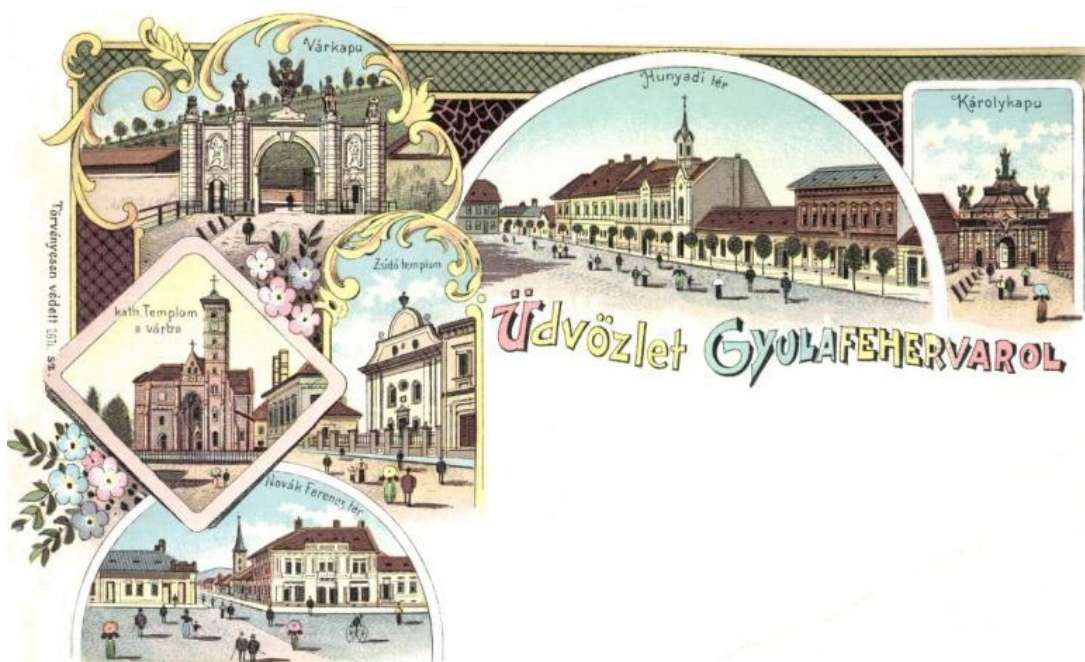
Figure 7 : Postcard, 1898 with Alba Iulia's synagogue, 5th building from left[34]

1.3. A city and its perceptions

Wanting to feel the pulse of the city with respects to its Jewish sites, I have decided to confront different citizens of Alba Iulia and foreigners with them and try to understand how much they are aware of the existence of Jewish heritage and how they incorporate that heritage in their own vision of the city. In that sense, I have been conducting interviews over the summer of 2015, 2016 and the winter of 2017 with the following groups in mind: local Jews, foreign Jews, academics, officials, rank and file locals. I also use as sources the questionnaires I have been collecting over the summer of 2015 and 2016 and the municipality's official site which presents, as said before, a self-fashioned multi-cultural image of the city.

What is the significance of these heritage sites for the local Jews? Both sites have religious meanings above all but even so, the 18 Jews of Alba Iulia are not interested in communal life, nor preservation of their heritage. This phenomenon might be due to age

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[34] Source: https://kepeslapok.wordpress.com/2011/03/20/gyulafehervar/, accessed 28.05.2016

reasons, disinterest, or lack of information. Lia Borza, the president of the community and its spokesperson, took upon herself the mission of preserving this heritage and creating a bridge between the community and the local authorities. It is a dialogue that sometimes fails. This fact was admitted to me by Ms. Borza when she mentioned that when the municipality became first interested in the Jewish sites, visiting the cemetery for example, the authorities hardly communicated with the community and did not take its opinion into consideration[35]. With the time, the dialogue strengthened. Even so, Ms. Borza has not been alone in her attempts to safeguard this Jewish heritage and as a proof, between 1996 and 2002, the Romanian Jewish Federation donated 470,000 USD for the renovation of the synagogues of Alba Iulia, Brașov, Tg. Mureș, Sighetu Marmației, Rădăuți and Tecuci[36]. Ms. Borza is willing to rent the upper area, where the women's section is located as an exhibition or teaching space, similar to how the former Orthodox synagogue Sas Hevra (Croitorilor str) in Cluj Napoca is used.

Even though the municipality has no legal authority over the synagogue, the official website lists the building under its Heritage and Historic Churches section. In 2006, the mayor's office funded the restoration of the building by offering 2000 euros[37] to the community. One wonders if it was in relation to Romania's acceptance in the European Union a year later. In any case, Mrs. Borza did not comment upon the subject and said only that at the beginning the communication with the officials was not very transparent. In 2015, the mayor's office had an awareness campaign, called "Being a Jew" in which it tried to familiarize young people (high school and University students) with certain elements of the Jewish culture. This campaign signified the lack of knowledge about the Jewish community of Alba Iulia and the

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[35] Lia Borza, interview by Mihaela Groza, July 2016

[36] Attila Gidó, "On Transylvanian Jews. An Outline of a Common History", *Working Papers in Romanian Minority Studies,* Nr. 17*,* Institutul pentru studierea problemelor minoritatilor nationale, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p. 28

[37] Lia Borza, interview by Mihaela Groza, June 2016

need to educate the citizens. When it comes to the cemetery, the municipality created a documentary, to attract funds, venture which proved unsuccessful. Despite that, every now and then, an official from the mayor's office comes along and introduces the site to a potential local investor.

There are the external visitors, namely the relatives of the deceased. Ms. Emilia Plesea, the curator of the Jewish cemetery, keeps detailed records of who visits the cemetery but she kept intact only the information starting with 2003. According to the early records, on a yearly basis, there were around 27 visitors, a number which decreased to 18 in 2015 with countries of origins such as Israel, United States, Canada, and the Netherlands. The interest ranges from visiting ancestors' graves to religious tourism since the cemetery shelters Ezekiel Paneth's ohel, the Rabbi of the community between 1823 and 1845[38]. By extension, this religious tourism led to a scholarly interest in the life and teachings of Rabbi Paneth[39]. Rabbi Paneth started his religious career in the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a scholar of the Talmud and later after he moved to Prague he became a Hasid. Thus he became a controversial figure since he breached the borders of two different Jewish religious currents. For these foreign Jews, these places are pilgrimage sites with an enormous potential. As Rabbi Elli Fischer, whose grandfather originated from Alba Iulia, remarked, a larger narrative should be created, one which could include the Jewish sites and stimulate interests in Alba Iulia as a heritage complex, thus agreeing with the municipalities' plans[40]. Professor Ossi Horovitz goes even further by claiming that both the synagogue and the cemetery are not highlighted by the municipality,

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[38] When appointed Rabbi, Paneth soon realized that his constituency was formed mostly by rural Jews, both of Ashenazi and of Sephardi rites. He played an important role in implementing a strict observance of Judaism by appointing ritual slaughters and ritual baths. A more detailed account of Yehezkel Paneth's life can be found on YIVO (The YIVO Encyclopedia of Eastern Jews in Eastern Europe), information provided by Dr. Michael K. Silber. Ohel represents a mausoleum erected above the grave of a Jewish person considered saintly. http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Paneth_Yehezkel, accessed 11.04.2015

[39] Elli Fischer, "Name, Language, and Dress":The Life Cycle of a Well-Known but Nonexistent "Midrash" article presented at a conference, *Always Hungarian: The Jews of Hungary through the Vicissitudes of the Modern Era*, at the Aharon & Rachel Dahan Center at Bar-Ilan University in conjunction with the Memorial Museum of Hungarian Speaking Jewry, May 30-31, 2016

[40] Elli Fischer, e-mail correspondence with the author, 11.05.2017

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and creating a bus station in front of the synagogue meant only sabotaging its touristic potential[41].

Academic interest came later when in 2014, Daniel Dumitran, professor at the local university, 1 December University, alongside a group of archaeologists and restaurateurs, initiated a Restoration Summer Camp for students, which operates to this very day. The main idea was not only to train and educate future scholars and to offer them practice opportunities but also to create a data base of the Jewish cemetery. It is not an activity funded by the municipality but mainly by the University and private sponsors. The restoration camp helped saving 60 to 70 gravestones belonging to the old part of the cemetery, where tombstones are of the 18th century. Stefan Valentin, one of the restaurateurs, has a grim perspective over the state of the cemetery, suggesting that lack of permanent funds endangers the existence of the site.

Since the cemetery is located not on a very populated street, I have tried first to talk to the neighbours which admitted that they knew about the cemetery but have never visited it, not even as an exotic attraction. These confessions were confirmed by the Romanian family who takes care of the site, starting with 1992.

But what happens in the street? To what extent the synagogue has a place on an imagined map of the city? As a matter of fact, a bus station is located in front of the Synagogue and it is also named after it, "Sinagoga". My preoccupation was to comprehend the level of awareness of a Jewish place in a non-Jewish space. It was even more puzzling because the synagogue is the only building which has a historical architectural style in the area, it is therefore easy to recognize. I asked 400 people the following two questions: if they are aware of the presence of the building which the bus station is named after and if they know its meaning. My 400 subjects had one thing in common: they were all inhabitants of Alba Iulia, and I did not take into consideration age, gender, or religious denominations. Of 400 people, seven knew

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[41] Ossi Horovitz, e-mail correspondence with the author, 13.05.2017

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that the building was a synagogue but were not able to link this term with the Jewish community and were quite surprised to find out that a Jewish community lives in Alba Iulia. But in the end the fact that they knew nothing about Jewish heritage sites proved only misinformation and I went even further and questioned to what extent there is a mental map with heritage sites as orientation points? And if it is one, which are those sites?

