

Jews in the sports life of Oradea between 1900 and 1942

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Abstract

Our aim was to study the contribution of the Hebrew community in Oradea to athletic development in our city between 1900 and 1942. Through its content, the work presents an interesting account to those researching the history of sport in Oradea in the period before the Second World War, particularly the role of the Jewish leaders of sports clubs, coaches and athletes in the development of sport in our city.

We studied Hebrew ethnic participation in sport development in Oradea. The scientific documentation consisted of the study of the works dealing with the history of sport in Bihor County, researching the press articles published in local newspapers that appeared in the period 1900-1942 and consulting documents in private collections.

The paper refers to the context that influenced the Hebrew community involvement and participation in the sporting life of Oradea, its contribution to the establishment of sports clubs and their activity before the First World War. In addition, it presents the role played by Hebrew athletes, coaches and leaders in the implementing of new sports branches.

Further, the paper refers to changes in the status of the Jewish community in Romania after the First World War and how it influenced the work of Hebrew ethnics in sport movements in Oradea. Also it studies the sport activity of the Jews in Oradea under anti-Semitic policy and discriminatory measures taken against the Hebrew community and after the enforcement of the Hebrew laws of the Hungarian government as a result of the annexation of northern Transylvania.

On account of its role in the establishment of sporting clubs and in the management and the financing of these and subsequently the results in local and national competitions managed by these athletes who were in the minority and, finally, because of the athletes promoted in Romania's national teams, the Hebrew city community made a great contribution to the sport development in Oradea.

Anti-Jewish policy, banning the right of the Jews to participate in sports, the dissolution of Hebrew associations or those which did not expel the Jewish members, destroyed a valuable tradition which was on its way to establish and strengthen part of the heritage of Oradea.

Keywords: sport, history, Jews, Oradea.