

ern *cheder* in Serey. He had considered himself nonreligious for a while, then became pious and taught a Talmud *shiur* in the *kloiz*. For many years the *gabbai* of the *beis hamidros* was Bera Tzvilling. The younger activists were Meir Evakovsky, Yeruchom Garbarsky, and Shmuel Koleka.

After Rav Sczupak's death, Serey had difficulty choosing a new rabbi. The town's temporary rabbi was Rav Sczupak's brother-in-law, Rav Karna, the rabbi of Mushnik, who was known throughout Lithuania as a very wise man. He was also physically very strong, and when he greeted you it was sometimes a bit difficult to free your hand from his. And so Jewish life continued in Serey until June 23, 1941, when the Germans occupied the town.

1939-45: Prior to their occupation, the Germans bombarded Serey with incendiary bombs, which burned down half the town. When the Germans entered Serey, the Lithuanians informed them that a Jewish member of the Communist Youth Party had shot at the Germans and at them from Garbarsky's granary. The Germans pulled Yossel Garbarsky out of his house and shot him. When his son Yeruchom, the town doctor, ran out to save his father, he too was shot. That same day Eliyohu Aminodov, Kovalsky, and other young men were shot.

The town's Jews had nowhere to go. They were crowded together in the Christian art school like herring in a barrel. Whoever was young and strong was taken off to labor; many never returned. Young women were raped.

This all occurred in 1941 until two days before Rosh Hashanah, when the remaining Jews were ordered to strip naked. They were driven through the streets and forced through a gauntlet of their Lithuanian neighbors who were armed with clubs and boards. The Lithuanians beat the Jews, all the while spitting on them and insulting them. In Galunishok, near the river, the bleeding, wounded Jews were finally driven into pits and to their deaths.

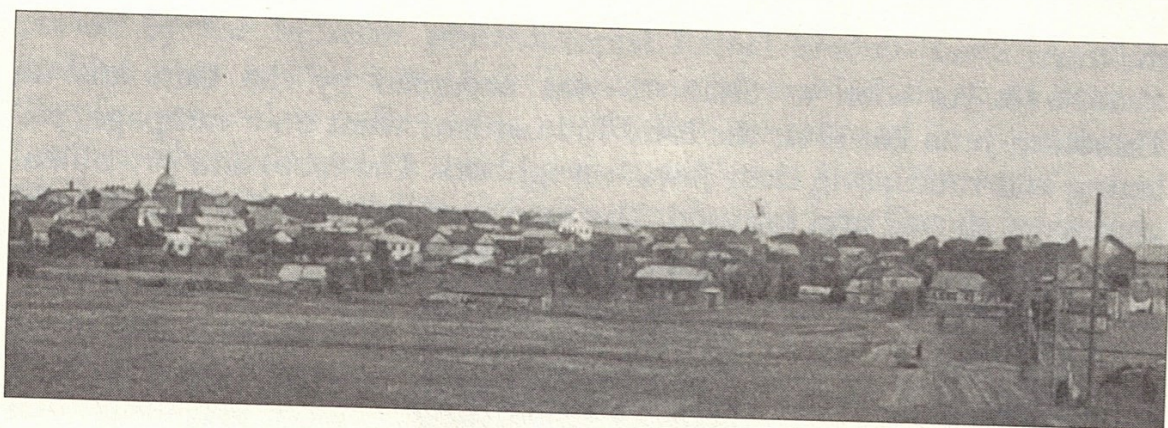
SHADOVE

LITHUANIAN NAME: Seduva RUSSIAN NAME: Shadov

LOCATION: In the Ponevezh district in north central Lithuania, a few miles west of Ponevezh.

JEWISH POPULATION IN 1939: 800

JEWISH HISTORY: Shadove was one of the oldest Jewish settlements in Lithuania. There is evidence of Jews living there as early as the mid-fifteenth century. In recent pre-war years, people from Shadove in the United States and South Africa sent home money to support their families in Shadove. Baltimore still has a Shadove synagogue and New York a Shadove committee, vestiges of that period.



View of Shadove.

ECONOMY: Many of Shadove's Jews made their living from retail shops and crafts. Some were vegetable farmers. They rented land from the gentiles, and planted, harvested and marketed their own produce.

INSTITUTIONS: Shadove was proud of its old synagogue and beautiful *aron kodesh*. There was also a large brick *beis hamidroh*, once the yeshiva founded by Rav Yosef Leib Bloch when he was rabbi of Shadove. After Rav Bloch moved to Telz, the yeshiva was led by the town's new rabbi, Rav Aharon Bakst, until World War I. The *gaon* and *tzaddik* Rav Moshe Kravitz, later rabbi in Fayura, founded a preparatory yeshiva in Shadove.



Rav Yosef Leib Bloch, rabbi of Shadove and later of Telz.

Shadove's institutions, besides its *chadorim*, yeshivos and daily *shiurim*, included a Tiferes Bachurim where the young men studied and prayed. There were also a Hebrew elementary school, a credit union, a library, and a variety of cultural groups.

SPIRITUAL LEADERS: The roster of Shadove's rabbis includes Rav Gershon Kremer; Rav Eliezer S. Rabinovitz; Rav Shaul Shapiro; Rav Simcha Horovitz; Rav Yehuda L. Riff; Rav Noach Rabinovitz; Rav Avrohom A. Burstein; Rav Dov Y. Kanovitz; Rav Aharon Bakst, later rabbi in Shavl; Rav Chayim B. Notelovitz; and the martyred Rav Mordechai D. Henkin.