Because of my inquiries, I noticed Alba Iulians orient themselves based on precise buildings such as the Catedrala Încoronării (Coronation Cathedral), Muzeul Unirii (Museum of the Unification), Hotel Cetate, Universitatea 1 Decembrie 1918 (1 December University) for the upper part of the city. The orientation points for the lower part are Primăria (which is the building where is the mayor's office), Tribunalul (Alba Iulia's Court house), Magazinul Universal Unirea (Unirea Universal shop, the one which took the place of the Sephardic synagogue), Poliţie (the Police headquarters). They are aware of the Hungarian heritage, especially the Catholic Cathedral but this awareness is spatial and less historical. It is also mentionable that the line buses in Alba Iulia make it even easier to spot the buildings or the sites that have significance for the Romanian history, because the routes follow a pattern which leads the traveller from the train station, as a starting point, to the mentioned buildings. As a consequence, the spatial orientation comes as a natural and unquestionable act. But why this is not an attribute that transferred on the synagogue? Why, even if the bus station Sinagoga is there, people are not able to connect it with a Jewish presence? I conclude that this is a question of not experiencing or being in contact with these places daily. To make it even clearer I believe it is not that much related to historical knowledge of the place but more with not creating a connection (social, economic, political) or having memories in which these sites are included. It is also connected to the fact that the Jewish community of Alba Iulia is not visible at all in the public sphere. It is, of course, a result of the Second World War deportations and crimes, of

the later immigrations to Israel and of the nationalization of the public space and of national and local identity policies.

A further step in my study is to offer an alternative to a better understanding and inclusion of these Jewish heritage sites in the daily experiences of people. How can one do that? Moreover, is it a prerequisite when dealing with the management of this type of heritage? And why is it important?

1.4. What is a Jewish space and how can it be interpreted?

In his book *The Practice of Everyday Life*, the French scholar Michel de Certeau distinguishes and defines places and spaces. Hence, a place is "an instantaneous configuration of positions and it implies an indication of stability", while a space is composed of "interactions of mobile elements" and as such "a place is a practised space"[42]. It suggests that a place is grounded in temporality, it requires a certain human interaction which a space does not, since the latter is something palpable, and can exist without a narrative behind it. I would go even further claiming that a place implies a level of energy, a state of mind which a space does not require, since it has a recognition in physicality. Following de Certeau's definitions, I assess that the Jewish heritage of Alba Iulia is primarily formed of spaces: a synagogue, a cemetery, a residential building, a mill. As spaces, their recognition does not go beyond physical location and as a consequence, the name of the synagogue transferred to the bus station in front of it. But one aspect that intrigues me is to discover to what extent if recognizing a heritage site only as a space will be enough for its survival, protection and in the end inclusion in a larger narrative of the city's heritage? For that matter, I believe that it is necessary to transform these spaces

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[42] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p.117

into places, places which are able to include different cultural groups and to anchor people's daily experiences in a shared temporal and spatial framework.

Michal Y. Bodemann coined the term *Judaising milieu,* defining those "professional almost-Jews", non-Jews, still, who interact with these Jewish spaces and whose contribution is essential[43]. Some of these people come from environments for which secularization means a clear distinction between religious institutions and state or economy, meaning a compartmentalization of life into spheres, as José Casanova explains[44]. As a consequence, their actions are not rooted that much in religious beliefs as they are in concepts such as tolerance, interculturalism and minority representation. This allows re-conceiving the meaning of Jewish buildings: they are no more seen primarily as sacred spaces belonging to a foreign religious community, but as cultural treasures relevant for all local inhabitants, worth therefore of being protected and publicly displayed.

Is this turn to a secularized view of Jewish built heritage happening in Alba Iulia? I remember that one of the interviewees during my research draw my attention to one of the first Orthodox churches in Alba Iulia and concluded that its restoration and contemporary usage could be implemented on a Jewish cemetery as well[45]. The named church is still functional and has a beautiful flower garden with benches, everything surrounded by gravestones. And this is the case with many other churches or monasteries throughout Romania.

In regards to Kazimierz, in a study from 2003, "The Krakow Jewish Culture Festival", Ruth Ellen Gruber observed that for the local Jews the Jewish district was perceived as a safe space, since "the district consciously forms a sort of 'Jewish zone' where different rules from

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[43] Eszter B. Gantner, Matyas Kovacs, "The Constructed Jew. A Pragmatic Approach for defining a Collective Central European Image of Jews", in *Jewish Space in Central and Eastern Europe: day to day history*, edited by Jurgita Šiaučiūnaitė-Verbickienė; Larisa Lempertine, Newcastle, UK : Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2007.

[44] José Casanova, "Rethinking Secularization: a global comparative perspective" in Peter Beyer & Lori G. Beaman (eds.), *Religion, Globalization and Culture.* Brill. pp. 101--120 (2007)

[45] Tudor Drambărean, interview by Mihaela Groza, 11.07.2016

the rest of the city—or country—may apply."[46] With time this perception can transfer to the non-Jewish population and hence these spaces can receive emotional values and cultural symbolism that are no more clearly Jewish or Christian. They become spaces of dialogue and communion for both Jews and non-Jews. I think the most important thing will be the fact that Jewish places could carry a very important message and that is the fact that Jewish life and culture are much more than Holocaust or persecutions. For the first time, both tourists and locals have the chance to experience Jewish life and not Jewish death[47]. A space which I like to call shared, is as defined by Diana Pinto "a meeting point" and it is not controlled by a particular group. It belongs as much to the Jewish people as it belongs to the non-Jews. And even more significantly, these are spaces that are financed by non-Jewish organizations but, hopefully, in a shared way[48]. And maybe, as Diana Pinto advises, Jewish spaces serve as models for future Christian spaces, since Christianity is about to become a minority religion in a secular Europe[49].

1.5. Conclusions

This chapter has been constructed around the idea that urban spatiality and its perceptions play a significant role in understanding how heritage sites are protected and interpreted. As such, what I have discovered in Alba Iulia is that perceptions of urban places are influenced by historical events (Holocaust, communism, immigration) and narratives, as well as local identity policies which determined Jewish sites to be excluded not only from public awareness but also from being a part of any official heritage policies. As a result, the

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[46]   Ruth Ellen Gruber, quoted in Erica Lehrer and Michael Meng, *Jewish Spaces in Contemporary Poland*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015. p. 179
[47]   Lehrer and Meng*, Jewish Spaces in Contemporary Poland*, p. 179
[48]   Diana Pinto, "The Third Pillar? Towards a European Jewish Identity", Central European University, Budapest, Jewish Studies Lecture Series, March 1999, http://web.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/pdf/01_pinto.pdf, Accessed February 2016 as part of a class, Jewish Revival Movements (Daniel Monterescu)
[49]   Diana Pinto, "Jewish Spaces and their Future", in Meng and Lehrer, *Jewish Spaces in Contemporary Poland*, p. 281.

attempts of the municipality to include the Jewish sites as a part of the city's image, even though commendable, seem artificial, in the sense that at times they are not backed up by historical realities. Moreover, responsibility in regard to the fate of the Jews in the city are not considered. A better exposure to the history of the Jewish population of Alba Iulia and creating a narrative in which the Jewish sites become part of the daily experiences of Alba Iulians, are necessary.

Chapter 2

Jewish Heritage, a time capsule

While writing this chapter I had in mind the almost proverbial words of the novelist L.P. Hartley: *The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.* And therefore, I start the following section by presenting a short overview of the history of the Jews in Alba Iulia from the perspective of their relationships with their Hungarian and Romanian neighbours. The aim is to highlight the multicultural past of the city and to show the continuity of the Jewish community. Afterwards, I question the present image that the local authorities project over the city and I ask what is multiculturalism in the present framework and what does it entail? I come to the conclusion that reclaiming the past brings forward the clash of two different historical narratives: the Romanian perception of Alba Iulia vs. the Hungarian one. I conclude that for the three groups involved in the study, having a different perception of the historical time and by extrapolation of Alba Iulia led to experiencing differently the Jewish heritage of the city.

2.1. The Jews of Alba Iulia

The first Jewish settlers are documented in Alba Iulia at the end of the 16th century (1591), through the presence of a Beth Din (rabbinical court), which means that a Rabbi must have existed there, as well as at least 10 adult males[50]. An official source appears in 1623 when Gábor Bethlen, the Prince of Transylvania, at that time a principality under Ottoman suzerainty[51], issued a decree known as a privilegium[52] through which he prescribed the rights and the obligations between the Jews who he invited to settle in Alba Iulia and the authorities. Prince Bethlen had valid reasons to call upon a Jewish presence since at the beginning of the 17th century the town was the battleground not only for internal political fights between disputers at the throne of Transylvania but also endured natural calamities such as floods and earthquakes[53]. It was a common practice to offer protection and abode to the Jewish community in exchange of their economic contribution to the development of a region[54]. Furthermore, the prince was influenced in his decisions by a Jewish physician from Constantinople, Abraham Sarsa, who played a key role in convincing Bethlen of allowing the Jews to settle in Transylvania and consequently in Alba Iulia, which was at the time the principality's capital[55].

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[50] Caloianu, *Istoria comunității…,* p. 1
[51] Between 1570 and 1711 Transylvania was under the Ottoman Empire as a semi-independent state ruled by different Hungarian princes.
[52] A privilegium is a legal or economic right given only to a certain group and which allows that group to have certain liberties for a definite period.
[53] Caloianu, *Istoria comunității…,* p.18
[54] One of the first mentions of such a practice is known as the Constituzione Livornina, a document from 1591 (annotated in 1593) through which Ferdinando dei Medici invited the Jewish merchants expelled from the Iberian Peninsula to settle in Livorno, Tuscany. In exchange of their economic contribution, the Duke granted the Jewish merchants many privileges such as: the right to practice Judaism, the right to own property, and exempt them from wearing a distinctive clothing whereas in other parts of Italy or other European countries, the situation was opposite. A more detailed account is given by Francesca Bregoli, *Mediterranean Enlightenment: Livornese Jews, Tuscan culture, and eighteenth-century reform,* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2014, p. 31
[55] Raphael Patai, *The Jews of Hungary: history, culture, psychology*, Detroit, Mich. : Wayne State Univ. Press, 1999, p. 120

Most of the Jews invited by Bethlen were Sephardic[56] Jews who imported luxury products from Constantinople and who came in low numbers mainly because at that time Transylvania was not a main trade hub of Europe[57]. But even so, with the prince's approval and the privileges given, continuity of Jewish life in Alba Iulia was threatened by political instability, Turkish-Tatar invasions of 1658-1662, and restrictions in terms of professing certain economic related jobs.

