

**THE STARS BEAR WITNESS:
THE JEWISH LABOR BUND 1897-2017**

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**120TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
OF THE FOUNDING OF
THE JEWISH LABOR BUND**

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THE STARS BEAR WITNESS: THE JEWISH LABOR BUND 1897-2017

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Captions: Except where indicated, photographs and all visuals in *The Stars Bear Witness: The Jewish Labor Bund 1897-2017* are drawn from the Bund Collection and from other collections in the YIVO Archives.

Front Cover Photo:

The house in Vilna where the Bund was founded in October 1897 by thirteen revolutionaries: Yidl Abramov, Pavel Berman, Leon Goldman, Roza Grinblat (Sonya), Yisroel Mikhl Kaplinsky, Dovid Katz (Taras, a leather worker), Hillel Katz-Blum (The Dyer), Vladimir Kosovsky, Arkady (Aleksander) Kremer, John Mill, Avrom (Glyeb) Mutnik, Hirsh Soroka (Grishe the Carpenter), Mere Zhaludsky (a seamstress).

Back Cover Photo:

Bundist meeting in a Warsaw courtyard, 1920s.

דער בונד און בונדיזם

THE BUND¹ AND BUNDISM

Daniel Soyer

In October 1897, the General Jewish Labor Bund of Lithuania, Poland and Russia was founded by thirteen delegates gathered secretly in an attic in Vilna (now, Vilnius, Lithuania). The Bund arose from the convergence of the emerging poverty-stricken Jewish working class and the radicalized and secularized Jewish intelligentsia, especially in the northeast regions of the Pale of Settlement in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Part labor union and part political party, the Bund thus represented in its early years a revolt by Jewish workers, intellectuals, and youth against the oppressive Tsarist regime, the exploitative capitalist order, and the stultifying and hierarchical traditional Jewish community. Together with other revolutionary parties, the Bund sought the overthrow of the Russian autocracy and looked forward to a socialist world. But it also championed the rights of the Jewish people—not only civil rights as individuals, but national rights within a multinational empire. In this early period, the Bund defended Jewish communities against pogroms. It also worked to raise the status of Yiddish, the language of the Jewish masses, and cultivated it as a medium of modern secular Jewish culture.

After the Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917, the Bund was suppressed along with all other opposition parties in Soviet Russia. But it flowered in newly independent Poland, where it became a true mass movement. (Smaller Bunds were active in Lithuania, Latvia and Romania.)

In Poland, the Bund continued its struggle for social justice and democracy, and against anti-Semitism. Together with its allied organizations, it made an immediate difference in members' lives, giving them hope in an increasingly bleak situation. Tens of thousands joined the Bundist women's, youth, children's, and sport organizations. Thousands of children at risk of tuberculosis spent time at the Medem Sanatorium. Between 1936 and 1939, the Bund ran up an impressive string of electoral victories, besting the other Jewish parties in contests for seats in city councils and Jewish community councils across Poland.

This golden age of Bundist influence came to an end in September 1939, with the German invasion of Poland. During the war, the Bund organized underground self-help and educational efforts, and played a central role in forming the armed resistance to the Nazi invaders. Members of *Yugnt Bund-Tsukunft* were especially active in this work. The Bundists maintained ties with the Polish resistance and raised anew the old Polish independence slogan, "For your freedom and ours." Bundist couriers helped inform the outside world of the unfolding *khurban* (Holocaust) in Eastern Europe.

¹ "Bund" simply means "union, alliance, federation" in Yiddish. But in modern Jewish history, there was only *the Bund*.

Vilna Bund calls for a protest meeting against pogroms in Poland on December 5, 1918. The speakers will be Max Weinreich, N. Pups, S. Shapiro, Sh. Novoplyant, and others.



Delegations to the *Tsukunft* convention carrying banners with the names of their towns, Warsaw, 1932.

After the war, surviving Bundists scattered throughout the world, often joining comrades who had emigrated earlier and who were serving in the leadership of local labor and socialist movements. Joined together in the International Jewish Labor Bund, Bundist groups remained active in socialist and Jewish affairs, striving to apply their values to their new homes and to educate their children in the spirit of the prewar Bund.

Although never a fully elaborated ideology in the sense that Zionism was, Bundism rested on three pillars: Socialism, *do'ikayt* (“Here-ness”) and secular Jewish culture in Yiddish.

דער סאָציאַליזם פֿון בונד THE SOCIALISM OF THE BUND

Marvin Zuckerman

At the founding of the Bund in 1897, the condition of the working class in Eastern Europe was harsh. Laborers worked 14 to 18 hours a day, and lived in poverty. The workplaces were squalid, unsanitary, unhealthy. Child labor was prevalent. Abuse and degradation of women, children, and workers in general were widespread. Civil liberties were harshly suppressed by the Tsarist regime.

As Marxists, the Bund believed that capitalism contained within itself “the seeds of its own destruction,” that socialism was the inevitable next stage in the development of society, a society of democratic rule by, for, and of the working class. It would be a system without exploitation, of production for social need, not for profit. Imperialism would end, as would strife between nations, peoples, and classes. It was a heroic ideal the Bund found worth fighting, struggling, and sacrificing for. In the meantime, the Bund set itself the task of educating, uplifting, and organizing the Jewish working class to fight for shorter hours, higher pay, respect, and better working conditions. That was the real-world, day-to-day socialism of the Bund. In this it behaved like a social democratic party, like the other anti-communist, social democratic parties of Europe.

דאָיקייט DO'IKAYT (“HERE-NESS”)

Jack Jacobs

The Bund, in its heyday, was committed to the idea of *do'ikayt*—the notion that Jews should focus on obtaining equal rights and on vastly improving economic and political conditions in the countries in which they lived. In lands such as Russia and Poland, Bundists opposed the anti-Semitic notion that Jews born and raised in those countries were foreigners. So too, they argued that it played into the hands of anti-Semitic movements to combat anti-Semitism by encouraging the creation of a Jewish state or homeland. As a result, the Bund was

consistently antagonistic towards Zionism, which it characterized as utopian and reactionary. Over time, however, some Bundists began to differentiate between Zionism on the one hand and the rights of the Jewish community which lived in Palestine in the pre-World War II era on the other. Immediately after the establishment of the State of Israel, the Bund endorsed the idea that Jews in Israel “should work for peace with the surrounding Arab states and for cooperation with the Palestinian Arab population through the establishment of a common Jewish-Arab state based on the principles of democratic federalism.” In later years, while continuing to oppose Zionism and to endorse *do'ikayt*, the Bund accepted the existence of the State of Israel as a significant factor in Jewish life. At the same time, the Bund encouraged those Jews living in Israel to work for peace, and ultimately supported the rights of Palestinians to self-determination.

וועלטלעכע ייִדישקייט SECULAR CULTURAL JEWISH IDENTITY

Hinde Ena Burstin

Bundists believe that *veltlekhe kulturele yidishkayt* (secular cultural Jewish identity) enables Jews to express their Jewishness independent of religion or geographic location. For them, this *yidishkayt* is grounded in the intrinsic Jewish values of community, cultural autonomy and engaged activism for freedom, equality and social justice.

When the Bund was founded in 1897, Yiddish was the mother tongue of most Jews in Eastern Europe and Bund organizers recognized Yiddish as a vital medium for reaching Jewish workers. Their view quickly evolved into a commitment to *veltlekhe*/secular cultural Jewish identity. Thus, Bundists became active in increasing Yiddish literacy and in agitating for linguistic recognition and rights. They did this by founding or supporting such Yiddish institutions as TSYSHO, with its system of Yiddish *folkshules* (secular schools), the Medem Sanatorium, YIVO, Yiddish libraries, and many Yiddish publications that encouraged fiction and poetry. The Bund also understood the necessity of preparing its future members and activists through its youth organizations — SKIF, *Tsukunft* and *Morgnshtern*. In addition to socialist celebrations, the Bund emphasized Jewish holidays in secular form, especially those with political overtones like *Hanukah*, *Purim* and *Pesakh*. Today, the Bund in Australia supports SKIF and *Tsukunft* organizations, along with many literary and cultural institutions and events. Also, in Paris, France, the *Bibliothèque Medem* and *Centre Medem* continue to provide both cultural and political events.

JEWISH SOCIALISM BEFORE THE BUND

The first Jewish socialists came from the ranks of the nineteenth-century Russian populists, organized in a group called *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will), who aimed to overthrow the Tsarist regime and saw the Russian peasantry as the true revolutionary force. After the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 by a group of *narodniki*, persecution of the Jews of Russia intensified, including the repressive May Laws and a wave of pogroms unprecedented in modern times.

The 1880s anti-Jewish outbreaks caused many enlightened and assimilated Jews to turn to political activism and to reach out to the Jewish proletariat. Some grassroots activists were already organizing

strikes in Jewish enterprises and establishing *kases* (mutual aid funds). Jewish socialist activists also began organizing underground study circles teaching economics, history, and literature and preaching a new doctrine of social revolution: Marxism. However, these Russified intellectuals soon identified another problem: the majority of the Jewish masses in the Pale could only be reached through Yiddish. So they began producing Yiddish propaganda brochures and creating libraries of Yiddish literary works. Thus, a *Zhargon komitet* ("Jargon" Committee) was formed precisely for the purpose of spreading Yiddish publications among the workers.

Pre-Bund Vilna "Zhargon" Committee

The selection of materials [for Yiddish political pamphlets] was guided by our desire to present scientific news in a popular form so as to enable the workers to comprehend it directly from the pamphlets and without any outside help; [we looked] also for belletristic writing which would work on their socialist emotions, awaken in them feelings of protest and struggle. Such pamphlets were hard to find. For the most part, Peretz was completely incomprehensible to the ordinary workers who barely knew how to read. We did select "Bontshe the Silent," but the censor wouldn't pass it.

