

Summary

The PhD thesis examines functioning of the community of Dobczyce and the surrounding villages constituting the court district of Dobczyce (powiat). The aim of the thesis is to present Dobczyce as the heart of the local community. The matter of the research is complex: territorial and demographic changes have been analysed and economic, social, political and cultural aspects of life have been presented, including the standards of living and the problem of safety of the inhabitants. It was also indispensable to examine religious life of both Catholics and Jews of the area. The analysis of the period of German occupation was crucial as many demographic changes and damage done to the infrastructure ensued.

The research methods implemented to achieve the aim entailed the analysis and deductive synthesis of the historical sources and the comparative synthesis. 276 historical sources as well as 263 reference titles were used.

The analyzed source material allows us to conclude that Dobczyce was a kind of micro world for many inhabitants. The city was an important center of crafts and trade. Local peasants flocked to fairs, which were a natural place to exchange information and views, including political ones. In Dobczyce, one could use medical assistance and buy medicines. In addition, many official matters could be dealt with in the city. Due to the seat of the court, many lawyers and notaries lived in Dobczyce, which made it possible to use legal assistance in the city.

The local gentry and clergy played an important role in social and economic life. They were involved in work in the local Stefczyk Funds or cooperatives. Many peasants were also involved in cooperative activities. The Jewish community, which played an important role in trade, should also be mentioned.

During the German occupation, the local population became involved in underground activities. It was an important resistance center as well clandestine teaching in the Myślenice district. Local residents were also involved in the activities of the Polish Social Welfare Committee. Unfortunately, during the occupation, the Jewish population was exterminated, which led to a change in the national and religious structure.

23.06.2023

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