Only with the beginning of the eighteenth century, precisely in 1711 when Transylvania was incorporated into the Hapsburg Monarchy, and with more accuracy the ruling period of emperor Joseph II (1780-1790), the situation of the Jewish community becomes clearer in Alba Iulia. The Edicts of Tolerance, whom the emperor issued, annulled abusive taxes, allowed peddling and lay schooling[58]. Moreover, Joseph II postponed his mother's plans to concentrate all Jews of Transylvania in Alba Iulia, going even further by allowing the construction of a Sephardic synagogue in the city. With a more receptive attitude of the Austrian authorities, the number of Jews in Transylvania grew from a few hundred to a couple of thousands, since Ashkenazi Jews joined the Sephardic ones. The first census to determine the number of the Jewish subjects in the Empire was done between 1784 and 1787 during Joseph's reign and it revealed that at that time in Alba Iulia lived 4,770 people of which 150 were of Jewish religion[59].

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[56] From the point of view of culture and traditions there are three distinctive groups of Jews: Sephardic, Ashkenazic and Mizrachi who differentiate themselves through their interpretations of the Jewish religious law or their attitude towards non-Jewish society. Another distinction refers to the geographical provenance of the three subgroups: Sephardic Jews originate from Spain, Portugal, Middle East, Ashkenazic Jews are the Jews of France, Germany, Eastern Europe, as for the Mizrachi Jews they originate from North Africa and Middle East.

[57] Attila Gidó, "On Transylvanian Jews", p. 6

[58] The Edicts of Tolerance are a series of laws issued by the Hapsburg Emperor Joseph II in 1782. The laws, part of the Josephinian Reforms were meant to help integrate and emancipate the Jewish population of the Empire. Some of the regulation touched upon the reformation of the educational system and access given to the Jewish population to it as well encouragement in practising productive occupations such as agriculture or crafts, frowned upon until that point. Ladislau Gyémánt, *Evreii din Transilvania : destin istoric = The Jews of Transilvania : a historical destiny,* Cluj Napoca : institutul cultural român, Centrul de studii Transilvane, 2004, p. 45

[59] Caloianu, *Istoria comunității evreiești...,* p.179

Additionally, Alba Iulia's Jewish community maintained its position as being the only officially recognized in the principality, subordinated to the Roman Catholic bishop[60].

Due to its legal status, the community was active in fighting for civil rights of all Jews across Transylvania, and in the events of the 1848 revolution, its members sided with the Hungarian nation, expecting in return political and civil emancipation. This is the start period in the Jewish-Hungarian relationships in Transylvania, relation which will determine the fate of the Jews in this region for the next 150 years. The adherence to the Hungarian nation was expressed not only culturally but also by proving loyalty and engaging in military service and voluntary contributions such as money and horses[61]. Consequently, amid the revolution, the relations with both the Romanians that lived in Alba Iulia and with the Austrian rulers suffered. After the revolutionary years, many of the economic restrictions against Jews were removed and as such starting with 1860 the Jewish population could own pharmacies, breweries, mills and become real estate proprietors. Prior to the dualist period the Jewish population of Alba Iulia numbered 735 people from a total of 5,408 of which 2530 were Romanians and 1009 were Hungarians[62].

Full civil and political emancipation was achieved in 1867, in the early years of the dual monarchy, under the Hungarian Prime Minister, Count Gyula Andrássy, but it came with a cost for the Jews of Alba Iulia. Any other privileges the community had become null and Alba Iulia's Rabbi who was previously the Chief Rabbi for Transylvania, lost his title[63]. Religiously speaking, the community was of Status Quo orientation, but in 1932 declared itself as Orthodox.[64] It was divided into different levels based on the fiscal contribution and eligibility

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60   Gidó, "On Transylvanian Jews...", p. 7
61   Ibidem, p. 8
62   Varga E. Árpád, Érdély etnikai és felekezeti statisztikája (Népszámlálási adatok 1850-2002), www.kia.hu/konyvtar/erdely/erd2002.htm, last Accessed October 21st, 2015
63   Gyémánt, Evreii din Transilvania..., p. 121
64   Orthodoxy is a branch of Judaism which aims at a strict adherence to traditional forms of religious observance and at preserving this tradition intact. It emerged as a response to the 18th century Enlightenment movement which had in mind integrating the Jewish population in their host countries, among others.

to vote at the regular meetings. Statistics show that during the dualist period in Alba Iulia lived 1,800 individuals of Jewish faith[65]. Apart from the political and civil emancipation, the Jewish population enjoyed religious recognition and acceptance in 1895 through the so-called Law of Reception, issued for the entire Jewish population of the monarchy. The period of the emancipation is also best known for being the most prosperous one for the Jews of Alba Iulia, since different individuals become fully integrated in the economic life of the city and businesses were expanding as well as residential buildings were built. A novelty in that sense is the erection of the Gizela Palace and the rise of the Glück family, and other figures such as Johan Mendel and Adolf Ionas. If the elites of the community were involved in owning businesses which covered the alcohol and grain industries and also became large land owners, the lower strata were involved in agriculture or its members were industrial workers as well as shop owners. There was even a functionally legal brothel, dated 1880, owned by a madam on the name of Estera Friedman[66].

The above occupational trend remained similar even after 1918, when Alba Iulia, alongside Transylvania became a part of Greater Romania. According to the statistics of the 1930 in Alba Iulia lived 1,480 Jews. Their contribution to the economic development of the city has been rewarded when in 1927, Ferdinand Fuchs was elected in the leadership of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the city, which starting with 1931, had a permanent member of the Jewish community in its organizational structures. This state of affairs, which seems deprived of attacks or abuses against the Jewish community, lasted until 1938 when the Ashkenazi synagogue was bombarded by members of the Iron Guard[67].

Michael K. Silber, "Orthodoxy", *The Yivo Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Orthodoxy accessed 23.08.2016

[65] Varga E. Árpád, Érdély etnikai és felekezeti statisztikája (Népszámlálási adatok 1850-2002), www.kia.hu/konyvtar/erdely/erd2002.htm, last Accessed October 21st, 2015

[66] Caloianu, *Istoria comunităţii evreieşti …,* p. 195

[67] Iron Guard or known in Romanian as Garda de Fier was a fascist organization of the 30s and 40s of the twentieth century, founded in 1927 by its leader, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu. Its ideology was based on mystical nationalistic and anti-Semitic ideas. Armin Heinen, *Legiunea "Arhanghelul Mihail" : mişcare*

With the invasion of Poland by the German Reich and the starting of the Second World War, the situation for the Jews in both Romania and Hungary changed dramatically, especially for the Jews in Transylvania. In 1940, Northern Transylvania (namely a total of 10 counties) becomes a part of Hungary, according to the Second Vienna Award. As such, the Jewish population of Transylvania had different paths: in northern Transylvania, with a population of 151. 125 Jews, 131. 633 were deported to Auschwitz. Southern Transylvania (which includes Alba Iulia) had a population of 54. 358 Jews who was subjected to deprivations and persecutions but they were not deported or faced the "final solution". When northern Transylvania become a part of Romania again, the entire region had 90. 444 Jews[68].

Between 1940 and 1944 a series of anti-Jewish legislation and policies taken by Ion Antonescu's regime affect the life of the community. First of the measures is that the Jewish cult was not recognized any more as an historical one. In Alba Iulia, the Jewish community faced abuses (physical and political) at the hands of the Iron Guard members. In a report at the end of the war, signed both by the community's secretary, Yekutiel Ernester and by its president at the time, Filip Glück, it is described how in October 1940 an Iron Guard police officer, Traian Hesker, arrested the Rabbi and other important members of the community and subjected them to beatings and torture, causing months later the death of Andor Glück, the honorary president of the community[69]. Reports of the local police between 1942 and 1944, reflect the state of the community which is seen by the authorities as „revengeful elements against the Romanian nation" but no concrete efforts to prove the assertion were made. The same report observes that the majority of the Jewish member are closer to the Hungarian community, which they see as more loyal and understanding towards their causes. [70] Alba Iulia's community was not

socială și organizație politică : o contribuție la problema fascismului internațional, București: Humanitas, 2006, p.32

[68] Ladislau Gyemant, "Transylvania" in YIVO, *The Yivo Encyclopaedia on Jews in Eastern Europe,* http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Transylvania, Accessed 05.07.2017
[69]Caloianu, *Istoria comunității evreiești...,* p.125
[70]Ibid., p.147

segregated during the Second World War, but many members were dispossessed of their rightful properties or deported to concentration camps. In 1940-1941, many Jews of Alba Iulia were forced by threats and torture to sign declarations by which they "sold" their property for one quarter of its value; mostly not even this quarter was paid to them[71]. During these difficult times, an extraordinary personality made an appeal to the authorities and local populations, asking them to reject the inhumane treatment of the Jews:

> "We must stand on the side of what is true and right, publicly and with pride, and resolve to see every human, no matter what his language or religion, as our brother"[72]

The words belong to Áron Márton, the Roman Catholic bishop of Alba Iulia who vehemently condemned the deportations of Romanian and Hungarian Jews and wrote numerous letters of support to local and national authorities. The Holocaust atrocities were survived by 587 members of the community which starting with 1947 did not have a Rabbi any more, the last one being Mauritiu Krauzs.