—Anna Heller Rosenthal (1872–ca. 1940)

Lifelong activist; took part in 1904 Siberian Romanovka revolt; dentist; member of Vilna's *Zhargon* Committee; later chair of Bund in Vilna; served on Bund's CC in Warsaw; member of the executive committee of TSYSHO; co-founder of YAF; died in Soviet prison at beginning of World War II.



The first Yiddish school in Poland, Warsaw, 1919.

דער אלגעמיינער יידישער אַרבעטער־בונד THE JEWISH LABOR BUND 1897-2017



A group of Bundists on an outing, London, England, 1902 or 1903.



Bundists and other political exiles in Yakutsk, Siberia, the scene of an uprising staged by exiles in 1904.

Vilna Revolutionary Women Workmen's Circle Branch, New York, 1905.



1897 A clandestine Yiddish printing shop begins operating in Vilna.

Di arbeter shtime (The Worker's Voice) starts publishing illegally in Vilna and other cities in the Russian Empire.

In Vilna, delegates from five cities establish the **General Jewish Labor Bund in Russia and Poland** and appoint the first Central Committee (CC): Arkady Kremer, Vladimir Kosovsky, Abraham Mutnik.

1898 At a congress in Minsk, the Bund helps in founding the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (*Rossiiskaia Sotsialno-Demokraticheskaia Rabochaia Partii*—RSDRP) and joins it as an autonomous organization.

Members of the Bund CC and RSDRP are arrested, as are 70 Bund members, in widespread raids. The clandestine printing shop in Bobruisk is raided.

Foreign Committee of the Bund is established in Geneva, Switzerland.

1900 Bund group is established in Paris.

Arbeter Ring/Workmen's Circle in New York reorganized as national Jewish labor fraternal order; in succeeding years, many Bundist *landsmanshaftn* and individual Bundists join and strongly influence the work of the order.

1901 Bund proclaims the Russian Empire should become a federation of autonomous nationalities and that Jews, as a nationality, are entitled to national rights. (Fourth Bund Convention, Bialystok)

1902 The Bundist Hirsh Lekert, a bootmaker, wounds Vilna Governor-General Victor von Wahl for ordering the flogging of Jewish May Day demonstrators. Lekert is hanged.

In response to a pogrom in Częstochowa, the Bund calls for Jewish self-defense.

The writer, playwright and anthropologist Sh. An-Ski writes *Di shvue* (The Oath), which will become the Bund's anthem.

1903 The Bund walks out of the RSDRP at the London party congress over the issues of Jewish national rights and the

Bund's autonomy within the RSDRP. At this congress, the RSDRP is split into the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions.

After pogroms in Kishinev and Gomel, the Bund organizes first self-defense groups.

Bund group is established in England.

Arkady Kremer and Mikhail Berg (Ezra) visit the United States to raise money for the Bund, organize a conference of Bundist organizations in America.

1904 Mass strikes and anti-government demonstrations in Odessa, Kiev, Baku, and St. Petersburg. About 4,500 Bundists arrested by Tsarist police. Many Bundists participate in uprising of political exiles in Yakutsk (Eastern Siberia).

1905 The Bund takes active part in the Russian Revolution.

Łódź Bundists lead Jewish textile workers in street battles.

Bundist self-defense groups are active during pogroms in Zhitomir, Odessa and elsewhere.

Founding of the Jewish Social Democratic Party (the Galician Bund) in Galicia (Austrian Poland).

The Bund formulates its program of national-cultural autonomy for Jews at Sixth Bund Convention (Zurich).

1906 *Der veker* (Awakener), first Bundist Yiddish daily, begins publishing in Vilna. Other Bundist publications appear legally in Russia.

Legal trade unions are established.

The Bund returns to the RSDRP as an autonomous organization.

A Bund group is established in Buenos Aires.

Workmen's Circle Branch 2 in Harlem (NYC) opens first Socialist Sunday school for children; includes cultural history, political economy, and the lives of important historical figures; other schools follow.

1907 The Revolution in retreat: The government closes legal Bundist press and arrests many Bund members. Bund revives its underground press.



Bund self-defense group, Pinsk, 1905.



Editorial staff of the Bundist Weekly, *Nasha Tribuna* ("Our Tribune"), Kovno, 1907. Vladimir Medem is on the right.



A Bundist self-defense group in Odessa with three of their slain leaders: Visotski, Sheltipsl and Yekhiel. 1905.

Students of a *Tsukunft* trade school pose with framed portrait of Karl Marx. Warsaw, 1917-18.



1908 Bund members led by Esther Frumkin attend the Yiddish Language Conference in Czernowitz, which proclaims Yiddish a national Jewish language.

1914-1916 Early World War I: A committee of Bundist organizations is established in Poland as borders begin to shift and the Polish Bund begins to separate from the Russian leadership.

The Bund, with other anti-war activists, participates in the International Socialist Conferences in Switzerland at Zimmerwald (1915) and Kiental (1916).

1916-1918 In the U.S., pushed by Bundists in the Workmen's Circle and following a resolution at its 1916 convention, WC transforms its schools into secular Jewish schools; children now learn Yiddish language and literature, and Jewish history in a socialist spirit. These new schools open in 1918.

1917 Revolution in February topples the Tsarist regime. The Bund enthusiastically supports the nascent republic.

The Bund movement grows during the Russian Revolution to 40,000 members in 400 localities.

Bundist leader Henryk Erlich is elected to the All-Russian Executive Committee of Soviets. After the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in October, the Bund protests and walks out of the Second Congress of Soviets.

The Polish Bund is established at a Lublin conference.

1918-1921 The *Kombund* (Communist Bund) is established by the Ukrainian Bund and merges with the Communist party in August 1919. The Russian Bund splits into two factions. The pro-Communist faction joins the Communist Party in 1921. The social democratic faction is short lived and is disbanded by the Soviet Government. The Russian period in Bund history ends.

1919 The country-wide organization of the *Tsukunft* (*Yugnt Bund-tsukunft*—Youth Bund-the Future) is established in Poland.

The Bund in Latvia is established and represented in the Latvian Constitutional Assembly.

The Bund in Romania is established and represented in Parliament.



20th anniversary of founding of Bund, Vilna, 1917.

Leaders of the cultural organization, *Morgnroyt* (Dawn), of the Romanian Bund, with Henryk Erlich and Shloyme Mendelson seated center, Cernăuți (Czernowitz, now Chernivtsi, Ukraine), 1929.



- 1920 Galician and Polish Bund parties merge at convention in Cracow.
- Bund's pacifist stance against Polish-Soviet War is denounced by the Polish government. At the Warsaw City Council Henryk Erlich demands peace negotiations.
- 1920-1922 Faction of delegates of the pro-communist *Kombund* organized in Polish Bund in 1921. The Bund in Poland refuses to accept the "twenty-one conditions" of the Third International. *Kombund* is defeated and secedes from the party in 1922.
- 1921 TSYSHO (Central Yiddish School Organization) is established with prominent participation of the Bund.
- Folkstsaytung* (People's newspaper), Bund's central organ, begins publication.
- Landrat* (National Council of Trade Unions in Poland) is established; it consists of 16 unions, 228 locals, and 58,000 members. Poland's only federation of Jewish workers, it is influenced predominantly by the Bund.
- 1922 Attacked by the government and by Communists, and facing internal strife and discord with other parties of the left, the Bund participates for the first time in the *Sejm* (Polish parliament) elections, but makes a weak showing.
- Landrat* allies itself with Polish socialist trade unions.
- 1925 YAF (*Yidishe arbeter froy*—Jewish Worker Woman) is established in Warsaw. YAF focuses on enabling Jewish working-class women to realize their own significance, on child-care and health of mothers and children. From the Bund's beginning, women are active throughout local organizations, but few serve in central leadership positions.
- 1926 The Bund in Poland, together with other left parties, supports Józef Piłsudski's revolt against the rightist government. When Piłsudski's right-wing and dictatorial policies emerge, the Bund turns sharply against him.
- SKIF (*Sotsyalistisher kinder farband*—Socialist Children's Union), the Bund's pioneer organization, is established in Poland.



Vilna Bund announcements in Yiddish and Polish for a meeting about Jewish secular schools. Among the speakers: A[nn]a Rosental, [Yosef] Aronowicz, Yankl Zeleznikow, and special guest Jakub (Jacob) Pat from Warsaw. The meeting is called for *shabes* at 11 a.m. ("first day of the holiday"). [1928]



Bundist youth group poses around a framed portrait of Vladimir Medem, Tarnow, 1928. The sign on the left reads, "Down with militarism," the sign in the middle, "Down with Fascism."



Zygmunt (Zalmen) Frydrych addressing a *Tsukunft* meeting, Warsaw, 1930s. In July 1942, Frydrych was sent by the ZOB of the Warsaw Ghetto to confirm rumors regarding Jewish "resettlement" in Treblinka. His report led to the organizing of the Ghetto Uprising the following April. Frydrych survived the Uprising, but was killed later.



Members of SKIF pose with portrait of Vladimir Medem.



Teens in the Medem Sanatorium. Second row, from left: 3rd Vladka Meed and 5th Hannah Fryshdorf; top row, from left: 3rd Marek Edelman.



Tsukunft contingent at the 1931 Workers Olympic Games in Vienna.



A lecture on Jewish-Polish understanding by Bundist leader Henryk Erlich. Piotrkow, July 4, 1925.



Appeal by the Central Committee of the Bund in Poland to boycott all products coming from Hitler's Germany, Tarnow, 1933.

