three years’ imprisonment but escaped to Czechoslovakia and later went to France, where he worked in the International Labor Organization and the League for the Defense of the Rights of Man and Citizen. He was the representative of the radical wing of the Polish Socialist Party in exile and cooperated with the Communists to organize help for the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War. In 1940, he moved to London and in September 1941 was appointed minister of justice for the Polish government-in-exile, thus becoming the first Jew in a Polish cabinet. He died in the following month.

• Józef Buszko, Ruch socjalistyczny w Krakowie, 1890–1914 (Kraków, 1961); Herman Lieberman, Pamiętniki (Warsaw, 1996); Adam Próchnik, Pierwsze piętnastolecie Polski niepodległej (Warsaw, 1983); Janusz Jarastowski, Polska Partia Socjalistyczna w latach 1935–1939 (Warsaw, 1969).

—ANTONY POLONSKY

LIEPĀJA (Ger., Liebau), Baltic port and the second largest city in Latvia. Jews began to arrive in Liepāja in 1795 and numbered more than 10,000 before World War I (for population, see Table 1).

When the town was taken over by Russia in 1795, only 19 male Jews had managed to find residence in Liepāja. In 1799, regulations were issued that granted Jews the right to settle in the town. By 1835, there were 1,348 Jewish residents, including a group of prominent persons from Germany. The Jews of Liepāja made their living mainly in commerce and industry, and the population of the town grew dramatically after a railway line linked it with Russian industrial centers. During World War I, 36,000–40,000 Jewish refugees arrived there.

From 1800 until the 1860s, the Jews of Liepāja were mainly under the cultural influence of German Jewry. The community’s educational system included both traditional religious bodies and institutions dedicated to the ideas of the Haskalah. Aharon ber Nurok served as the rabbi starting in 1907; indeed, he and his brother, Mordekhai, headed the rabbinate for all of Latvia. After pogroms grew rampant in southern Russia in the 1880s, Liepāja absorbed many refugees. The community established special relief institutions to deal with the newcomers. When a modern-style school opened in Liepāja in 1885, the Hebrew grammarian Mordekhai Manischewitz taught Hebrew language and literature. That same year, a local Hoveve Tsiyon association was founded, and a Bund group became active at the turn of the century.

In the interwar period, Jews in Liepāja founded a number of banks and credit institutions. In 1924, a private Jewish bank was established, called the Merchants Bank of Liebāu, and at about the same time the Jewish-owned Liepāja Bank was founded to replace the exchange institution that had been destroyed during the war. The Liepāja Bank became one of the six largest banks in Latvia, holding more than 60 percent of the private bank capital in the country.

In 1935, there were 7,379 Jews in Liepāja. In 1940 the town—along with all of Latvia—was annexed by the Soviet Union. Liepāja came under German occupation in July 1941; very few Jews managed to escape. In July of that year, Jews were held in the town’s prison and were shot to death by the Nazis. During the first month of the German invasion, at least 1,000 Jewish men were murdered. By November 1941, only 3,890 Jews were still alive.

After Liepāja was liberated in May 1945, a series of photographs was discovered among Gestapo documents, depicting the murder of 2,800 local Jews in December 1941. The victims had been taken to Skedern, a fisherman’s village north of Liepāja, and murdered there in ditches by the Germans, assisted by Latvian policemen. After these murders, about 1,000 Jews had remained in the town, of whom some 250 were killed immediately while the remainder were forced into a ghetto at the beginning of July 1942. The ghetto was liquidated on 8 October 1943, on the eve of Yom Kippur, and its inhabitants were sent to the Kaizervald concentration camp. Some Jews, including children, were hidden by local peasants. When the Red Army entered Liepāja on 9 May 1945, it found between 20 and 30 Jews. Although several hundred tombstones remain in the cemetery, in the year 2000 no Jews were known to be living in Liepāja.


—NATHAN A. RO’I

Translated from Hebrew by I. Michael Aronson

LIFE CYCLE. The notion of life cycle may appear to reflect a natural human category, but is conditioned by social and cultural circumstances. Cultural elaboration of the special characteristics of “childhood” is associated with early modernity, and the idea of “adolescence” is connected with the Industrial Revolution, expansion of the middle class, extended education of young people, and their dependence on the family. Demographers claim that declining rates of infant mortality are followed by a reduction in birth rates and new images of family formation.

When rabbinic literature considered ritual milestones of Jewish life—circumcision, bar mitzvah, marriage, and death—the discussions were scattered in different sections of halakhic works whose topical structure had been established in medieval times and maintained in the Shulhan ‘arukh containing both the Sephardic code of Yosef Karo and the glosses of Mosheh Issersiel. The rabbinic conceptual ordering of life progression was male-centered.

East European Jewry’s understandings of life-cycle notions were embedded in domestic and communal ritual and can be seen in the way Yiddish terms codify birth order and gender. A first son was referred to as his parents’ kaddish—the prayer he was eventually expected to recite on memorial occasions after their deaths, and the youngest daughter was called in Yiddish mizinke (pinkie)—a term also linked to a special ceremonial dance when she was “finally” married. The centrality of community was seen when young boys from the heder came with their teacher to the homes of postpartum, convalescing mothers, or to funerals, in order to recite krishne (Shema’ Yisra’el), psalms, or other appropriate prayers.

During birth, only a midwife and female relatives or friends were in the room with the mother. Kabbalistic books could

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**Table 1. Jewish Population of Liepāja**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Number of Jews</th>
<th>Jewish percentage of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>4,548</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1,348</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>6,651</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>9,454</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>83,650</td>
<td>10,308</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>60,762</td>
<td>9,851</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>57,238</td>
<td>7,908</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>57,098</td>
<td>7,379</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Dov Levin, ed., Pinkas ha-kehilot: Latviyah ve-Estoniyah (Jerusalem, 1988).*