Between 1948 and 1995, 272,000 individuals of Jewish ethnicity emigrated to Israel from Romania[73]. On one side, an essential contributor to the emigration was the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 but most importantly the process was encouraged by the communist regime from Bucharest, which proceeded at nationalizations and resorted to demand monetary compensations from Israel in exchange of Romanian citizens of Jewish faith. The usual rate was 3,000 USD/person[74]. Consequently, Alba Iulia's Jewish population decreased from 568 members in 1966 to 87 in 1977[75]. Jewish community life in communism surprisingly survived mainly due to the figure of Moses Rosen, the Chief Rabbi of Romania, who could "arrange"

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[71] Mózes Richtmann, "Alba Iulia" [in Hebrew], in *Pinkas Hakehillot: Encyclopaedia of Jewish Communities, Romania*, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1969), 277-279.
[72] "Márton FAMILY", *The Righteous among the Nations*, http://db.yadvashem.org/righteous/family.html?language=en&itemId=4016317, accessed 17.03.2016
[73] Gidó, "On Transylvanian Jews...", p. 26
[74] Bernard Wasserstein, *Vanishing diaspora: the Jews in Europe since 1945,* London, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1997, p. 56
[75] Varga E. Árpád, Érdély etnikai és felekezeti statisztikája (Népszámlálási adatok 1850-2002), www.kia.hu/konyvtar/erdely/erd2002.htm, last Accessed October 21st, 2015

with the communist regime a relative freedom for the community by keeping open religious schools and a kosher[76] food distribution chain. The Bucharest Jewish State Theatre, which still exists to this very day and it is one of the only performing Yiddish theatres in Europe, toured the country with different performances. Even so, communism in Romania, if it had offered at any moment a slight impression of equality, was an equality of poverty. In Alba Iulia, the authorities from Bucharest kept a vigilante eye on the community records and as such confiscated the community's archives and relocated them to Bucharest. Even more, in 1983, the Sephardic synagogue was demolished, showing that Jewish buildings had no heritage character for the authorities. But this was a common practice in communist Romania, where churches were also demolished. The community, overall, as it started to decrease in numbers and because of Nicolae Ceauşescu's identity policies, struggled to maintain a religious character and was slowly assimilated in the Romanian society. Therefore, after 1989, being Jewish was defined more by expressing an ethnic affinity rather than belonging to a religious community[77]. It is a phenomenon encountered in other Eastern European countries as well, and it is extensively related to the countries' repressive political regimes.

Today, the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania is the main organism that handles the communities' existence and distributes funds from the Romanian Government and international organizations. The Federation also supervises Jewish cemeteries and synagogues, but this is a difficult task, since there are entire communities across Romania that either have no members left or they are elderly, incapable of taking care of this heritage. Fortunately, even if in Alba Iulia there are 18 members of the Jewish community, the President, Lia Borza, is an

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[76]   Kosher - accepted by Jewish law as fit for eating or drinking, mid-19th century: from Hebrew kāšēr 'proper'. Merriam – Webster dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/kosher, accessed 14.05. 2017

[77]   Zvi Gitelman, "Reconstructing Jewish Communities and Jewish identities in post-Communist East Central Europe", *Jewish Studies at the Central European University I.* Central European University, Budapest, 2000, p. 35–50.

active personality who aims at preserving Jewish heritage sites and contributes to this venture by collaborating with the local authorities. Unfortunately, one cannot speak of the existence of a religious or community life amongst the Jews of Alba Iulia, partly because of a lack of interest, as it was claimed by Ms. Borza.

2.2. Opening Pandora's Box

Jewish presence in Alba Iulia spans over centuries and yet, the municipality's attempts at creating an image in which the city presents itself as multicultural strongly contrasts with present day's realities. Today, the city is Romanian to more than 95%, while the once strong populations of Hungarians, Germans, and Jews have decreased to tiny minorities. Therefore, what does it entail for Alba Iulia's authorities being multicultural? In a general context, multiculturalism as a notion has been initially understood as an acceptance of different groups from an official perspective through governmental policies but today this recognition transferred to a societal level by an acknowledgement of multiple languages or cultural mores[78]. In the case of Alba Iulia, multiculturalism does not go as far as inclusion but as an acknowledgement at an official level of the existence of the patrimony of a different group. It retains for itself an abstract dimension since it sees the cultural identity of the Jewish community as an aiding element to a larger narrative, and not a full participant since it presents the community in a way that fits a Romanian historical narrative only. It is a controlled interaction between the two different groups and it expels a third one, the Hungarian community. I believe that invoking multiculturalism by the authorities brings forth the clash of the Romanian and Hungarian national historical narratives since what is remembered demands how it is remembered.

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[78] Rodney Harrison, "Multicultural and minority heritage", in *Understanding heritage and memory,* ed. Tim Benton, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010, p. 167

2.3. Down the memory lane

If so far I discussed the historical continuity of the community, one might ask if this passage of time limited in any way the interpretation of Jewish heritage, created breaches or simply developed new perceptions. My understanding of historical time is derived from the work of the German historian Reinhart Koselleck. In the last chapter of his book *Futures Past: On the semantics of historical time*, Koselleck creates semantic categories for how past and future relate from the perspective of a temporal dimension and in relation to their connection to the present historical time. He discusses the connection between the "space of experience" seen as the past and the "horizon of expectation" seen as "the future made present"[79]. I believe this definition is very much relevant for the relationship that exists between the historical experience that heritage sites convey and present-day expectations on what the same heritage sites should transmit and represent. On this basis, I discuss in what ways historical time influences the development and the interpretation of Jewish heritage in Alba Iulia.

Since the setting of the present research is a town, and to understand how urban spaces are shared in such a setting and how historical time is experienced, one needs to define what a city is[80]. The French sociologist Henri Lefebvre defines a city as a "mediation among mediations" where relations are established between the "near order – relations of individuals in groups of variable sizes, more or less organized- and far order- society regulated by powerful institutions, Church and State"[81]. Thus, the city is the setting for an urban dialogue but also it

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[79] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures past: on the semantics of historical time,* New York: Columbia University Press, 2004, p. 234
[80] I am using these terms interchangeably even though I am aware of their size differences.
[81] Henri Lefebvre; Eleonore Kofman; Elizabeth Lebas, *Writings of Cities,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, p.58

is an ongoing negotiation process between different participants. The dialogue is an important part of the city's continuity and existence and many times its transparency depends not that much of the participants but of the framework where it is conducted. As in the present case, a heritage space can become a milieu through which the different stakeholders of the city are negotiating their social representations or identity. But in the same time, heritage can mediate urban memory and its resilience as the city transforms. Through heritage the city's inhabitants have the power to recover from shocks and to adapt to new situations since these heritage sites defy the passage of time and are remainders of the past, inside a change environment. They "speak" the unspeakable and they testify in the absence of witnesses. But one should not confound memory with history, as Pierre Nora makes a clear distinction between the two notions. "Memory is life" states Nora, is evolutive, vulnerable to manipulations and tied to gestures, spaces while history is a reconstruction of the past, subdue to temporality:

> "Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past." [82]

In that sense, the Jewish heritage sites of Alba Iulia are physically there, an historical and undeniable fact, but how is their memory preserved?

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[82]   Pierre Nora; David P Jordan, *Rethinking France = Les lieux de mémoire.* Volume 2, Space, Chicago, Ill.; London : The University of Chicago Press, cop. 2006, p.1

2.4. Heritage of the past, heritage of the future

2.4.1. Jewish Time

The oldest Pinkas (minute book) of the Alba Iulia Jewish community covers the years 1735-1836[83] and it was sold in 2013[84]. The nineteenth-century pinkas is also extant. Various pinkassim from 1866-1957 were sold by Kestenbaum in 2016.

In September 2016, Kestenbaum and Company, the largest niche auction house in the United States, specialized in Hebraica and Judaica Collections among others, auctioned the nineteenth century Pinkas of the community of Alba Iulia. A Pinkas[85] is a book, a ledger through which each community documents and organizes itself. It is a genre which originated in the pre-modern Jewish communities of Central and Eastern Europe. Many times, written in three or four languages simultaneously (Hebrew, Yiddish and the local languages depending on the geographic areas), Pinkassim recorded acts and decisions of the community board, which serve as a source of historical and demographic data, societal structures within the Jewish communities and interactions of Jews with Gentiles. Usually these ledgers are auctioned for significant sums of money due to the fact that most of the minute books prior to the Holocaust have been destroyed and thus their existence today is rare. If one is to skim through the auction catalogue of the American company, it will find interesting how the Pinkas of Alba Iulia is recorded. It is registered under the following name "LOT: 128 (KARLSBURG) Group of four manuscript ledgers (Pinkassim) all from the Jewish community of Karlsburg,

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[83] Richtmann, "Alba Iulia", p. 78

[84] See   :
http://www.rarebookhub.com/auction_lot_books/2324076/print?key=6b6197a26df080bba5b4a305cad68ce693a
e10c4

[85] Discovering and digitizing Pinkassim became a part of an international project started by the National
Library of Israel and Simon Dubnow Institute for Jewish History and Culture from Leipzig with the help of
distinguished professors from prestigious universities such as Brown University or Hebrew University in
Jerusalem. The aim is to create access for future researchers of Jewish history and to safeguard this
extraordinary written heritage. The website can be accessed at:
http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/collections/jewish-collection/pinkassim/Pages/default.aspx, last
accessed 14.05.2017

Transylvania'[86]. Karlsburg was the city's official name between 1711 and the Magyarization of 1867. The reference to the town by using the German name has been preserved ever since in Yiddish, Ladino and Hebrew. On websites that document Orthodox Hasidic[87] dynastic genealogies, the information provided is similar and the mention of the town is done by using the Yiddish name and not even mentioning the Hungarian or Romanian versions. One of the descendants of a Jewish family who originated from Alba Iulia, remembers that his grandfather, born in 1911, never called the city by its Hungarian name, rather using the Yiddish or the Romanian version[88]. It is as if a different geography of the physical place has been invented. To this very day, in the Jewish imagination Wroclaw is still Breslau, and Cluj is still Kloyzenburg. The same is common for the Hasidic Jewish communities in Brooklyn, New York but this is a religious interpretation since these communities are connected with Rabbi Yehezkel Paneth's legacy, who is buried in the Alba Iulia Jewish cemetery. Of course, this practice is quite ordinary for other cities which names are dubbed in other languages and Yiddish is no exception. What makes it relevant, from my point of view, is that this practice reveals the temporal perception of the city through its Jewish heritage, and even more it reveals how historical time is experienced and treated. On one side, it seems as if the Jewish heritage of Alba Iulia is closed in a time capsule, and access is allowed by required background information. On the other, it seems as if there was a rupture in the historical time frame of the town and the temporal dimension freeze by referring to the city with its name from the Hapsburg period. Ultimately this double perception serves the purpose of creating what French

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[86]   Kestenbaum and Company, Auction catalogue from September 2016, https://www.kestenbaum.net/content.php?subj=71&item=23027&pos=127, last accessed 14.05.2017

[87]   Hasidism is a Jewish European social and religious movement of the eighteenth century which arise against secularization, nationalism and Zionism. The main characteristic of Hasidism is that its followers have a devotion for a dynastic leader (known as Rebbe) and that they believe that every mundane experience should be lived through Torah and God. David Assaf, "Hasidism", *The Yivo Encyclopedia of Eastern European Jews*, http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Hasidism/Historical_Overview, last accessed 14.05.2017. See also David Assaf, *A Journey to a Nineteenth-Century Shtetl : The Memoirs of Yekhezkel Kotik,* Detroit : Wayne State University Press 2008.