Arbeter sportler (Worker-Athlete), Morgnshtern journal, publicizes the 1931 Workers Olympic Games in Vienna.



Morgnshtern (Morning Star), the Bund's organization devoted to sports and physical education, is established in Poland.

The Medem Sanatorium opens in Miedzeszyn, near Warsaw. Aimed at ailing children of poor Jewish families, it becomes one of the world's most innovative educational and health institutions.

Medem Klub formed in Paris.

1927 Workmen's Circle opens Camp Kinder Ring in upstate N.Y.

1928 In elections to the Sejm (Polish Parliament), the Bund joins with the Polish Socialist Party and other left groups to form the Left Electoral Bloc. Though none of its candidates win, the Bund contributes over 100,000 votes to the strong showing of the left-wing parties in the new Sejm.

Workmen's Circle schools in the U.S. enroll 6,500 children in its 105 shules which function after public school hours or on Sunday.

1929 The Bund joins the Labor and Socialist International.

Medem Library established in Paris by eight young Bundists. Poet David Einhorn donates the first book.

1931 The Bund in Poland boycotts elections to kehiles (Jewish community councils) because of the kehiles' exclusionary policies toward secular Jewish institutions.

Morgnshtern participates in the Second International Workers Olympics in Vienna.

1932 Jewish Socialist Union (JSU) of France, a French Bundist organization, established.

SKIF in France founded and led by Henri and Tsirl Steingart, and Max Klok.

1933 The Bund calls for a united anti-fascist labor front.

The Bund joins with the Aid Committee for the Victims of Fascism in Germany.

1934 The Jewish Labor Committee (New York) is founded by Bundist immigrants and others to fight fascism and to open American doors to new immigrants.

1935 The Bund co-founds the League for the Defense of the Rights of Man and Citizen to help political prisoners in Poland.

JSU of France begins publishing *Unzer shtime* (Our Voice).

Melbourne: I.L. Peretz Sunday School established.

- 1936 The Bund in Poland drops its boycott of *kehile* elections and wins majorities in many Jewish community councils.

On March 17, the Bund proclaims a half-day general strike to protest the pogrom in Przytyk, Poland. The strike demonstrates the growing strength of the Bund.

SKIF holds its first convention in Warsaw. It has over 10,000 members.

In France, Socialist Leon Blum, an Alsatian Jew, becomes France's premier; was close to Bundist leaders Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter.

- 1937 Start of the first Yiddish *shule* in France.

A strike in Białystok lasts 10 weeks and brings out 7,000 Jewish textile workers.

During the Brześć (Poland) pogrom, one Jew is killed and almost all Jewish stores destroyed.

In August there are 400 attacks on Jews in 79 localities throughout Poland.

Bundist students protest the creation of "ghetto benches" in Polish universities.

- 1938 The Bund wins 16 out of 20 Jewish seats on the Warsaw City Council. It succeeds in city elections throughout Poland.

- 1939 The Bund gains strength among Polish Jewry and continues to battle state-sponsored anti-Semitism and totalitarianism. The Bund's offer to join the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) in a call for a government of national unity in the face of the Nazi menace is rejected.

Under the Bund's leadership, Jewish trade union membership reaches over 99,000.

September 1: Nazi Germany invades Poland. The Bund goes underground.

1939-

- 1941 Many Bund leaders and workers in Soviet-occupied eastern Polish territories are arrested by the secret police. Some are liquidated. The Bund is disbanded in all provinces of prewar

Bund May Day demonstration in Lublin, 1936. The speaker is Bella Shapiro, leader of the Bund in Lublin and a deputy in the Lublin City Council.



Executive Committee of Warsaw's *Morgnshtern*, 1937. From left, seated: 3rd Jakub Celemensky, 5th Zygmunt (Zalmen) Frydrych. Standing in middle, Michal Klepfisz.



Youth activists at Bund May Day rally with hand-made banner, Warsaw, May 1, 1936.

Bundists marching in May Day parade in Stockholm, Sweden, 1946. From left: Chaim "Bolek" Ellenbogen; 2nd person behind him Lutek Svedosh; carrying left side of banner Borukh Spiegel.



Tsukunft militia walking through the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto on the occasion of the April 19th anniversary of the Uprising, 1947/1948 (?).

Poland now in Soviet hands. Henryk Erlich and Victor Alter are taken to Moscow, where they perish in prison.

- 1940 Bund participates in formation of *Comité Amelot*, a resistance organization in Paris dedicated to assisting Jewish children, women and the elderly; creates own network to smuggle Jews across Swiss border.
- 1941 The American Representation of the Bund is established in New York. The first issue of the Bund's American organ *Unzer tsayt* (Our Time) is published.
- 1942 Following the mass deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto in the summer of 1942, the Bund joins the ŻOB (*Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa*—The Jewish Fighters Organization) in preparation for the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Bundist activist Marek Edelman is named one of ŻOB's commanders.

In August the staff and children of the Medem Sanatorium are deported to Treblinka.
- 1943 Bundist fighters of the ŻOB form four fighter squads for the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising which begins on April 19. Marek Edelman and his group break out of the Nazi-encircled command bunker at Mila 18 and fight on as the last armed ŻOB group before going over to the "Aryan" side.

Shmuel Mordkhe (Artur) Zygielbojm, the Bund representative to the Polish National Council-in-Exile in London, commits suicide on May 11 to protest the inaction of the Allies in the face of the annihilation of Polish Jewry.

Bundist groups participate in resistance activities in Bialystok and Vilna ghettos.

Bund group is established in Palestine.

Bund network smuggles Jewish children from France across Swiss border with help from Prof. Liebmann Hersch.

- 1944 Bund group is active in French underground.

First postwar edition of the daily *Unzer shtime* appears in France. It continues publishing from 1946 until the 1970s.

Medem Library re-opens, sole Yiddish library left in Paris.
- 1945 Bund organization is re-established in Poland. The first national conference of the postwar Polish Bund takes place in Lublin in June 1945, with 44 delegates from across Poland.

- 1945-1947 In France, the Bund opens homes in Le Mans and Brunoy for orphans and returning deportees, some run on the principles of the Medem Sanatorium

and sponsored by Jewish Labor Committee, unions and U.S. Workmen's Circle branches.

SKIF restarted in France; joins the French Red Falcons (*les Faucons Rouges*) delegations to the international socialist gatherings in Brighton (GB) in 1946, Amsterdam (NL) in 1947.

SKIF in France purchases mansion in Corvol called *Foyer Ika* (Hall of Ika), nickname of Esther Rivka Richter (1887-1942), a Bundist activist and Yiddish teacher; arrested in 1941, died in prison.

1945-1950 Bund groups are formally constituted as Bund organizations in thirty-one cities in thirteen countries around the world.

1946-1950 Bundist groups are active in Displaced Persons camps in Germany, Austria and Italy. An Executive Committee of Bundist groups in Germany is established to coordinate between these groups.

1947 First World Conference of the Bund takes place in Brussels. A World Coordinating Committee is established for the first time, and the movement is reconstituted as the International Jewish Labor Bund.

Melbourne: Sholem Aleichem Sunday School established.

1948 Second World Conference of the Bund takes place in New York.

1949 Bund chapters around Poland are liquidated by the Communist government, marking the end of the Polish Bund.

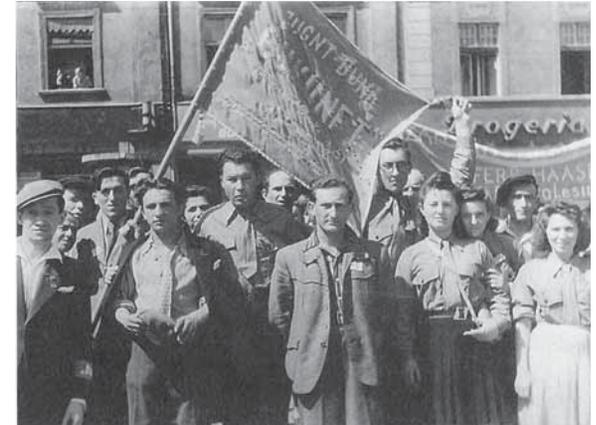
1950 SKIF movement is established in Melbourne, Australia. It will become the longest surviving Bundist children's movement.

1951 First national conference of the Bund Organization in Israel takes place. The Israeli bimonthly Bund journal, *Lebns-fragn* (Life's questions), first appears under the editorship of Issachar Artuski.

1955 The Third World Conference of the Bund in Montreal passes a resolution recognizing the Jews as a world



Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Bund, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1947.



Tsukunft May Day demonstration in Dzierzoniow, Poland, ca. 1948.



Bundists in Stuyer Displaced Persons Camp, Austria.



Camp Hemshekh *denkmol* (memorial) in memory of the *khurbn* (the Holocaust). Courtesy of George Rothe.

This is the *denkmol* created by the architect Daniel Libeskind when he was a teenager. It is a mosaic of a ghetto fighter. On Ghetto Day, following the Bundist tradition at funerals of having two comrades stand by the coffin in rotation, two campers stood as an *ern-vakh* (honor guard) at the *denkmol* in an all-day rotation. That day we also held a commemoration in the camp auditorium. Following the program, the camp gathered silently and walked to the *denkmol* for a silent vigil, which ended with the singing of the Partisan Hymn. —Moishe Rosenfeld

Solidarność (Solidarity), the independent trade union movement that helped overthrow the Polish Communist regime, issued this commemorative stamp, illegally, to honor the memory of the Bundist leaders Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, 1988.



Celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Bund in Israel, with photographs of Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, 1961.



Marek Edelman and Vladka Meed in front of the Warsaw Ghetto Memorial, Warsaw, 1990.



people. It also recognizes the establishment of the State of Israel as a significant moment in Jewish life.