Shadove's community members included many scholars and lovers of Torah. The town philanthropist was Bena Mehr, my uncle. He loved Torah and respected rabbis and their disciples. His son Avigdor, a major Torah scholar, married the daughter of Rav Malkiel Tzvi Tenenbaum, the rabbi of Lomza. Yisroel Elya Mirvis took the brilliant Rav Yaakov Meskin for a son-in-law. Rav Meskin emigrated to America and served as a rabbi in the Bronx, New York, where he died in 1956. Shlomo Yossa the shoemaker was up at 4 a.m. daily, the sound of his *Tehillim* resonating through

the town.

1939-45: As soon as Shadove was occupied by the Germans on Thursday, June 26, 1941, the local Lithuanians went on a rampage, pillaging and murdering their Jewish neighbors. The rabbi and prominent men were abused and tortured. The men were taken out of the city and murdered. The women and the children were locked into the synagogue, abused, and then killed.

SHAVL

LITHUANIAN NAME: Siauliai **RUSSIAN NAME:** Shavli

LOCATION: The second largest city in Lithuania, and a district capital in northern Lithuania. Shavl is located slightly northeast of Kelm.



A Shavl street.

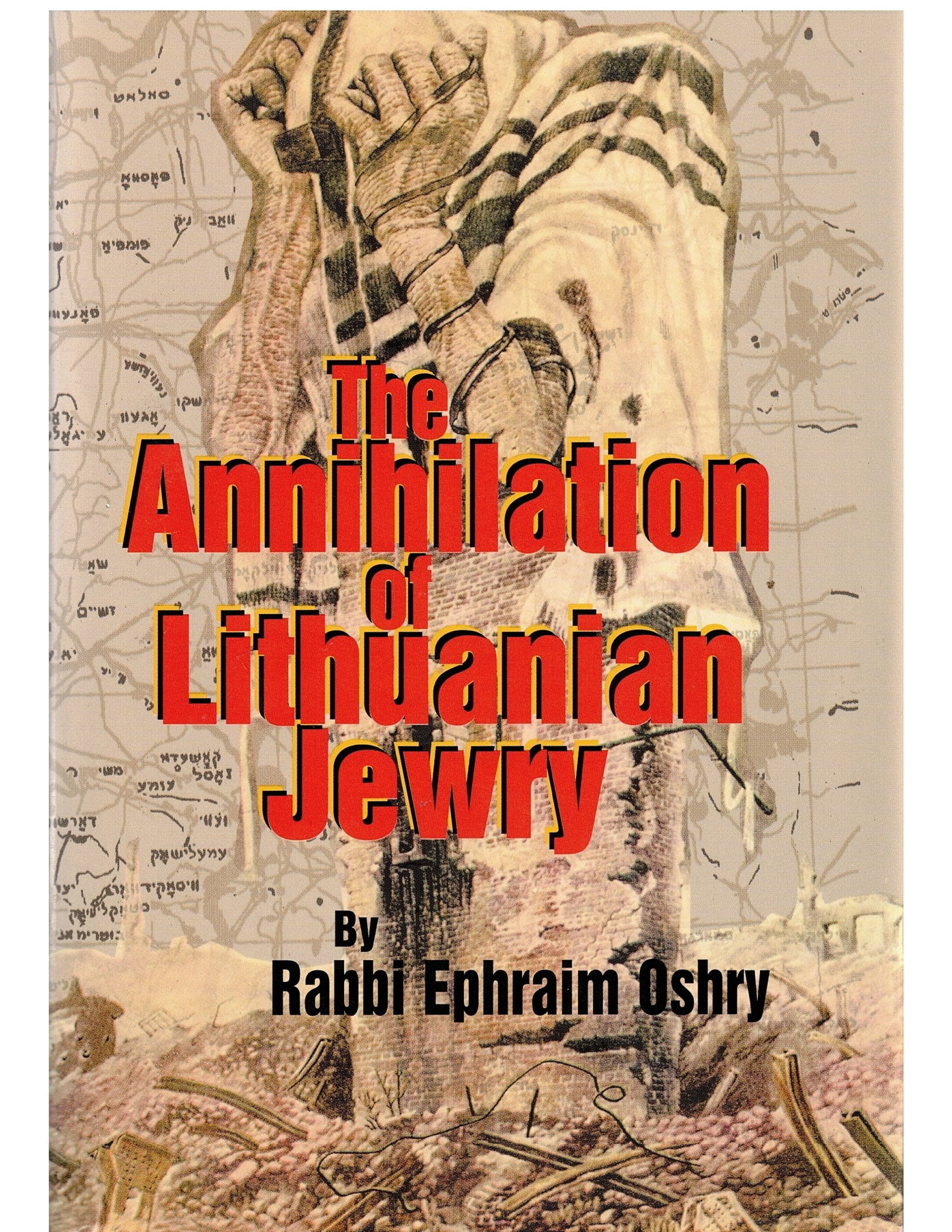
JEWISH POPULATION IN 1939: 8,000 (total population: 32,000)

JEWISH POPULATION IN 1945: 500

JEWISH HISTORY: The Jewish settlement in Shavl dates from the 17th century.

ECONOMY: Shavl's wealthiest Jews were involved in leather production. The Turok brothers owned one such factory. Another was owned by Chayim Frankel, whose factory became one of the largest leather factories in Russia. A generous man, Frankel helped establish the Talmud Torah in which 250 children studied. He also provided many of the children with food and clothing.

INSTITUTIONS: Shavl had a yeshiva, founded in 1909, that was sup-



The Annihilation of Lithuanian Jewry

By
Rabbi Ephraim Oshry