[88]   Elli Fischer, e-mail message to author, 23rd of June 2016, 11th of May 2017

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historian Pierra Nora called a "milieu de mémoire". This means that the Karlsburger Hasidim create a milieu de mémoire, therefore they do not care about Alba Iulia, the actual place. This means that Jewish heritage sites become repositories of memory in the absence of daily practices which have the ability to reinforce a lifestyle or a cultural expression which are now lost. Dubbing the city with its Yiddish name means anchoring it and the heritage it entails in a frame time of the past and which has a relevance only for a specific group, in this case implying cultural and religious aspects.

Figure 8: Rabbi Panneth's Ohel

2.4.2. Romanian Time

"Veniţi la Alba Iulia" (Come to Alba Iulia) was the urging slogan of December 1918, when the union of Transylvania with Greater Romania was proclaimed. Starting with 1918 the city becomes glorified in the Romanian historical narrative, as a place where Romanians as a people achieved their political desideratum and their national existence was recognized. In the

collective memory of the nation to this very day the city is known as Orasul Unirii (the City of the Unification). As such it retains a strong symbolism not only at a local level but also at a national level. Its name, on the other hand, legitimises the idea of historical continuity of the Romanian people since Alba Iulia is a reference to the Latin version of the name which roots itself in the Roman period. This explanation is part of the Romanian national myths, since In reality, the Roman name was Apulum, not Alba. Alba (Latin "white") is a thirteenth-century Latin translation of Gyulafehérvár (Hungarian "Gyula's white castle"). "Alba Iulia" was coined in the 18th century on the basis of the medieval precedent. But how do Jewish heritage sites fit in this framework?

Jewish heritage sites became relevant for the Romanian local authorities only in present times. And as such, a documentary titled *Testimonies carved in stones* (*Mărturii scrijelite în piatră[89]*) produced by the city's municipality in 2015 presents the history of the community throughout its recorded existence in Alba Iulia. Among other things, which will be discussed in a following chapter, the mayor of the city, Mircea Hava, speaks of historical realities of the past such as coexistence of different communities in the city and their contribution to its development. What makes his approach interesting, from a temporal point of view, is that he tries by using Jewish heritage sites, to import past experiences on present expectations. In this case, historical time is experienced as a repetition of the past, a past used to legitimize the choices of the present. In the documentary, there is a revindication of multi-ethnic local traditions with the Jews as a minority, but the narrative of the city's history is still the traditional nationalist one and erases the Hungarian contribution (at the beginning of the documentary, Gábor Bethlen's charter was said to be given by the Ottomans). What becomes relevant in terms of Jewish heritage are the industrial development and social diversity, while other aspects such

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[89] Municipiul Alba Iulia, Film documentar "Marturii scrijelite in piatra" , Youtube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRdhkiudkb0&t=21s, last accessed 20.04.2016

as Hungarianness and anti-Semitism are erased. Therefore, Jewish heritage sites are seen not as sites of the past but as patrimony of the present, which could convey future functions, enabling thus their survival.

One could notice that a secular perception of this heritage is involved, which might in the end clash with the ideas that descendants of the people buried in the cemetery, have. To what extent the municipality can balance the religious aspect that the cemetery will forever imply with their own conservation and touristic plans remains to be seen.

2.4.3. Hungarian Time

For the Hungarian memory, Alba Iulia (in Hungarian: Gyulafehérvár) is the religious center of Transylvania, since in 1009 king Saint Stephen established the bishopric there. To the religious importance, one might add, the place Gyulafehérvár retains in the historical narrative of the Hungarian nation. János Hunyadi is buried in the St. Michael's Cathedral and the name of the city makes a reference to Gyula, a Hungarian 10th century local political and military leader, whose existence is mentioned in *Gesta Hungarorum*, a chronicle of the 13th century which describes the settlement of the Hungarian people in Central Europe[90].

Every summer, buses full of Hungarian students and tourists visit the city and its heritage stays as a testimony of a great past. Hungarian Tourist Associations located both in Hungary and Romania organize guided tours of the city and of the entire region of Transylvania. In 2016, the Hungarian government allocated funds for the preservation and restoration of churches in Transylvania, in the Transcarpathian region of the Ukraine, and in Slovakia, Croatia and Serbia. It is a program that aims at medieval churches which have important fresco

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[90] Béla Köpeczi (ed.), History of Transylvania, Volume 2, Social Science Monographs, 2001, p. 137

decorations. The cathedral of Gyulafehérvár numbered among the selected monuments; but restoration works have been previously conducted since 2009, this being the year of the millennial celebration of the bishopric. The presence of the cathedral is of even greater significance if one considers that it has kept its original medieval structure with only minor changes. Such governmental and civic actions show that the memory of the city is preserved in the consciousness of the Hungarian nation as memory becomes a "public translation of a symbolic repetition"[91].

The communist regime in Romania challenged the dynamic of the Hungarian-Jewish relationships in the sense that it pressured the Jewish communities in separating themselves culturally from the Hungarian nation. In Alba Iulia the assimilation in the Hungarian nation was visible not only linguistically, through the minutes books written in Hungarian (as well as in Yiddish, German, and later Romanian), but also extended to burial practices. In the Jewish cemetery of Alba Iulia, there are four monumental crypts belonging to four influential families: Ionas, Straibăr, Fridman and Glück. The existence of the crypts suggests the imitation of a burial custom attributed to the Hungarian nobility, making them unique in the cemetery. The Glück family's crypt displays a set of paintings depicting several family members but the paintings are rather in a poor state. Today, only the inscriptions on the tombs in the cemetery remind of the assimilation into the Hungarian nation and some of the inscriptions go well beyond the 50s and the 60s of the 20th century.

Since my intention was to understand if there is a peculiar perception of the Jewish community and its heritage sites amongst the Hungarian community of Alba Iulia, I interviewed the representative of the Hungarian community of Alba Iulia, Gábor Teleki. I selected him because I was interested in an official opinion, meaning an institutional one. Mr.

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[91]François Hartog, "Time and Heritage" in *Museum International*, Volume 57, Issue 3 September 2005 , Pages 7–18

Teleki was quite eager to give information, emphasizing the fact that the Roman Catholic Archdiocese protected over the centuries the Jewish community of Alba Iulia. From my observations, I would not go as far as to claim that there is a preoccupation for the Jewish sites but there is an historical acknowledgment of them. He remembered streets where different Jewish residents lived in the city and he was aware of the municipality's plans to restore the cemetery. And still this is not available for the entire Hungarian community since my impression is that Mr. Teleki is aware of the Jewish presence, but for him it was more of a curiosity and the community does not have a plan to get involved or to safeguard the Jewish heritage sites.

2.5. Conclusions

As one can conclude, the Jewish heritage sites in Alba Iulia are included in three different time periods, depending on the group which discusses them. The Romanians refer to Roman Antiquity and the recent time, the Hungarians to the Middle Ages, the Transylvanian principality, and the dualist monarchy, while the onomastics most common among the Jews looks back to the Austrian Karlsburg of 1711-1867. And even despite their differences, the future cannot exist without the past references, since the former legitimizes the latter and the latter contributes to the survival and the continuity of the former.

Chapter 3

When heritage meets contemporary society: Jewish patrimony and the different meanings it triggers in Alba Iulia

I start the present chapter by explaining how interest in Jewish heritage and Jewish scholarship developed in post-communist Romania. The reasoning behind this approach is that I intend to establish a larger framework in understanding how interest in Jewish sites was born and how Alba Iulia came to include what Ruth Ellen Gruber called a "Jewish phenomenon"[92]. In the same time, preoccupation with Jewish cultural heritage acquired different meanings and in the case of Alba Iulia, Jewish sites became associated with concepts such as democracy or urban identity. This was not only the case of Alba Iulia, but happened in other cities as well, such as in Lviv, Bialystok, Wroclaw, Lodz or Warsaw. I conclude that even though Jewish sites are charged with different symbolical values, they have the potential of creating a bridge in dissipating the tensions between different groups associated with this Jewish heritage.

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[92] Ruth Ellen Gruber, *Virtually Jewish: reinventing Jewish culture in Europe*, Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2002, p. 3-15.

As sources for this chapter I will focus my attention on the documentary issued by the municipality, of which I referred to in the first chapter of this study, the website of the municipality and an interview with Daniel Dumitran, professor at the local university, one of the most ardent supporter of protecting Jewish heritage sites in Alba Iulia.

3.1. How interest in Jewish heritage developed in Romania

The fall of communism meant the beginning of an exposure to Western values such as religious freedom, cultural pluralism or market economy and has had a profound impact on how Jewish heritage was perceived, managed and promoted in the ex-Soviet block's countries. One after the other, countries from Eastern Europe took interest in Jewish Studies scholarship and heritage. The meaning of the past, as interpreted by the communist regimes, was to be challenged, and Romania was no different in that sense. In the course of 10 years starting with 1991 in Cluj-Napoca and 1998 in Bucharest, the universities from the respective cities opened Jewish Studies academic programs and departments, which allowed students to study Jewish history and to research topics that were until then either neglected or forbidden. It was a breakthrough, historically speaking, since in the communist period researching the Holocaust period has been a taboo, mainly because the communist regime through its nationalist policies aimed at dissipating minorities and integrating them into the larger Romanian majority. The regime feared that any emphasis on past Jewish suffering would foster community separatism. Also this taboo was fuelled by the fact that Romania did not want to take responsibility for the Holocaust.