- 1959 Bundists found Camp Hemshekh in upstate New York.
- 1960s The American Bund joins with the *Katsetler farband* and the Socialist Party of American in organizing Jews to support the Civil Rights Movement.
- 1962 The French SKIF movement, founded in 1932, reconstitutes itself as Club laïque de l'enfance juive (CLEJ)—Secular Club for Jewish Children).
- 1970s-
- 1980s Jewish Socialist Youth Bund and, later, Medem Jewish Socialist Group, are active in New York.
- 1972 The Fifth World Conference of the Bund continues to oppose large scale emigration to Israel, and supports the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam.
- 1975 Melbourne: Spearheaded by Bundists, the Sholem Aleichem College is established and consists of a Yiddish day school, Sunday school and kindergarten.
- 1978 Camp Hemshekh in upstate New York closes.
- 1988 SKIF in Melbourne initiates One Voice, Jewish music and culture festival, considered "Melbourne Jewry's largest communal event."
- 1992 Eighth and final world conference of the Bund is held in New York.
- 1995 *Unzer shtime* in France publishes its final issue.
- 1997 In Warsaw, Bundists and scholars from around the world gather to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Bund.

In Melbourne, Bundists celebrate with a *yoyvl* event and exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of the Bund.

In Paris, a two-day congress is organized in honor of "*Les 100 ans du Bund*."

In New York City, a celebration of the centennial of the Bund draws hundreds of people to Cooper Union's Great Hall.

Events also take place in London and Brussels.

2002-

2003 In Paris, *Arbeter Ring*/Medem Center separates from the *Bibliothèque Medem* which becomes *Maison de la culture yiddish – Bibliothèque Medem*.

2005 *Unzer tsayt* publishes its last issue.

2017 Celebrations of the 120th anniversary of the founding of the Jewish Labor Bund are organized in New York City, Paris, Melbourne.

The Workmen's Circle in the U.S. continues work for a *besere un shenere velt* (a better and more beautiful world); running Camp Kinder Ring in upstate New York; and supporting its educational program with *shules* in Boston, Chicago, New York City, Somerset (N.J.), and in East Meadow, Smithtown, and Westchester (N.Y.).

In Paris, the *Arbeter Ring*/Medem Center and the *Maison de la culture yiddish – Bibliothèque Medem* continue to be engaged politically and to provide scholars with Yiddish materials and the general public with cultural events. The *Foyer Ika* in Corvol continues to be run on SKIF principles and to operate under the auspices of the CLEJ.

In Melbourne, SKIF and the Sholem Aleykhem College continue to educate children in Yiddish and Yiddish culture as well as the socialist ideals of the Bund.



Parisian demonstrator after jihadist attack on the French satirical publication *Charlie Hebdo*, January 2015. Courtesy of Centre Medem.

Memorial for Medem Sanatorium with the photograph of teens who attended the Sanatorium before the war (see page 9 for full photo inset in the memorial), Międzeszyn, Poland, erected in 2015. It stands near the sanatorium site in front of a Polish elementary school, which is responsible for its upkeep. Courtesy of Irena Klepfisz.



The sign for Camp Hemshekh with the Red Falcon symbol of SKIF.



Bundists demonstrate against an appearance before a right-wing Jewish group of a leader of One Nation (a racist political party), Melbourne, Australia, 2016. Courtesy of the Jewish Labour Bund Inc. in Melbourne.

in so far as it is available in Yiddish, is the work of the Bund. The other parties can only total up a few brochures. They use the Bund's literature. They must also admit that many works for the masses not directly from the Bund were created under its direct influence. Those areas of popular scientific literature not stirred by the Bund still remain unworked fields.

—*Di hofnung* (Hope), October 1907

Books and Libraries

[T]here were no private or public libraries of Yiddish books, especially modern literary works. Despite the fact that all literature, like everything else printed in Russia, contained the standard imprint "*Dozvoleno tsenzuroi*" — passed by the censor — it was still forbidden during Tsarist times to keep a large number of books in one place. The Tsarist servants considered books ammunition for war and more than one Jewish worker was punished and banished to the wastelands of cold Siberia for just such a "crime."

As a result, each trade *kase* developed its own illegal library of legal books with its own librarian. Besides the trade libraries, there was also a central library which would buy new books, distribute them and exchange them among the trade libraries. The central library was run by a special librarian whose identity was kept especially secret. He was known only to the trade libraries and very close friends in the organization. But despite their illegal existence, these libraries functioned exceptionally well and fulfilled their obligation in the best manner.

—**Leybitshke Berman (b. 18??-1959)**

Born into poverty in Dvinsk; learned carpentry; became member of Bund in his early teens; an organizer in different cities in Russia and Poland; remained active in the U.S.; wrote memoir *In loyf fun yorn*/The flow of years; dedication: "To my spiritual father and nurturer—The General Jewish Workers Bund in Lithuania, Poland and Russia."



Activists with buttons, banners, and armbands reading, *Lebns-fragn*, Mezritch.



Children at the Medem Sanatorium reading the *Folktsaytung*.



Poster advertising the *Folktsaytung*, the Bund's official daily organ: "Worker, your paper is the *Folktsaytung*." Designed by Hersh Cyna.

DISCOVERING THE BUND

In Bobruisk, Belarus: Power of Words

The Bund often arranged demonstrations in the synagogues. One Friday evening, when the congregation was already at the *Aleynu* prayer toward the end of the service, two youths mounted the platform and banged on the table: "We want to say something." Two other youths stood by the door and did not let anyone out. The first two unfurled a red flag. The flag was inscribed: "Workers of all countries unite! The General Jewish Labor Bund of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia." Another youth mounted the platform and started to speak. He spoke with fire, with passion. Foam appeared on his lips. He spoke about abolishing the autocracy, about the freedom to say what one wanted. After the autocracy had been abolished, equality would be introduced, and so on. He ended: "Down with the autocracy!" The speech made a twofold impression on me — both in its content and in the beauty of the language.

—Sam Carasick

Yeshiva student turned cabinet maker, too young to join the Bund in Russia; took part in its activities, 1904-1905; came to U.S. in 1906; active in the Workmen's Circle and Socialist Party in Baltimore.



Bund May Day demonstrators, Nowy Dwor, ca. 1930.

Outside of Lodz: A Worker's Duty

I learned from friends that on the Sabbath there would be a gathering... in the forest around the nearby town Zgierz.... [F]inally that blessed Sabbath morning came. I snuck out in the middle of the night... and set out in the direction of the Zgierz Forest. Thousands of people were walking in groups.... For the first time in my life I walked so far on the Sabbath. People had brought large loaves of bread and ate them on the way, without saying the blessing.... What is this, Jews eating without the blessing? The gathering was secret... so I didn't ask any questions.... God in heaven, how many people were there! This was the first time... that I had seen so many people gathered in one place.

But before I had time to consider the whole situation, a girl with short-cropped hair and a black band around her beautiful pure white neck suddenly appeared, shouting, "Brother weavers of Lodz, now is the time for you to stop allowing such terrible exploitation. We must fight against all oppressors and exploiters, and also against the Russian Tsar, who lies like a leech on our bodies and sucks our blood." The words, "overthrow the Tsar," made me shudder... Well,

I thought, uniting against the genteel class and attaining a better life. I like that, but I'm afraid of what they are saying about the Tsar. Before I had time to recover, a blood-red flag unfurled with the inscription, "Long live the Jewish Labor Bund of Lithuania, Poland and Russia." People sang, and their song drove away the fear in me. Everyone left for home with shining faces.

But I walked back alone, by a different route, with slow steps, reflecting on the whole event. Right away, I decided that they truly were the real thing.... And my duty as a worker, I said to myself, is to be with the others. From then on, I entered the Bundist socialist movement, which I still believe in to this day.

—Aaron Cohn

Hasidic background; joined the Bund as a young weaver; came to the U.S. in 1905; maintained his socialist beliefs and affiliations even as a textile manufacturer in Paterson, N.J.

In Vilna: Disobeying a father

My attraction to the Bund did not gladden my family's friends. This, of course, did not bother me in the least; what was really troubling was disagreements with my father [historian Shimon Dubnov]. His sympathy for political radicalism stopped short of the Jewish workers' movement: he condemned class politics among Jews, invoking the fact that our people were subject to persecution as a single whole. This argument did not seem convincing to me. Into our quarrels papa brought a great deal of irritation, experiencing my disagreement with him as a personal insult. Mama grew nervous listening to our steadily rising voices; attempts to calm us did no good. After especially fierce fights papa would slam the door and go off to his study, while I choked down tears, ashamed of my weakness.

—Sophia Dubnova-Erlich (1885-1986)

Poet, Bundist activist, translator, memoirist, critic, lectured and wrote in Yiddish and Russian about sexuality and marriage; married Bundist leader Henryk Erlich.

In Kremenchug, Ukraine: Obeying a mother

With trembling hands, my sister took down the box, took out the two hidden brochures. She went into the kitchen and burned them in the oven.... With tears in her eyes, she quietly began, "Forgive me, Mother, but understand that things cannot continue like this. They think that when they chop off heads, arms, and legs, they chop off everything. But although they can chop up the bodies of some of



A family gathering, late 1930s. From left: Victor Erlich, Henryk Erlich (Simon Dubnov's son-in-law), Rokhl (Shoshke) Fliegel-Erlich, [unnamed] housekeeper, Alexander Erlich, Sophia Dubnov-Erlich, Simon Dubnov.



Needle workers conference, Vilna, 1906.



