

Jewish New York today is indisputably the center of the Jewish Diaspora. It is the largest and the richest Jewish community outside of Israel. Already since the beginning of the 20th

century it has had the largest urban Jewish population in the world. Nevertheless, Jewish New York is not only vast, but immensely complex as well. Jews were arriving in various historical immigration waves from different places in the world, each one of them preparing the ground for the next wave. The goal of my M.A. thesis called "Jewish New York. Diversity of the Jewish Immigration Waves 1820- 1924", was to identify the waves of Jewish immigrants that were transforming the city of New York and to describe the way they settled in, adapted and lived in New York. The time span is limited to the century of the mass migration starting in 1820 and ending in 1924 after the immigration restriction legislation was adopted.

I was inspired by reading Jewish American authors such as I. B. Singer, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth or J.S. Foer, particularly in specialized seminar conducted by Hana Ulmanova, PhD., at the Department of English and American Studies. The final decision to write about this topic was influenced by the fact that in 2007 I received a one semester scholarship at the Department of Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University, where I was able to do the research, attend specialized seminars and consult the results of my research with Hasia Diner, a professor of American Jewish History at NYU.

Analyzing the waves of Jewish immigration, I tried to point out that they were more complex than it is usually mentioned in popular history. I strove to emphasize the mutual influences between the groups of Jewish immigrants from different countries. Each wave has left a cultural imprint; therefore, every next wave had to adjust not only the new environment, but to the new Jewish surroundings created by the previous immigrants.

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