In 2004 an International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania (also known as the Wiesel Commission) assessed the number of Romanian Jews that perished during the Second World War and cast light on the collaborationist attitudes both from civilians and officials in

the events[93]. In the years after the Wiesel commission's report was submitted to the attention of the public opinion, international surveys were conducted in regard to the number of Jewish communities, cemeteries and synagogues such as the International Jewish Cemetery Project[94] or the Historic Jewish Sites in Romania[95] survey. The surveys described the precarious state of the Jewish sites and the incapacity of the communities to provide care, due to a lack of funds and decreasing numbers of their members. As a result, communities rented their synagogues for cultural purposes, as was the case with one of the former synagogues of Cluj Napoca, which now hosts the Dr. Moshe Carmilly Institute for Hebrew and Jewish History, under the patronage of the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. Other buildings became community centres, such as Casa Rabinului (the Rabbi's House) and the synagogue in Mediaş, where due to the assiduous work of Anda Reuben[96], the building hosts concerts of Klezmer music, exhibitions and presents itself as a centre for dialogue for all the residents of the city. Moreover, the European Union encouraged state members' participation in safeguarding Jewish heritage sites through the Resolution 1883 of the Council of Europe (2012). The resolution establishes a European Route of Jewish Heritage and supports "initiatives to enhance the management, maintenance, preservation and restoration of Jewish burial sites..."[97]. This amendment gives the sign of approval for many local authorities in their involvement in Jewish heritage preservation.

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[93] More info at: https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20080226-romania-commission-holocaust-history.pdf, accessed 16.02.2017

[94] This is a project conducted by the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Studies and JewishGen in order to identify and register Jewish burial sites around the world. More information available at: http://www.iajgsjewishcemeteryproject.org/, accessed 02.013.2017

[95] For more information: Samuel D. Gruber, ed., *Historic Jewish Sites in Romania* (New York, Washington D.C.: United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, 2010), 2, and http://www.jewish-romania.ro, accessed 21.02.2017

[96] Reuben is the project coordinator for the Jewish community in Medias.

[97] Resolution 1883 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Art. 8/Jewish cemeteries, 2012, http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/Xref/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=18723&lang=EN, accessed 12.03.2017

The above examples are success stories, and the buildings that belong to the Jewish communities found a functionality. In other cases, Jewish heritage sites and the study of their history became core elements in attracting governmental and European funds, in the frameworks of the European agenda in terms of cultural diversity. Jewish history and heritage sites became relevant, escaping the traps of obliteration, being exposed and exposing themselves.

A way to preserve and present Jewish heritage sites was also to involve them in the tourist industry of the host countries, fact which as Ruth Ellen Gruber points out in her article, "Beyond virtually Jewish...balancing the real, the surreal and real imaginary places"[98], determined a closer look at the relationships between Jews and non-Jews and a re-evaluation of the past was considered. Furthermore, in many cases Jewish heritage and everything that it entails was to be associated with a number of cultural, political attributes which were desired attributes by the groups and societies in which Jewish sites resided.

The situation described above fits the state of affairs in Alba Iulia. This is a city with a rich historical symbolism for different ethnic groups. What makes the town to stand out, in terms of its Jewish heritage sites, is that their preservation and promotion entered the attention of the local authorities. Since the Romanian government has no legal authority over Jewish cemeteries and synagogues, the sites are either owned by private persons or by the Romanian Jewish Federation. They rarely became a part of the agendas of local authorities, making thus Alba Iulia a specific case. Authorities' involvement attracts a variable number of interpretations and interests and it triggers different narratives in respect with the Jewish sites. Based on the interviews that I conducted and my own observations, I suggest that there is a specific meaning that is attributed to Jewish heritage sites since they are expected to convey a significance and

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[98] Ruth Ellen Gruber, "Beyond virtually Jewish...balancing the real, the surreal and real imaginary places", in *Reclaiming Memory: urban regeneration in the historic Jewish quarters of Central European cities,* Monika Murzyn-Kupisz; Jacek Purchla, Krakow: International Cultural Centre, 2009, p. 63-79 (p.65)

to play different symbolic roles. As such, in the case of Alba Iulia, Jewish heritage carry the following functions: they are indicators of urban identity, of democratic values and of cultural diversity.

3.2. Heritage Counts: Meanings and Indicators

3.2.1. Jewish Heritage as indicator of urban identity

When in 2014 I interviewed Dumitran to ask him about his reasons behind his involvement in researching the Jewish cemetery, he brought to my attention that besides the historical value of the site, there is simply the idea of novelty. The scholarship regarding Jewish cemeteries in Romania resumes itself to a study done in 2000 by Silviu Sanie, for the medieval Jewish cemetery of Siret, Bukovina[99], and a survey made by the United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad in 2010, which assessed the situation of the cemeteries and the synagogues[100]. To this list one might add Mircea Moldovan's work, *Sinagoga. Arhitectura a monoteismului* from 2003 and the numerous studies and books written by Ladislau Gyemant, professor at the Babeş-Bolyai University. Dumitran and his collaborators are trying to make visible the Jewish heritage not only to their students but also to a larger audience, for which they published historical studies and visual materials. But beyond this, resides a conviction that Jewish heritage could help create an urban identity which, Dumitran claims, is absent in Alba Iulia[101]. Meaning that the Jewish cemetery's preservation and maintenance is directly connected with the idea of creating and consolidating an urban mentality, since it shows a considerable preoccupation with the past, with a desire of surpassing

[99] Silviu Sanie, *Dăinuire prin piatră : monumentele cimitirului medieval evreiesc de la Siret*, Bucureşti : Editura Hasefer, 2000.

[100] Historic Jewish sites in Romania, Washington, DC : U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, 2010.

[101] Daniel Dumitran, interview by Mihaela Groza, August 2015

past preconceptions and prejudices and also exposing inhabitants to a variety of cultures Alba Iulia had. Interestingly enough, urbanism is associated with the notion of Jewish heritage, but not with the Hungarian heritage. Urban memory thus seems to have primacy only for the Jewish case, which of course can be explained by the enduring Hungarian and Romanian conflict of the different historical narratives. But I find it even more problematic since according also to Dumitran and based on the epitaphs on the gravestones, Jewish community in Alba Iulia was until the 60s and the 70s of the 20th century assimilated culturally within the Hungarian community, a fact that is not reflected in any presentation materials done by the municipality, for which the double identity of the Jews of Alba Iulia and their connections with their Hungarian neighbours is of no concern.

3.2.2. Jewish Heritage as a substitue of cultural diversity

On the official website of the municipality, http://www.apulum.ro/index.php/patrimoniu, the Jewish cemetery is not even mentioned, but neither are other Romanian or Hungarian cemeteries. Nevertheless, the municipality, as stated previously, showed interest for the cemetery by producing a short documentary called *Testimonies carved in stones*, in which alongside the synagogue, the cemetery is featured in an attempt to raise awareness as heritage that is endangered and in need of restoration. This documentary was the basis of a crowdfunding initiative and was also presented at different international conferences such as the *European Jewish Cemeteries: Theory, Policy, Management and Dissemination* conference held in Vilnius, in October 25th-28th, 2015. From the video, listening to Alba Iulia's mayor, Mircea Hava, it is noticeable his attempt at anchoring Jewish heritage in a larger narrative, as he calls it "a common inheritance" which must be safeguarded for the future generations. At this point I think a clarification is needed to explain in what context Hava's assertions fit. Now, Alba Iulia's municipality leads a publicity campaign in order to compete as a European cultural capital for the year 2020. This could explain interest in Jewish heritage which is perceived as

representative for the cultural diversity of the city. Again, this cultural diversity is restricted to Jewish heritage and does not transfer onto other minority groups.

This is a trend that is visible on the municipality's website where are presented different historical buildings but this presentation goes as far as it can fit a Romanian local historical narrative which excludes Hungarian presence. As an example, the case of the Batthyaneum Library is telling. The library belonged until 1949 to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Alba Iulia and it contains important manuscripts and incunabula such as Codex Aureus[102] or Biblia Sacra[103]. After 1949 it was nationalized by the Romania's communist government. On the municipality's website, the building has a short description and it's not making reference either to the provenance of the building and its collection, or to the significance it has for the Hungarian history. As a reader of this website for me it was transparent that consciously or not, the Hungarian presence in terms of historical and architectural contribution is diminished.

A similar approach is used when presenting heritage that had either Jewish ownership or it was significant for the Jewish community. For that matter, the case of the Gisella Palace is revealing. Why is it important to recognize the Gisella Palace as a Jewish heritage site? The simple answer is that because it is one. The fact that the house was build and belonged to Jacob Gluck, a Jewish business man, it consists as its identity, per se. If a plaque was installed for the house in which Camil Velican, the first Romanian mayor of Alba Iulia, resided, then the same action should be taken for the Gisella Palace. According to the County's main cultural heritage preservation organization, Directia Judeteana pentru Cultura, Culte si Patrimoniu Cultural Alba Iulia[104], every building that was declared a historical monument is marked with a sign, and in

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[102] Codex Aureus is a Gospel Book from the 8th and 9th centuries whose letters are painted in gold. The counterparts for the Gospel held in Romania can be found in the Vatican Library and the Victoria and Albert Museum.
[103] Manuscript from Paris, 13th century.
[104] County Directorate for Culture, Cults and National Cultural Heritage

the case of Gisella Palace, the building is marked with a Star of David, but recounts nothing about its history or its past owners.

3.2.3. Jewish Heritage as indicator of democratic values

In the promotional video mentioned before, the mayor suggests that the existence of a synagogue in the city shows that there resides a European community, which adheres to democratic values of respect and inter cultural agreement. Therefore, democracy, according to the mayor, entails the recognition of the Jewish religious and communal symbols. Even on the website, the synagogue is mentioned as one of the most charged symbolically buildings in the city since "Alba Iulia was the first city in Transylvania which allowed Jewish people to settle on its territory"[105]. Thus, Alba Iulia has been for centuries an open-minded city, welcoming different minorities and offering them opportunities.