Girls reading Yiddish and Polish newspapers, Pinsk, 1930's.

the masses, they will never cut away the soul, the collective soul of the greater masses. The Russian people are like a volcano, it doesn't mean that the volcano is extinguished. Yes, Mother, I belong to the Bund and come what may, I will not stop. But I promise you that I will never bring anything into the house again." And she kept her promise.

I swallowed my sister's words like noodles with butter.... [Later,] I spied on my sister on Yekaterinski Street, and saw whom she stopped to speak with.... Without much of a thought, I went over to the same person, tugged at his sleeve and said quietly, "I am Rosa's sister, and I want to be a member of the Bund too."

—Bertha Fox

Shop worker, corset maker, and photographer; came to the U.S. in 1923 and worked as a nurse.

Women in the Bund

Women always played a conspicuous role in the Bund. During the dawn of the workers' movement, they distinguished themselves by their numbers and activities. Vilna's mass movement began with the strikes of women tobacco workers, sock makers, and others. The passive women masses suddenly moved and individual women workers proved themselves to be gifted activists and held responsible, honored positions in the leadership of the movement.

—Anna Heller Rosenthal

A NEW SPIRIT, A NEW FAITH

The Jewish Worker

The Bund infused the Jewish workingman with a new spirit. The Bund filled his heart with a new faith. The Bund awakened in the Jewish worker the feeling of human dignity and, as a consequence, also his national consciousness, the need to find fulfillment within his national culture. And as an equal among equals, it introduced the Jewish worker to a new and proud world, the world of the militant proletariat.

The Bund also taught the Jewish worker how to feel and think like a citizen of the country. It taught him how to link his own destiny to the destiny of the country. It inculcated in him the unshakable conviction that in the place where he lives and in the land in which he expends his toil, he must demand his rights and stand up for his rights with all his strength.



Cooperative tannery workshop in Warsaw, late 1920s. Photo: Alter Kacyzne.

The Bund taught the Jewish worker that his power lies not in national unity with his exploiters, the rich and their minions, the clerics, but in class struggle against the capitalists without difference of nationality: and in international unity with all toilers and oppressed.

—**Henryk Erlich (1882-1942)**

Bundist leader and strong nationalist; editor of *Folkstsaytung* (People’s newspaper); arrested with Victor Alter in 1941 by the Soviets; was tortured and committed suicide in prison.

Bundist Unity

The Bund mentality possesses an important feature: an instinctive feeling for the blessing of unity in the workers’ ranks. Bundists can engage in the sharpest arguments among themselves, but all of them feel—indeed *feel* more than *know*—that these differences of opinion dare not jeopardize their unity. And whoever had begun to preach, on principle, the necessity of splitting in our movement, has automatically produced a break with the Bundist mentality.

—**Victor Alter (1890-1943)**

Exiled to Siberia for Bund activities in 1913; major Bund leader in interwar Poland; served on Warsaw City Council; arrested with Henryk Erlich by the Soviets in 1941; executed in 1943.

Anniversary of the Bund

This is our custom, an old and beautiful Bundist tradition. We do this year-in, year-out. We celebrate our party holiday—the anniversary of the founding of the Bund.

And here it is again, this day, for the twenty-second time. And once again, we stand still in the midst of the commotion, in the midst of life’s hustle and bustle. A small moment of rest, a bundle of memories—dear, rejuvenated faces. And the golden thread continues to be spun out.

For the first time on the Jewish street there arose a fighting organization, for the first time in the Jewish street there arose a political party, for the first time the Jewish masses felt their power. From a passive, raw, dead material which was molded and thrown according to the will and caprice of others, there arose an active force which expresses its own will, which fights for its own desires, and throws its weight on the scales of historical events. This was the Jewish worker, this was the Jewish proletariat, and the name of that power was the “Bund”....

Bund May Day demonstration in front of the Bund club on Przejazd Street, Warsaw, 1933. The speaker is Henryk Erlich.



Celebration of 30th anniversary of the founding of the Bund, Warsaw, 1927. Standing on the presidium: Noyekh Portnoy, chair of the Bund Central Committee. Other leaders seated, from right, Joseph Chmurner, Meir Wasser, Sarah Schweber, Henryk Erlich (with Victor Alter in back), and Beinish Michalewicz.



Vladimir Medem, 1920.



Victor Alter (behind flag) at Bund May Day rally, 1936.

Children playing with clay, seated around a table in the P. Anman Day Care Center run by *Yidishe arbeter froy* (YAF), Vilna, 1930s.



Poster for a Bundist youth gathering, Daugavpils (Dvinsk), Latvia, 1931. Courtesy of International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

Not a single area of political and social life remained untouched by [the Bund's] influence: political struggle, the trade union movement, cultural work, cooperative activities, national revival, the press, journalism, literature, the Yiddish language, resistance to pogroms—all this the Bund encompassed in this circle of its direct work.

—Vladimir Medem (1879-1923)

A major Bundist ideologist; revered and almost legendary; advocated for Jewish “national-cultural autonomy”; died at age 44 in New York City; the Medem Sanatorium (1926-1942) near Warsaw named in his honor; the Medem Library (1929) in Paris is the largest European collection of Yiddish materials today.

Women in the Bund

I did not know the principles of the Bund. I always opposed it, but I knew that its impact on the lives of the masses was enormous.... It created the ethic of work and inculcated respect for work among the masses. We all know that Jews held an attitude of scorn for manual work. In particular, they scorned a woman's work. Maids were most ashamed of their work. This attitude was a product of long exile, and the Bund began to fight it. This was its powerful historical contribution, and thus it liberated the woman.... The Bund won the hearts of the youth.... Among Jews, the Bund succeeded because it organized the workers to strike, carried out practical actions and was a symbol of an ideal and a wider vision. Youth believed in the Bund.

[Excerpt from a speech to the Women Workers' Council, Tel Aviv, 1937]

—Manya Shochat (Wilbushewitz) (1880-1961)

A Labor Zionist leader, opposed to the Bund, who recognized its importance in the modern Jewish political revolt.

From Dvinsk to Warsaw

The cultural and spiritual level of the Warsaw labor masses was, as I viewed it then, significantly lower than in Dvinsk. The majority were workers from local and distant provincial towns and I was really very surprised that among these were large numbers of illiterates. Until I came to Warsaw, I could not have imagined a Jewish boy who was unable to read a printed Yiddish text.

The cause of this situation was the capitalistic production method that drew into its devil's work the hands of young children.

By contrast, the worker intelligentsia was distinguished by its knowledge of Yiddish literature. Warsaw was, after all, the

city of Peretz, Spektor, Nomberg and other great writers. This circumstance had its influence. The knowledge expressed itself in private conversations as well as in speeches of worker orators who frequently and aptly cited our poets and writers. And Warsaw had quite a few excellent worker orators.

—Leybitshke Berman

NATIONAL CULTURAL AUTONOMY

Do'ikayt [Here-ness] and National Autonomy

The Bundists did not wait for the Messiah, nor did they think about migrating to Palestine. They wanted Poland to be a country of justice, socialism and equal rights for national minorities. They fought for the national-cultural autonomy of Jews, for schools and theatres in Yiddish, for the right to testify in the Jewish language in courts.

—Marek Edelman (1919-2009)

Raised in SKIF, *Tsukunft*, and Medem Sanatorium; co-founder of the ŻOB and Bund Commander of Warsaw Ghetto Uprising; wrote *Getto Walczy* (The Ghetto Fights, 1945); noted cardiologist; active member of *Solidarność* and struggle for Polish democracy; internationally known human rights advocate; all his life a champion of Bundist ideals.

The National Question

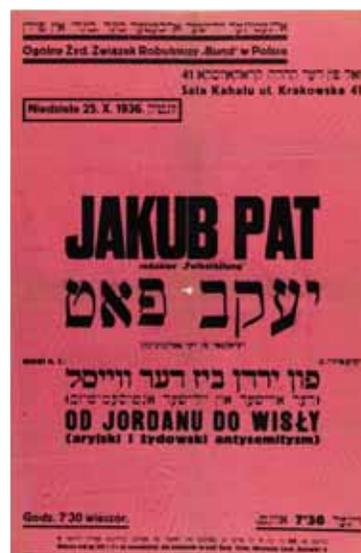
The Jews in Russia are becoming more differentiated; not only is Jewry dividing into classes, but its national culture is developing and growing with each year. Where does the driving force for this development lie? In the Jewish labor movement. If one does not want development of the national culture, one must speak out against the Jewish labor movement. It was said here that the existence of the Bund has no connection to the National Question. What does this mean? The Bund publishes literature and deals with the National Question. We influence the bourgeois classes and force them to do the same. With their activity, the Bundists thus push the National Question to the fore. The evolution [of Russian Jewry] is moving in the direction of nationalization and *zhargon*... The only certainty is the course of Jewry's evolution: A literature is developing in *zhargon*. This cannot be disputed, and it can be built upon... Yiddish literature and culture need guarantees for their continued development. ...If a literature and culture are developing among Jews and must be defended, the National Question cannot



Call in *Folkstsaytung* for a general strike of all businesses in Poland as a protest against a pogrom in Przytyk, March 1936.



Bund calls on Jewish workers to join Poles in a mass demonstration marking the 20th anniversary of Independent Poland, Cracow, November 13, 1938.



Announcement of a lecture by Bundist leader Jakob (Jacob) Pat entitled, "From the Jordan to the Vistula (Aryan and Jewish anti-Semitism)." Cracow, October 25, 1936.

Children with rabbits in Medem Sanatorium, 1930s.



Page of a photo album from the SKIF camp *Frayhayt* (Freedom), 1937. Anna Heller Rosenthal addresses the camp; a slogan from the Spanish Civil War, in Catalan, “No passaran” (They shall not pass), appears behind her.

be dismissed—it will have to be dealt with.... Jews have no territory—so we have to solve the question in terms of national autonomy.

