

MIDDLE AGES JEWISH CEMETERY IN BARCELONA ON MONTJUÏC

IX-XIV centuries

Defining its limits

METHODOLOGY PROCESS

This is the development of a study to reconstruct the territory which, as such, it always presents considerable difficulties because the necessary documentation is not found in one single place. We must gather information from different archives and sources. We must start from a chronology close to us in time and go back in reverse order to get closer to the period we are interested in. As much as intermediate changes (between the start and end dates) may be irrelevant, they are essential to achieve the objective: to establish the limits of the Jewish cemetery of Montjuïc.

It is important to note that along with direct research of original documents, various publications and monographic studies were also selected as they could offer new leads to complete the study.

In our case, the starting and most relevant point was the expropriation of land held in the area covered by this study on the occasion of the Universal Exhibition of 1929. Most of the records of such expropriations are kept in the Municipal Administrative Archives of Barcelona (AMA), and provide important data about the owners prior the Municipal Government. These sources were first reviewed and then followed by systematic inventory and analysis of the files corresponding to the area that was estimated to most likely be the location of the old Jewish cemetery in Barcelona. Thanks to the large amount of data and some ancient writings preserved in several of the files studied, we could obtain enough information to go back to the early 18th century and propose and approximate reconstruction of the changes that took place in the plots until that period. But most valuable was that with such data we could establish a baseline and open new avenues of research in other archival funds such as the Public Notary, the Mortgage Accounts and Property Registry.

Among all the documentation consulted, it is worth noting the Notaries documents which had been the most representative in volume. Notaries collections were consulted in different files, especially in the Archive of Historical Protocols of Barcelona (AHCB). It is precisely this public notaries documentation which presents a greater variety in the kind of documents: inventories, sales and purchases, marriage settlements, wills, leases and definition of plots, recognition of rights of way, censuses, etc. This has involved the review of documents generated by many notaries over several centuries. The Regional Archive of Segarra (ACS) has also been consulted, especially its 14th century documentation which gave very positive results. This extensive documentation mainly represents "private" dealings.

On the other hand, in the "public" section of the documentation, we have selected some documents series preserved in the Historical Archives of the City of Barcelona (AHCB) using chronological and thematic criteria applicable to our interests. We had to discover if the documentation generated by public municipal governance would offer additional elements beyond what was already obtained from the "private" funds. Thus the following series were consulted:

- Records of Ordinances' (*orders and decisions*)
- Ordinances (since 1359): regulating the life of citizens and taking care of public order, hygiene, health, trade union activity, urban planning and public morality.
- Special Ordinances (since 1349): issued by various public officers responsible for regulating different areas of public realm, i.e.: *Mostassaf* (among other powers controlled sanitation and hygiene in the city as per King's instructions)
- Original Ordinances (since 1312): also regulated life in the city.
- Records of Proceedings (since 1465): containing the minutes of meetings of the *Consell* (*Council*) and are the primary source to observing how the municipal governing body operated in relation to problems relative to land and other matters.
- *Notularum*: manuals of different notaries who worked for the municipality of the city writing various deeds.

Besides all of the above, an essential element when trying to work on the reconstruction of territory, is consulting maps. In this regard it should be noted the use of plans of the different quarries on Montjuïc.

Not all research lines provided satisfactory results. But having performed an in depth search without always finding information is also positive in any research project, as it provides an overview enriching in itself given the thoroughness.

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