3.2.4. Jewish Heritage as a counter narrative

What was transparent to me, during the research that I have done, was that these attempts to integrate Jewish heritage in a local historical narrative boomeranged by birthing question marks or even a counter narrative to the already existing local one. This means that certain events in the Romanian-Hungarian-Jewish relations were dismissed regardless the proven historical data or the social memory of the places. It was a contradiction in remembering different historical episodes or just suppressing them. And here I am bringing into discussion the bomb threat of 1938 when a bomb was detonated at the Ashkenazi synagogue. The Jewish community remembers this event very well, even having a plaque installed inside of the building, whereas for the local authorities it seems to be a desire to detach from an inconvenient past by focusing on positive encounters in the history of the Jewish-Romanian relations. How

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[105] The official site of the municipality on the existing patrimony of Alba Iulia
    http://www.apulum.ro/index.php/patrimoniu_en/biserica/576

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will the quest of offering an authentic, singular experience for foreigners and locals prove to work in Alba Iulia? I do not think that local authorities will be able to only rely on the "power of otherness" in their touristic agendas since 'otherness' has the capability "to seduce and to disrupt and eventually also to renew, the social and cosmological orders of "modern" culture and everyday life"[106]. Cities such as Alba Iulia have the chance of becoming an example at merging different layers of heritage. What authorities might need to do is to either organize school sessions about the local history, or to organize a multicultural festival where the Jewish presence would have to be noted. But above all, what I have noticed to be missing is cooperation between different groups. This cooperation included lack of dialogue or engaging in restauration works without taking into account the architectural value of the synagogue. For example, Ms. Borza has in plans to remove the 19th century doors of the building and replace them with PVC ones, much to the dismay of Professor Dumitran.

3.3. Conclusions

In my view and as shown in this chapter, Jewish heritage sites have become a substitute for different desires and causes. Some are questionable, others are debatable, others just commendable. But with the risk of sounding too enthusiastic, I would say that whatever fuels this interest, whatever small step it is taken to cut the grass in the Jewish cemetery or donate a few Euros for the restoration of the synagogue, or simply showing interest in the history of the Jewish community, it means that heritage becomes life. And in the long run, it means taking responsibility and creating a civic engagement, one powerful enough that one day it will

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[106] David Picard, Michael A di Giovine, *Tourism and the power of otherness: Seductions of difference*, Clevedon: Channel View Publications 2014, p. 74

transgress historical frontiers, with one condition, though: "...whether our loyalties are to the past, the present, or the future"[107]

The words of hope Daniel Dumitran shared, during our interview, stayed with me ever since:

> "I would have never imagined 10 years ago that I will be involved in exploring Jewish history or that it will become an interest for anyone in this city. For me, this means progress, it gives me hope. Who knows what the next 10 years will bring?" [108]

Chapter 4

One hand washes the other and both wash the face: a list of ideas for preserving, interpreting and promoting Jewish heritage in Alba Iulia

4.1. Overview of the chapter

In the following chapter I propose a set of recommendations on how Jewish heritage of Alba Iulia could be integrated into a larger social narrative, a narrative that serves not only the interests of the Jewish community, but also those of the other actors involved, such as local

[107] Theodore Zeldin, *An intimate history of humanity*, New Delhi: Penguin Books India; London : Penguin, 1999, p. 16
[108] Daniel Dumitran, interview by Mihaela Groza, 2014

officials, academics, or private citizens. As a preliminary tool I created a business ecosystem map using as a guide the book written by Verna Allee, *The Future of Knowledge: Increasing Prosperity Through Value Networks.* In this book, the author offers as examples business maps of different organizations, defining the stakeholders and also the relationships that are established between individuals, communities, service providers and recipients. It emphasizes on the idea that when developing a business solution, one should have in mind that what is offered is not a commodity per se, but an image of that commodity, which is created based on the needs of both suppliers and receivers[109]. I think a map like this is relevant in my case because it clarifies the relationships created between different interest groups in the city and defines roles that these groups should acquire for a better protection and promotion of the Jewish heritage sites. The map shows how different stakeholders interact with one another and how this interaction benefit their interests. Of course, I have adjusted the examples offered by Allee in her book to the case study that I am discussing.

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[109] Verna Allee, *The future of knowledge: increasing prosperity through value networks*, Amsterdam: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003, p. 191

Cultural alternatives

Employment opportunities

Academics/heritage
enablers

Research support

Academic lobby

International/national credibility

Research material

Sense of community

Urban identity

Education

Public dialogue

Municipality/he
ritage enablers

Sense of community

Multiculturalism

Jewish
community/heritage
providers

European values

Sense of community

Locals-private
citizens/heritage
consumers

Recognition

Community building

Reclaimed status

Sense of community

Exposure

Sense of cmmunity

Retracing roots

Inter-cultural encounters

The Hungarian
community/heritage
enablers/consumers

Tourists (national
and
foreigners)/heritag
e consumers

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I start from the premises that in a business ecosystem the organisms of a community interact with one another and each depends on each other for their survival. I have assigned roles to different groups according to their connection and affiliation to Jewish heritage. Therefore I have assigned three groups: providers, enablers and consumers, each influencing and supporting one another.

4.2. Recommendations

For a successful integration of Jewish heritage sites on the agenda of the municipality, I believe it is important to include these sites into a specific tour of the city, by adding them in brochure materials and on the official website of the municipality. I can understand the hesitation of the officials in not yet doing so, wanting first to restore and later on to integrate but I think in this case it is a work in progress. Their crowd funding campaign, launched in 2015, did not prove to be financially successful, therefore why not building a need for this heritage along the way? In that sense, I suggest a campaign, which would mean **creating a new image, brand of the city** which should include the multicultural aspect of it. That image should appeal to the foundation of the modern city, starting with the 19th century, when different ethnic groups participated in establishing what is today Alba Iulia. It could have as a motto *Building a home*, or *The city builders*. In this way, Jewish heritage will find a more equitable representation and interpretation without distorting or undermining historical realities. The city of Pécs offers a good example in that sense. Pécs is the fifth largest city of Hungary and prides itself as being "a vibrant multicultural place where 9 out of the 13 traditional ethnic minorities recognized in Hungary have lived peacefully together for centuries"[110]. In 2010 the city was declared a European Capital of Culture by the European Union having as a motto, *The*

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[110] Source used : http://www.iranypecs.hu/en/index.html#, a website which promotes Pécs's heritage, movable and immovable and offers information regarding accommodation, upcoming events and 3D tours for tourists, both locals and foreigners. Accessed 23.04.2017

Borderless City. What is particular interesting and useful for Alba Iulia is that Pécs's officials decided to emphasize the Ottoman heritage of the city, which includes: the türbe of Idris Baba, a Turkish fountain, the Mosque of Pasha Yakovali Hassan, the baths of Pasha Memi and the Mosque of Pasha Gazi Kasim. In total, 140 years of Ottoman occupation presented as a multicultural oasis alongside the Catholic cathedral, Franciscan churches and a synagogue. Of course, Ottomans do not live in Pécs today and retroactively considering Hungarian history, the Turkish occupation of the city has not been fondly remembered. Nevertheless, it is a part of the history of the city and it has been integrated as such. A borderless city could signify the meeting point of different historical periods but could also suggest the European multicultural views, in absentia. Having this in mind, I think Alba Iulia has the potential of creating a narrative which might fit both its historical realities, past and present.

One of the issues with which the municipality confronts is the attraction of funds for the Jewish sites. While interviewing the cultural heritage officer at the mayor's office, his lack of a direction was clear to me. He was informed of the Jewish past of the city, but he did not knew what made it valuable in order to attract funds. In that sense, I suggest **emphasizing on the particularities of Jewish heritage in Alba Iulia**. This could mean focusing on the lost Sephardic patrimony of the city by either researching in the local cemetery the gravestones which belonged to this branch of the Alba Iulian Jewry and therefore establishing a network through which one could show the Sephardic contribution to the city, or by researching the destroyed immovable patrimony such as the Sephardic synagogue demolished in 1983. I think it is important to emphasize this aspect of the Jewish contribution to the city, since Alba Iulia alongside Timișoara, București and Craiova were the only cities in Romania where Sephardic Jews settled[111]. And this is even more interesting considering that Transylvania has been a space

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[111] Lucian Nastasă, Andreea Andreescu, Andrea Varga, *Minorități etnoculturale mărturii documentare*, Centrul de Resurse pentru Diversitate Etnoculturală, 2003, p. 45

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known for considerable numbers of Ashkenazi settlers. Unfortunately, Romania does not have a Heritage Lottery Fund as in the case of Great Britain, but in that sense, there are several international organizations which can grant the funds (just to name a few: World Monuments Fund, UNESCO's World Heritage Fund, Rothschild Foundation – assistance as well as financial help). Also, the municipality could emphasize the uniqueness of the synagogue, since it is the first synagogue in stone in Transylvania. Another way to attract funds could be started together with the local University. Thus, the researchers could **create a data base** for all the names of the persons buried in the cemeteries and ultimately upload the found information on websites, such as JewishGen, creating not only a virtual map of the local Jewry but also an international network of people, who will express interest, will visit the city and will sponsor its survival. It will be a slow process, but at least, it will be organic. A similar project was started in 2015 by Professor Dumitran which alongside a team of Yiddish and Hebrew speakers, archaeologists, and Jewish history experts competed for funds from the Romanian government. Unfortunately, the project did not reached any ends due to weak participation and cooperation between the members of the team.

Another way to keep an international perspective over the sites would be **to collaborate with international Jewish organizations** such as Centropa [112]. In 2002 an Emergency Ordinance emitted by the Romanian Government, criminalized the cult of persons accused of Holocaust denial and crimes against humanity and starting with 2005 the Romanian Ministry of Education encouraged middle schools and high school to include in their curricula the history of the Romanian Jews and of the Holocaust. Centropa is an organization which guides history professors in teaching Jewish history by providing them research support hence a

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[112] Centropa is a non-profit organization which documents Jewish pre-war life in Europe, digitizing documents, photos, taking interviews with survivors and ultimately disseminates all this information through an established educational network in collaboration with high school and University history professors. The organization was founded by Edward Serotta (an American journalist and film maker) in 2000 and has offices in Vienna, Budapest and Washington DC.

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collaboration between Centropa and local schools should be encouraged. Centropa's mission is to raise awareness in respect to Jewish presence and contribution to the European culture, among others, and it could also serve the aims of the municipality, who confronts itself with a huge gap in terms of the knowledge of the Jewish past of the city. It could be also an extraordinary opportunity for Romanian professors to participate to international conferences and to present the sites through the eyes of the new generations.