—Vladimir Kosovsky, at the Bund’s Fifth Party Congress in 1903.

THE FUTURE: THE MEDEM SANATORIUM

[Some people complained that] the Medem Sanatorium is an unreal world. It is too far from the children’s homes. The Sanatorium alienates the child from its home. The child returns to the city and begins looking at its home from the top down. It no longer likes the food, it demands different habits: a toothbrush, separate towels, more frequent baths. Some parents give in. Others not. Why create conflicts with its home? After all, the Sanatorium is temporary—the home permanent.

This is how Shloyme Gilinski responded:

“Nothing is too good for our children. There won’t be any conflicts within the home. Because we, together with the children, want, in fact, to introduce new ways into the home. The parents who send us their children have confidence in us, and they like what their children bring home from the Medem Sanatorium. The children are but the first swallows who announce the spring. Together with them we will make life more beautiful in their homes.”

Rokhl (Shoshke) Fliegel-Erlich (1908-1991)

Bund activist; spent time at the Medem Sanatorium; an administrative assistant in Warsaw Bund office; emigrated to U.S. in 1941; worked as assistant to Max Weinreich and taught Yiddish and Yiddish literature at YIVO.

Shloyme Gilinski (1888-1961)

Co-founder and director of the Medem Sanatorium (1926-1942) named in honor of Vladimir Medem; children’s health facility and progressive school for children of poor Jewish workers; famous for its pedagogy; visited by educators from all over the world.

THE HOLOCAUST — דער הורבן

The Warsaw Ghetto: Children

We Bundists also continued our activities in the ghetto.... In the courtyards of the tenement houses our activists taught children to sing the same songs which we would sing in prewar SKIF. It was a beautiful sight when the educators walked the children home in the evening. As they walked, they sang songs of freedom. In all this filth, hunger, humiliation and demoralization, we were still able to give those children some joy and warmth.

—Marek Edelman

The Bund calls for Warsaw Ghetto to resist deportations scheduled for July 22, 1942

We finally resolved unanimously that we must ask the ghetto conference not to permit the deportations.... When, finally [the Bund representatives] came back, they reported... [that] only the delegates of *Hechalutz* and *Hashomer Hatzair* had supported us... We decided to urge the sixty thousand to do what little they could: not to report voluntarily at the *Umschlagplatz*, to go into hiding, to fight the police at every step. Morizi Orzech wrote our proclamation, which was printed in a new illegal bulletin, *Storm*. It said in part:

Jews, you are being deceived. Do not believe that you are being sent to work and nothing else. Actually you are being led to your deaths. This is the devilish continuation of the campaign of extermination which has already been carried out in the provinces. Do not let them take you to death voluntarily. Resist!

Fight tooth and nail. Do not report to the *Umschlagplatz*. Fight for your lives!

Storm was widely distributed and posted on the streets. In three or four days it was necessary to turn out three additional printings.

—Bernard Goldstein (1889-1959)

Organizer and recruiter of the poorest of the poor for unions and the Bund; leader of Bund militia in Warsaw; critical member of the underground Jewish resistance in Warsaw; author of *The Stars Bear Witness* (Yiddish, 1947; English, 1949), a memoir of the Warsaw Ghetto, and of *Twenty Years with the Jewish Labor Bund: A Memoir of Interwar Poland* (Yiddish, 1960; English, 2016).



Marek Edelman



Bundist partisans in the Wyszkw forest. Surviving fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising formed a partisan group there.



Herman Kruk

Vilna Ghetto: April 4, 1943

Blinds down, cut off from the ghetto's surrounding world, at 5 yesterday evening, about 80 comrades gathered in the ghetto library and sadly looked at the decorative inscriptions "Henryk Erlich — Wiktor Alter. Honor to their memory." After the commencement of the memorial service, in the name of the committee of the Bund, Comrade Pati [Kremer] was invited to be chairman of the memorial service.

Comrade P [Pati] delivered a brief but splendid speech about the meaning of today's memorial service in the ghetto. Her warm and fine words made a splendid impression on the audience. Comrade Hersh [Gutgestalt] spoke of the personal ties of the deceased and described their role in the movement. Herman [Kruk] spoke last, describing his meetings with the two comrades, Henryk and Wiktor; and sketching their life and influence.

The memorial service made an understandable impression. For the party members, this was a great experience because, since the outbreak of the war and especially for the past several years, this was the first general meeting of the Bund in the ghetto.

[from Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939-1944*]

—Herman Kruk (1897-1944)

Bundist activist in Warsaw; became trapped in Vilna Ghetto; organized ghetto library; kept comprehensive diaries about ghetto and Lagedi (Estonia) labor camp; buried the diaries before being killed.

London: May 12, 1943

SHMUEL MORDKHE (ARTUR) ZYGIELBOJM

**the Bund representative
to the Polish Government in Exile
commits suicide
after having been unable to secure aid
for the Jewish fighters in the
Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.**

Part of his farewell letter reads:

....I cannot continue to live and to be silent while the remnants of Polish Jewry, whose representative I am, are being murdered. My comrades in the Warsaw Ghetto fell with arms in their hands in the last heroic battle. I was not permitted to fall like them, together with them, but I belong with them, to their mass grave.

By my death, I wish to give expression to my most profound protest against the inaction in which the world watches and permits the destruction of the Jewish people.

I know that there is no great value to the life of a man, especially today. But since I did not succeed in achieving it in my lifetime, perhaps I shall be able by my death to contribute to the arousing from lethargy of those who could and must act in order that even now, perhaps at the last moment, the handful of Polish Jews who are still alive can be saved from certain destruction.

My life belongs to the Jewish people of Poland, and therefore I hand it over to them now....

—Shmuel Mordkhe (Artur) Zygielbojm
(1895-1943)



The catalog for a Centre Medem exhibition on the life of Shmuel Mordkhe (Artur) Zygielbojm, Paris, 2013. Courtesy of Centre Medem.

Vilna Ghetto: June 16, 1943

I hear that yesterday, the radio broadcast that at a London convention of the Labor Party, which just took place, Friend Lucjan [Blit] gave a greeting in the name of the Polish Bund.

Lucjan was with me in Vilna as a refugee from Warsaw. From here he went to “work” [for the party] in Warsaw and was once arrested with two other comrades by the Lithuanian authorities. I then went and freed them on some pretext. Later he set off again, and on the Russian-German border, near Bialystok, he was arrested as a Christian. For crossing the border illegally, the Christian Lucjan was sentenced to two [three] years of exile. Twice I succeeded in corresponding with him, even sending him packages. Now comes the happy news that he is in London and is carrying on Bundist social activity.

It warms the heart and evokes the wish that if not us, at least our loved ones are out.

—**Herman Kruk** [from his *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939-1944*]

**ON SEPTEMBER 23, 1943,
the day she and other Jews of the Vilna Ghetto
are being taken to the killing fields of Ponar,**

PATI KREMER

**known as the “*neshome fun vilner geto*”
the soul of the Vilna Ghetto
is reported to have said:**

**“*Let us all embrace and sing Di shvue
and death will not be so terrible.*”**

—**Pati (Matla Srednicki) Kremer (1867-1943)**

Activist in Vilna from a young age; at 15 taught textile workers to read and write; member of the Vilna Group (pre-Bund) with Arkady Kremer and John Mill; a dentist; later worked with Bundists; her Yiddish served as a link between the elites and proletariat; in Ghetto participated in readings and organized illegal libraries.



**Vladka Meed
(Feygele Peltel)**

Warsaw, after Ghetto Uprising: October, 1943

[I]n the autumn of 1943, a small group of us gathered for a symbolic celebration of the anniversary of the founding of the Bund. At a time when all that had been our lives had been destroyed, this small gathering was no more than a remembrance of yesterday, of the pulsating Jewish labor movement in which we, its survivors had been raised. And although the movement and the life belonged to the past, it comforted us a little to recall it now. There were nine of us there at the meeting, including Celek, Benjamin, Chaim [Bolek] Ellenbogen, Zygmunt Iгла, Inka Schweiger, and Bronka Feinmesser. We sat around a table decorated with flowers at Miodowa 24, one night, with curtains drawn.... [W]e faced each other without being able to speak; it was only after Celek spoke of the reason for our gathering that our spirits rose a bit. Little by little, almost in whispers, we recalled the days when such celebrations had been held in vast halls before huge audiences of workers with appropriate songs, music, speeches, and fluttering flags. Now all that remained was pain and the bitter realization of a world that accepted the inhumanity in which we lived.

—**Vladka (Feygele Peltel) Meed (1921-2012)**

Raised in SKIF, *Tsukunft* and Medem Sanatorium; courier and smuggler for ŻOB in Warsaw Ghetto; continued underground work on Aryan side after Uprising; author of *Fun beyde zaytn geto-moyer / On Both Sides of the Ghetto Wall*, 1948); in U.S. organized educational workshops and tours about the Holocaust for teachers and academics.



Pati Kremer (Matla Srednicki)

Warsaw: July, 1944

I remember the great joy in July 1944 when the Polish government forwarded to us a microfilm which contained articles from *Unser Tsait*, the New York Bund magazine....

Our joy was boundless. The microfilm was a direct, almost personal greeting from our comrades in America. We felt bound to them across the years of blood and suffering which divided us. Using a photographic enlarger, we transcribed all the documents, duplicated them on our machine, and distributed them among the comrades in hiding places. This contact with America did much to raise our morale. It reminded us that we had friends. It gave us the feeling that if this wonderful miracle of communication could be accomplished, all was not yet lost.

