

## Summary

Drohobycz is a poviat town on the River Tysmienica, which is a tributary of the River Dniestr, it lies in the South-West, circa 60 km away off Lviv, it is currently located on the territory of Ukraine. The town has a small Jewish minority. From those who survived the Holocaust the majority emigrated to Israel and to the United States, and to Poland. During the time of the Second Polish Republic Drohobycz belonged territorially to Poland.

The history of Drohobycz is undoubtedly connected to its Jewish citizens who through centuries contributed extensively to town development in every aspect: political, social and cultural.

The beginning of the Jewish settlement in this area goes back to the Middle Ages and it relates to salt mining. In 1404, Jagiello's financial representative Wolczko, the first Jewish man, leased royal salt mines. Since 15<sup>th</sup> century the number of the Jewish community had been increasing gradually.

This thesis presents interrelations within the Jewish community of Drohobycz during the Second Polish Republic and it deals with basic aspects of their social, political and economical life. The Jewish population was an important part of a multinational interwar Drohobycz's society. Their activity involved almost all aspects of social life. Economically, the Jewish people definitely dominated trade and industry, including oil industry. The economic situation of Drohobycz's citizens depended greatly on a general state of the Polish economy. The crisis on international markets contributed to development of a big number of charities within the Jewish community in some way. There were attempts to ease hard economic conditions in the after-war period and in the 30s by stimulating small business activity. For this purpose, credit unions and interest-free loan associations were established.

During the interwar time, the Jewish community, one of the oldest in Poland, struggled with financial and administrative difficulties. The authorities, which were elected in 1924 elections for the Jewish commune, made an attempt to restore all single aspects of commune activity. A big financial burden was presented by the state of religious buildings. In the discussed period the renovation of the Jewish hospital, the old people's home, the Great Synagogue was completed and new building plans on the new Jewish cemetery were put into effect.

The political life of Drohobycz's Jewish people featured a great variety of Zionist and Non-Zionist political parties. Zionist parties were the most active. Youth organizations related to them conducted dynamic activities by organizing meetings, lectures, workshops and courses of all kind.

The Jewish religious education, particularly on the elementary level, was built on the basis of Judaism rules. Moreover, a number of youth used the state education system and went to local schools. In the private Leon Sternbach's Coeducational Junior High School and in the King Władysław Jagiełło's State Junior High School students of the Jewish faith were a majority. In the state junior high school this percentage dropped below 50% in the second half of the 30s.

The Jewish community distinguished itself against other nationalities through its rich cultural life. Apart from guest artistic performances presenting well-known works in Yiddish, there were local associations which dealt with a broad scope of art. Drohobycz is a town which is currently perceived through the person of Bruno Schulz although there were more than twenty not only Jewish artists who originated from this town.

A special place for the Jewish community was the Jewish House which was a particular centre of Jewish social life.

Drohobycz's Jewish community in 1918-1939 was demonstrating an extraordinary economic, social and political activity. Through a number of organizations it created a united group.

The outbreak of WWII brought about a process which had led to a nearly complete annihilation of the Jewish population in Drohobycz. It has never recovered to the same degree as it was before the war.