I find that the lack of knowledge in terms of Jewish history is an important issue with which the authorities confront themselves. Thus, how can a need for these sites be created? How can an attachment be forged, in order for this heritage to survive and enter the consciousness of the regular citizens of Alba Iulia? In that sense, I suggest **tempting the locals with a Jewish festival** in the framework of the European Days of Jewish Culture. This could mean serving Jewish food, a Klezmer band could be invited, and both the cemetery and the synagogue could be opened to the public. I think a very good example in that sense was set in 2009 when around 25 European countries, including Ukraine and Turkey, celebrated Jewish Culture by emphasizing the Jewish traditions and celebrations. Concerts and film screenings were organized, site touring as well, in a way as to project the historical relationships between this heritage and the locals. Of course, in the Romanian case, the focus could be on depicting Jewish life in Alba Iulia before the Second World War, but even the communist period presents surprises, such as the figure of Eugen Benyamin Hersch Handelsmann, a painter and caricaturist, who through humour depicted everyday life during the communist years. Handelsmann was born in Alba Iulia in 1912, in a Sephardic family. In 1999, at the 10th anniversary of his death, the Unification Museum of Alba Iulia organized an exhibition which included paintings of the artist and which attracted a considerable number of visitors. I believe Handelmann's figure has the potential of becoming a focal point in a Jewish festival, and based

on his paintings and caricatures an entire narrative could be created, one that could reflect on the relations between Jews and non-Jews during communism in Alba Iulia.

What I have also noticed it terms of outreach, is that the local officials have very few knowledge of best practices in dealing with Jewish heritage, across Romania, and they are missing contact data and how other Romanian cities managed their Jewish heritage. In that sense, I suggest **creating a free website** which could map all Jewish heritage projects across Romania, having as an example the site created by Ruth Ellen Gruber, Jewish Heritage Europe: http://www.jewish-heritage-europe.eu/. There is an internet tool which offers guiding for such projects, which it is called Free Website Builder (http://www.wix.com/). What this site might offer is a platform on which best practices could be exchanged and future heritage professionals could engage in a dialogue. The following link is a simulation of such a website[113]:

https://mihaelamariagroza.wixsite.com/jewishheritagero

The simulation includes videos of the ongoing plans, contact data for the persons who are in charge of the Jewish heritage projects and as an important feature a list of international organizations that can be contacted both for assistance and financial help.

Of course, information given on a website as the one presented above, could benefit not only the official persons charged with finding the best solutions for safeguarding Jewish

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[113] As to briefly describe the link: I have added four videos which include presentation of immovable heritage: cemetery – Alba Iulia, a synagogue – Medias, a Jewish museum – Bucharest and movable heritage: a recipe for cholent from Brasov. I have included the names of different actors in the promotion of Jewish Heritage across the country but I provided fake e-mail addresses since this is only a simulation. I plan to work on the website soon.

heritage but also other heritage professionals. In order to reach a broader audience, I suggest **the organization of annual meetings** in different locations across Romania, allowing therefore professionals to exchange views or report on situations that they are confronting with. I would specify that these conferences should not have an academic focus, therefore giving the opportunity to heritage practitioners such as local history professors, tour guides, volunteers to voice their opinions. An example in that sense is the seminar convened in Krakow, Poland, in 2013, having the title, *Jewish Built Heritage. What to do? How to do it. Managing Jewish Immovable Heritage*. The seminar had an international outreach but it was important since there were workshops organized as to exchange best practices and to engage the audience with the new technology and its use in the promotion of Jewish heritage. Based on these annual meetings one can draw a tour of Jewish Romania for foreigners, involving local tour guides and volunteers and exposing sites which to this very day are not open to the general public or are simply abandoned or not taken care of. For example, the Tarbut Foundation from Sighet already organizes "Jewish routes to roots" journeys for the Maramureș region[114]. It could be a solution for the local economy as well, considering the unemployment rate in Alba Iulia reaches 4.91%, according to the County's Employment Agency's data for March 2017. In my opinion organizing a Jewish route across the country will expose at the same time issues with which local communities are confronted; and it will also give opportunity to foreigners to search for their roots. Special commissions could be established in these communities to assist people in searching for their relatives, tracing graves, deciphering burial ledgers and ultimately safeguarding these heritage sites which many times are either going to be used as storage buildings (in the case of synagogues) or simply abandoned and neglected (as it is the situation with cemeteries).

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[114] The Tarbut Foundation was established in 2014 in Sighet by Peninah Zilberman, the offspring of a Holocaust survivor whose family lived in Sighet for 200 years until 1944. The Foundation aims to offer Jewish walking tours of Sighet for tourists, genealogy search, roots journey. http://www.ftsighet.com/index.php, Accessed 20.03.2016

Another suggestion that I think it is necessary in Alba Iulia would be **to involve in the decision-making process the Hungarian community.** The rationale behind this suggestion has not only to do with the cultural affiliation of the members of the historical Jewish community with the Hungarian community but also to the support that might be offered: in terms of translations first, since many communal records have been written in Hungarian, and also in terms of the remembrance process.

As shown in a previous chapter, due to a survey that I did among locals I found out that many of them knew nothing of the existence of the Jewish heritage sites in question. Even though I have suggested above some measures in that sense, I also argue that the local contribution should be also financial. As an observer, I find a bit unfair the tendency of the municipality to seek mainly international financial support. Therefore, I suggest a local campaign in order to support the restoration of the cemetery for example by **encouraging citizens to donate 2% of their paid taxes.** To avoid fraud, an NGO could be created with the sole purpose of collecting the money, periodically reporting on the progress of the heritage projects. To increase visibility among the locals, I suggest a better news coverage in terms of the history of the Jewish community and again its contribution to the development of the modern city.

How can the Jewish community bring its own contribution to the promotion of its cultural heritage?

The research that I have done led me to believe that there is a need for transparency from all parties and establishing a better communication to have a similar direction. I also take into consideration the role that the Romanian Jewish Federation might play in these projects, namely their involvement in lobbying for funds and offering consultancy since the Federation

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has its own heritage experts. According to Ms. Borza, these appointed professionals are sent once a year to assess the state of the Jewish sites.

4.3. Conclusions

Adding value, respecting traditions, celebrating differences are just a few of the principles which can determine a successful heritage project, which allows the characteristics, the variety, to become a brand and not a stereotype. The tangible and intangible cultural heritage of a city represents more than a tourist potential or a defining brand capable to enhance economic and cultural motivations. It is, first and foremost, a manner to prove identity and to achieve pride as a community. Involvement of local authorities proves to be critical, not only for legal reasons but also for lobbying issues outside the historical context. But as in an ecosystem, one organism cannot live without another, it is a chain which is build alongside the idea of cooperation. In the case of Alba Iulia, it proves to be a win-win situation: the survival of Jewish heritage depends on the municipality's interest, interest which is in accord with the European Union's agenda.

Conclusion

The present study discussed how heritagization processes work under the pluralistic criteria of today's multicultural Europe. It showed how the patrimony of a minority is used by the majority to create an image of a city, an image that is not in conformity with present day realities. It also showed the persistent nature of the historical narratives and how identity policies shape the perception of public spaces.

In this study, I discussed the implications that Jewish heritage sites convey, focusing this research on the town of Alba Iulia, where there is not anymore, a significant Jewish population. As to make the story even more complicated, the town taken into consideration is in Transylvania, a region that is disputed both by Romanians and Hungarians. In present times a part of Romania, Transylvania has been part of the Hungarian kingdom until 1918, and encompasses national myths of both countries. In a way or another, the Jewish heritage sites of the city, fall into this dispute and trigger different meanings depending on the actors involved and the interests they have.

In my study, I focused on two sites: a synagogue and a cemetery, both part of the Jewish heritage complex of Alba Iulia which either has been destroyed, either is unidentified. I focused on these 2 sites because they are the object of attention for the municipality of Alba Iulia which now intends to include them in a larger local narrative, presenting the city as being multicultural. This aspect would not cause any issues if this preoccupation would not be so recent and if the authorities would not be selective in terms of presenting and interpreting these sites as to fit a Romanian historical local narrative. As such, I start by tracing the urban and ethnic history of the city and I discover that even if these sites have always been in the center of the city, only recently the municipality had plans for them. And to complicate the issue a bit

more, the local population has very little knowledge of their existence. Of course, many causes are involved here, including a lack of collective memory caused by the Holocaust, identity policies, a process of nationalization of the public space and displacement of population from another part of the country.

Based on my observations, interests in preserving these sites triggered different meanings when interpreting them. For example, based on a documentary produced by the municipality, the mayor associates the Jewish presence in the city with economic prosperity but also with democracy. For a local scholar, this presence has to do with installing a spirit of urban values among the present citizens. It also conveys a sense of cultural diversity and this idea of a past that must have been lived in peace, offering itself as an example for present and future times. To an extent, it is an invented past that exists only to serve a certain narrative that suits Alba Iulia's today's realities, fitting this trend born inside the European Union, that allows small towns to access funds, to rediscover their past and filter this past through the lenses of the present and its needs. But what I have also noticed is that the wounds of the past are too fresh in Alba Iulia, the Romanian authorities overshadowing the fact that the Jewish presence in the city has been associated with an adherence to the Hungarian nation, for example. Or even more flagrant, certain moments from the Jewish-Romanian historical relationship are not acknowledged, such as anti-Semitic events.

Who takes responsibility for the preservation of this heritage in the long run, was one of the questions that I had on my mind during the writing process. And even more important, how? I believe that these 2 sites should profit from a larger exposure among the citizens of Alba Iulia, eventually the keeper and benefiters of the presence of these sites. I address this issue by offering a set of recommendations which are both short and long term, simple or more intricate.

This study was written from the perspective of a native who understands the necessity of internalizing heritage, regardless of religious or national denominations. By internalizing, I refer here to the need of protecting heritage on the grounds of a digested, understood and assumed historical past. Alba Iulia is the object of my case study, but other towns such as Arad, Iaşi, or Timişoara await their turn. Even though Jewish heritage is targeted, my research also has a more general relevance for the study of pluralization processes in the public image of the past. Apart from heritage professionals, the study is a contribution to a better understanding of Alba Iulia's multicultural history and therefore it aims at local historians and policy makers.

Of all the recommendations that I proposed, I am hopeful that one of them will continue to materialize itself in a long-term project, which will combine my desire to be of help with my passion for Jewish history and heritage. The recommendation in question is the website that I created which will connect Jewish heritage professionals of Romania and will give them a platform to exchange best practices and learn new methods of protecting and promoting Jewish heritage sites.

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