—Bernard Goldstein



**Bundist activists in Warsaw, ca. 1930.
From left: Bernard Goldstein, Victor
Shulman, Hershl Himmelfarb, Abraham
Kastelanski and Emanuel Nowogrudzki.
Photo: Menakhem Kipnis.**

HANNAH KRYSZTAŁ FRYSHDORF ON THE RUBBLE OF THE WARSAW GHETTO 1945/1946



Courtesy of Ettie Goldwasser—photographer unknown

—Hannah Krystal Fryshdorf (1920-1989)

Raised in SKIF and Medem Sanatorium; fought in and survived the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising; became a partisan; later emigrated with her son to Sweden and the U.S.; served as the assistant director of YIVO.

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Until the age of 18, I heard and read all political discussions and intelligible poetry in Yiddish. Only later did I realize that the politics and culture of the Holocaust survivors around me were informed by Bundist ideology which, unconsciously, informed my own politics and writing. Sometimes I found it needed expansion, but the Bund's insistence on valuing ordinary individuals, on giving voice to the voiceless, on demanding fairness and justice, on viewing the Jewish people unsentimentally but with commitment—made it natural for me to foster feminism and gay rights, opposition to Israeli government policies and to work towards a poetics infused with Bundist ideals. Yiddish was not my primary linguistic medium, but Yiddish literature and culture, *yidishe veltlekhkayt*/Yiddish secularism, are as embedded in my worldview as the previous generation's and I remain committed to their survival.

—Irena Klepfisz (b. 1941 in Warsaw, Poland)



A group of *Morgnshtern* gymnasts, Warsaw, 1937. Second from left: Rozka ("Lodzia") Perczykow Klepfisz.

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To me the great lesson of the Bund is that fighting for social and economic justice for all and celebrating Jewish culture and autonomy need not be mutually exclusive. One of the themes I have explored in my work as a composer is the search for secular and abstract meaning through Jewish texts and modes of thought. I've found it very personally meaningful to set Yiddish language poems to music and to embrace Jewish tropes and stories as points of departure. As such it is inspiring to learn of the great history of Ashkenazi Jews striving to be universalist within their particular language of Yiddish, and building a strong progressive politics from a deeply Jewish perspective.

—Alex Weiser (b. 1989 in New York, New York)



Arayn in "Tsukunft" ("Join the Tsukunft"—literally: Into the future), poster printed in Warsaw in the 1930s. Artist: Hersh Cyna.

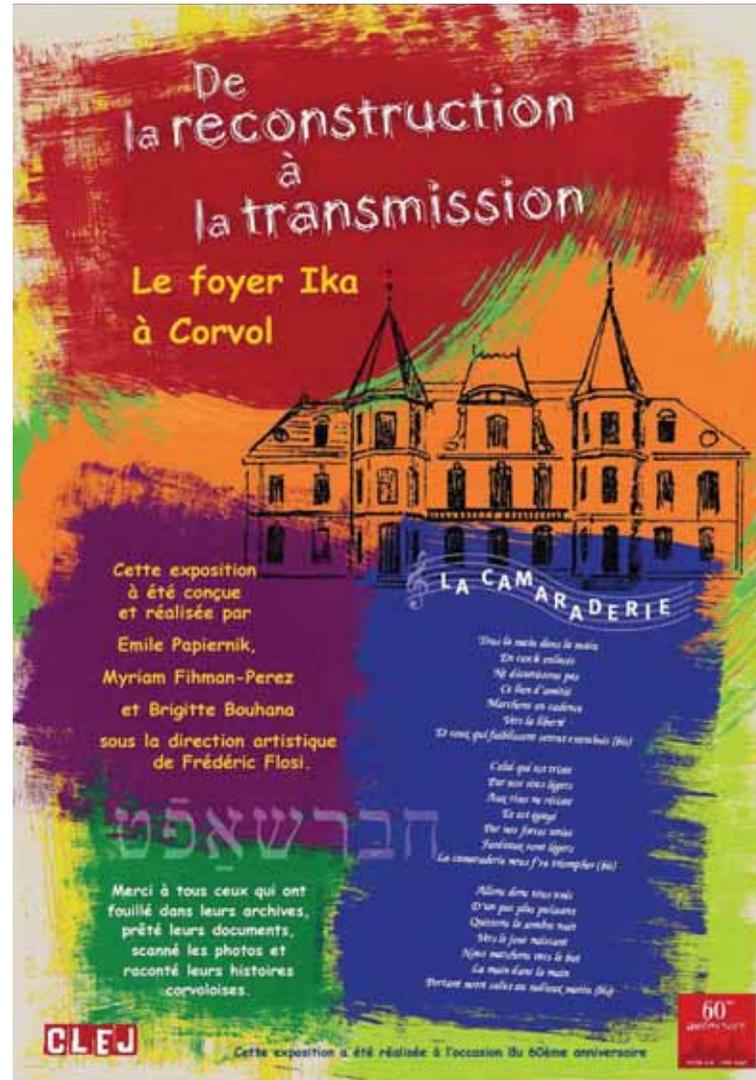
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I recall my adolescence in France after the war as a period of great happiness. Between 1950 and 1958, I was actively involved in the Bund's SKIF. In Paris, we met once a week and planned Sunday's activities: distributing leaflets, attending a speech by a local politician, or going to a cultural event. My SKIF friends became my family, my community, and my safe place. We spent our vacations at Corvol, where the Bund had bought a "chateau," a dilapidated large building in the middle of a vast wonderful park. During the summers, we participated in international socialist jamborees throughout Western Europe. SKIF taught me respect for others and the value of work. It was the place where I experienced the challenges of collaborative endeavors, learned to deal with competing egos, to keep focus on communal projects and to endure time-consuming meetings. These experiences served me well later in my academic life.

—Nelly Furman (b. 1940 in Paris, France)



Members of SKIF at a demonstration after World War II, France. Courtesy of Centre Medem.



Poster for the 60th anniversary, with a reunion and exhibition, of Foyer Ika, Corvol, France, 2007. Courtesy of Centre Medem.

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When I was in my 20s, in the late 1970s, I belonged to a lesbian feminist publishing collective. I was working on the sewing floor of a coat factory and was active in the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. I also taught 7th grade in a Reform Sunday school. I had no ideological background or “left” social experience. I first heard of the Bund in ‘82 through *Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology*. I found a library copy of Tobias’ *The Jewish Bund in Russia* and knew I needed it. So I xeroxed all 409 pages and researched many books in its bibliography. Bund activists addressed the burning question in my life then and now: How do I organize as a Jew, with other Jews, to move our society toward justice? Today I work as a director of education and librarian in Jewish schools. At every opportunity, I include teaching/learning on feminism, anti-racism, immigrant and refugee rights, and Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation.

—Clare Kinberg (b. 1955 in St. Louis, Missouri)



Bundists at the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, at which Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. Courtesy of Gabriel Ross.

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Before the war, my parents and grandfather were Bund activists and leaders in Poland. After the war, they connected deeply with Jewish labor and Yiddishist organizations in this country and insisted we speak Yiddish at home in the Bronx. But Yiddish isn’t spoken much where I live in Vermont, so I sing in the *Nisht Geferlekh Klezmer Band* (Not-So-Awful Klezmer Band) and speak to myself in Yiddish, usually about the state of the world. There is a line connecting what I’ve done: anti-poverty and economic justice work, clean energy, cooperatives, and elected offices. That line runs straight back to the Bundist and social justice *svive* I was raised in, which addressed many of the same issues, but perhaps in a different form.

—Avram Patt (b. 1950 in Bronx, New York)



Presidium of first national convention of SKIF, Warsaw, 1936. From left: Henryk Erlich, Shmuel Mordkhe (Artur) Zygielbojm; 5th from left: Jakub (Jacob) Pat; standing behind him, Emanuel Pat.

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The notion that the Bund's legacy plays a part in my work as an ordained Orthodox rabbi might seem incongruous. Then again, I thirst for a Torah of dissonance, a Torah which honors competing values, responds to the suffering of the poor and downtrodden and seeks to build a world of justice. As a grandchild of Holocaust refugees, I grew up hearing and singing the songs of the Bund. The words and melodies of these songs felt deeply religious to me, echoing the charge of the Biblical prophets, who consistently reprimanded and reminded the ancient Israelites to protect those most vulnerable. It is this music and ethos which has made an impact on my work. Morris Winchevsky's redemptive charge: "*O, di velt vet vern shener*, the world will grow beautiful, love greater, hatred smaller, between women, between men, between nation and nation." These are my hopes as a rabbi.

—Rabbi Avram Mlotek (b. 1987 in New York, New York)



A Bundist election poster, Latvia, 1928. It reads, "The workingman votes for the ticket of the Bund." Courtesy of International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

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Part of my work today is a direct outcome of the fact that a small group of committed Bundist Holocaust survivors created Camp Hemshekh in New York State to share their ideals of democratic socialism and of promoting the Yiddish language and culture with American Jewish children. As a Yiddish-speaking teenage immigrant from Poland, I was hired in 1971 by Hemshekh to be a counselor and Yiddish teacher, and I saw how it was possible to transmit Yiddish language and culture to American children in a meaningful way without resorting to popular stereotypes. I have taught Yiddish language and culture to children and adults of all ages since my first summer in Hemshekh, and my teaching and singing performances continue to enrich my life and the lives of my students and audiences.

—Paula Teitelbaum (b. 1954 in Wrocław, Poland)



Tsukunft group on an outing, Kazimierz Dolny.

