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BOOK REVIEW

ZECE PENTRU LUGOJ. O ISTORIE NECONVENȚIONALĂ A LUGOJULUI [TEN FOR LUGOJ. AN UNCONVENTIONAL HISTORY OF LUGOJ MUNICIPALITY]

Cristian GHINEA, 2013, Nagard Publishing House, Lugoj,
322 pages, including a photo album

Ioan Sebastian JUCU

Ten for Lugoj; An Unconventional History of Lugoj Municipality, represents a valuable contribution in the field of urban history starting from the olden times to the contemporary features of urban cultural capital. Framing by various historic backgrounds, the author presents a complex set of stories on local urban personalities that marked the local cultural urban identity, spreading out and diffusing the local culture throughout the world regardless of the historic times and the fields on these personalities. Their reputation has grown due to their particular involvement and their total accomplishments in such varied scenes as arts, science, sport, academics and education etc. The volume is based on a specific methodology framed by historic analysis of old documents and related references and by qualitative research in terms of interviews, personal conversations and talks with the people presented in the book as cultural human resources of Lugoj municipality. In addition, oral histories developed by the questioned persons in the volume enrich the value of the content aiming to unveil the cultural echoes in time and space generated by the local people that, in terms of various cultural tasks, have been acknowledged with their visibility being continuously increased at the international scale. Thus, the book is an unconventional history of Lugoj approaching from a historical perspective the main interventions of the local cultural personalities that traced both the past and present layers of time. The volume provides an interesting gallery of portraits of local cultural personalities developed through the self-experience of the author. In this regard, Lugoj municipality is seen both as a cultural place with emblematic roots within the Romanian space and as a cultural hearth that spreads and diffuses, through the local human capital, important cultural traits, values and thoughts, with all those being literally spatialized. Consequently, the local cultural diffusion as text remain the core argument of the book providing the main

accomplishments in various different fields throughout the world. Against such a background, the medium-sized town of Lugoj grounds a specific cultural hearth that has to be more visible both at the national and international level in a time when often local cultural values are shadowed in the face of the rapid flows of current globalization. Thus, the contribution of Ghinea is an important approach in the field of local culture preservation and in all those fields that aim to capitalize the local cultures in different international contexts. As much, the book remains an outstanding tool in promoting the cultural values of Lugoj and their related cultural and urban identities strengthen in time. The book is structured in three distinctive sections, each of them being focused on different layers of time. Firstly, the author pays a special attention to the cultural foregoers of the town that traced the local urban culture. Secondly, the author brings to the fore the issues of discrete present unveiling the most important accomplishments of the contemporary personalities. Thirdly, the last section looks forward to the future with new important cultural figures tracing the present local culture and assuredly influencing the future cultures regardless of their spatiality. It is about the new generation of intellectuals that make the local culture more visible due to its contemporary accomplishments. The profile of the cultural figures included in the volume vary from a field to another with complexity being the main characteristic in the local 'gallery of portraits' as the author considers his work. Particularly the first part of the book unveils the figure of some important historical personalities with outstanding persons such as Alexandru Lupu, Traian Grozăvescu, Filaret Barbu, Vasile Maniu etc being discovered in-depth. Their related stories achieved through different channels (from literature research to interviews and personal conversations with their descendents), disclose important cultural issues of the town's history. The second chapter is dedicated to such contemporary outstanding local figures as scientists, doctors, historians, artists, professors, musicians and other professionals with emeritus achievements in their field diffused all-over the world. Victor Neumann, Ion Boldea, Gheorghe Luchescu, Dan Popescu, Remus Tașcău, Aura Avram Twarowska, Mirela Zafiri etc are so many names that were made known worldwide through their achievements and excellent performances in their personal fields with international echoes. In the last chapter, the author brings together the new generation of outstanding personalities in the local culture with international recognition through many figures such as Christian Maier (internationally appreciated in the field of astronomy), Robert Reisz, Mihai Murariu, Anca Koczkas (internationally acknowledged professors, scientists and researchers), and other relevant persons with remarkable accomplishments internationally recognised in the field of music, sport and mountain exploration. The book ends with a photo gallery illustrating the images of the cultural figures stated above. Through its originality, approachable manner, information and results, the book introduces the reader into a specific cultural micro-universe of Lugoj municipality. This volume is a relevant reference for all those interested in the study of the cultural hearths of the Romanian regions framed by specific histories, values and thoughts. Furthermore, completing the specialised literature focused on the local culture, history and human geography, this work forms an outstanding contribution in the field of the cultural geographies of the Banats' region and more widely. The book remains also an important resource for further research, opening new critical reflections for both the local culture capitalization and in the preservation actions in the urban cultural identity reproduction through different layers of time. Finally, the book brings together the place history, geography and place cultures in an interesting approach of urban historical identity.