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Inspired by the legacy of Bundists who gave their lives and lived their lives for Bundist principles, I have been committed to Bundist ideals. I began in SKIF, which grounded me as a Jew and human being. It provided me with lifelong friends and knowledge and pride in secular Jewish political and social thought as well as Yiddish culture. Today I am part of a vibrant team of Yiddish and Jewish Studies teachers in Melbourne's secular Jewish day school. We *shep nakhes* from our students who graduate with a love of Yiddish language and culture, a strong appreciation of their Jewish identity and place in Jewish history, and a strong sense of justice (my own children included). As a performer I see myself as an ambassador of Yiddish culture and song. I promote *yidishkayt* in largely Zionist Hebrew-focused Jewish communities and sometimes beyond to largely monocultural country towns. I spend every day living my passions, passions honed first at SKIF and now also watching my daughter participate in *Yugnt-bund*.

— Freydi Mrocki (b. 1960 in Melbourne, Australia)



Two SKIF *forziters* (chairs) and another *helper* (helper) at a refugee rights rally in Melbourne, Australia, 2017. Courtesy of the Jewish Labour Bund Inc. in Melbourne.



Election leaflet urging people to vote for the Bund and for the Federation of Class Trade Unions, Warsaw, 1930's.

SONGS AND POETRY — זינגלידער און פאָעזיע

We're On Our way

Declare a holiday in all the markets,
And light fires on the mountains!
We are coming—storms without end,
From land to land, from sea to sea.

We're on our way, we're on our way,
We're on our way, we're on our way,
And our step is sure!
We are coming from village and city,
With hunger fires in our glance,
With hearts longing for happiness!
We are coming, we are coming!

We are going steady and ready
How brightly bursts our joy;
We beat fire out of stone
And who is young—must walk with us.

—Nokhem Yud

Mir kumen on

*A yontev makht oyf ale merk,
Un fayern tsindt on oyf berg!
Mir kumen—shturems on a tsam,
Fun land tsu land, fun yam tsu yam.*

*Mir kumen on, mir kumen on!
Mir kumen on, mir kumen on!
Un fest un zikher undzer trot!
Mir kumen on fun dorf un shtot.
Mit hunger-fayern in blik,
Mit hertser oysgebenkt nokh glik!
Mir kumen on, mir kumen on!*

*Mir geyen ale fest un greyt
Vi likhtik flakert undzer freyd;
Mir shlogn fayer oys fun shteyn
Un ver si'z yung—muz mit undz geyn.*

—Nokhem Yud (words),
Yankl Trupianski (music)

מיר קומען אָן

אַ יום־טובֿ מאַכט אויף אַלע מערק,
און פֿייערן צינדט אָן אויף בערג!
מיר קומען — שטורעמס אָן אַ צאָם,
פֿון לאַנד צו לאַנד, פֿון ים צו ים.

מיר קומען אָן, מיר קומען אָן!
מיר קומען אָן, מיר קומען אָן!
און פֿעסט און זיכער אונדזער טראַט!
מיר קומען אָן פֿון דאָרף און שטאָט.
מיט הונגער־פֿייערן אין בליק,
מיט הערצער אויסגעבענקט נאָך גליק!
מיר קומען אָן, מיר קומען אָן!

מיר גייען אַלע פֿעסט און גרייט
ווי ליכטיק פֿלאַקערט אונדזער פֿרייד;
מיר שלאָגן פֿייער אויס פֿון שטיין
און ווער ס'איז יונג — מוז מיט אונדז גיין!

— נחום יוד

מיר קומען אָן
Mir Kumen On

Text: Nokhem Yud
Music: Yankl Troupianski

Resolutely F C F Dm Am

A yon - tev makht oyf a - le merk, Un_ fay - ern tsindt on oyf berg, Mir

5 Bb F C F
ku - men shtu-remts on a tsam. Fun land tsu land, fun yam tsu yam. Mir ku - men

9 F Bb C7 F Bb C7 F
on, mir ku - men on, Mir ku - men on, mir ku - men on! Un

13 Dm Gm A
fest un zi - kher un - dzer trot, Mir ku - men on fun dorf un shtot. Mit

17 Dm F Gm G7 C
hun - ger - fay - e - rn in blik, Mit her - tser oys - ge - benkt nokh glik, Mir ku - men

21 F Bb C F Bb C7 F
on, mir ku - men on, Mir ku - men on, mir ku - men on!

Youth Hymn

Our song is full of sadness,
Bold are our cheerful steps,
Though the enemy guards the gate, —
Youth storms through with its song.

Young is each one who only wills it,
Years have no meaning.
Elders also can be children
In a newer, freer time.

Whoever roams on the roads,
Whoever's step is strong with hope,
Youth brings them
A greeting from the ghetto.

Young is each one who only wills it...

We remember all our enemies,
We recall all our friends.
We will forever bind
Our yesterday with today.

Young is each one who only wills it...

We gather our limbs,
Again we steel our ranks.
There's a builder, there's a blacksmith, —
Let us all join with them!

Young is each one who only wills it...

—Shmerke Kacerginski



Shmerke
Kacerginski

Yugnt-himen

*Undzer lid iz ful mit troyer,
Dreyst iz undzer muntergang,
Khotsh der soyne vakht baym toyer, —
Shturemt yugnt mit gezang.*

*Yung iz yeder, yeder, yeder ver es vil nor,
Yorn hobn keyn batayt.
Alte kenen, kenen, kenen oykh zayn kinder
Fun a nayer, frayer tsayt.*

*Ver es voglt um oyf vegn,
Ver mit dreystkayt s'shtelt zayn fus,
Brengt di yugnt zey antkegn
Funem geto a gerus.*

Yung iz yeder...

*Mir gedenken ale sonim,
Mir dermonen ale fraynd.
Eybik veln mir farbindn
Undzer nekhtn mitn haynt.*

Yung iz yeder...

*Klaybn mir tsunoyf di glider,
Vider shtoln mir di rey.
Geyt a boyer, geyt a shmider, —
Lomir ale geyn mit zey!*

Yung iz yeder...

—Shmerke Kacerginski
(words), Basye Rubin (music)

יוגנט־הימען

אונדזער ליד איז פול מיט טרויער,
דרייסט איז אונדזער מונטערגאנג,
קאָטש דער שונא וואַכט בניִם טויער, —
שטורעמט יוגנט מיט געזאַנג:

יונג איז יעדער, יעדער, יעדער ווער עס וויל נאָר,
יאָרן האָבן קיין באַטייט.
אַלטע קענען, קענען, קענען אויך זיין קינדער
פֿון אַ נײַער, פֿרײַער צײַט.

ווער עס וואַגלט אום אויף וועגן,
ווער מיט דרייסטקייט ס'שטעלט זיין פֿוס,
ברענגט די יוגנט זיי אַנטקעגן
פֿונעם געטאָ אַ גערוס.

יונג איז יעדער ...

מיר געדענקען אַלע שונאים,
מיר דערמאָנען אַלע פֿרײַנד.
אייביק וועלן מיר פֿאַרבינדן
אונדזער נעכטן מיטן היינט.

יונג איז יעדער ...

קלייבן מיר צונויף די גלידער,
ווידער שטאַלן מיר די ריי.
גייט אַ בויער, גייט אַ שמידער, —
לאַמיר אַלע גיין מיט זיי!

יונג איז יעדער ...

— שמערקע קאַטשערגינסקי

יוגנט-הימען
Yugnt-himen

Text: Shmerke Kaczerginski
Music: Basya Rubin

Brisk March Tempo

Un - dzer lid iz ful mit troy - er, Dreyst iz un - dzer mun - ter-gang, Khotsh der
5 soy - ne vakht baym toy - er, Shtu - remt yu - gnt mit ge-zang. Yung iz
9 ye - der, ye - der, ye - der, ver es vil nor, Yo - rn ho - bn keyn ba - tayt. Al - te
13 ke - nen, ke - nen, ke - nen oykh zayn kin - der fun a nay - er, fray - er tsayt. Ver es
18 tsayt. Fun a nay - er, fray - er tasyt.

It's Burning!

It's burning! Brothers, it's burning!
 Oy, our poor shtetl is sadly burning!
 Raging winds of wrath
 Tear, break and blow
 Making stronger the wild flames.
 Everything around us is burning!

And you stand and stare
 With folded arms,
 And you stand and stare—
 Our shtetl is burning!

It's burning! Brothers, it's burning!
 Oy, our poor shtetl is sadly burning!
 The fire tongues have already
 Swallowed up the whole shtetl—
 And the raging winds howl.
 Our shtetl is burning!

And you stand and stare...

It's burning! Brothers, it's burning!
 Oy, God forbid! The moment can come:
 Our shtetl together with us
 Can disappear as ash in flames.
 What'll remain—as after a battle,
 Just bare, black walls!

And you stand and stare...

It's burning! Brothers, it's burning!
 Help depends only on your will.
 If the shtetl is dear to you,
 Take the vessels, put out the fire.
 Put it out with your own blood,
 Show that you can do it.

Don't stand like that, brothers,
 With folded hands.
 Don't stand, brothers, put out the fire—
 Our shtetl is burning!

—Mordechai Gebirtig

Es brent!

S'brent! Briderlekh, s'brent!
Oy, undzer orem shtetl nebekh brent!
Beyze vintn mit yirgozn
Raysn, brekhn un tseblozn
Shtarker nokh di vilde flamen.
Alts arum shoybn brent!

Un ir shteyt un kukt azoy zikh
Mit farleygte hent,
Un ir shteyt un kukt azoy zikh—
Undzer shtetl brent!

S'brent! Briderlekh, s'brent!
Oy, undzer orem shtetl nebekh brent!
S'hobn shoybn di fayertsungen
Dos gantse shtetl ayngeshlungen—
Un di beyze vintn hudzhen.
Undzer shtetl brent!

Un ir shteyt un kukt azoy zikh...

S'brent! Briderlekh, s'brent!
Oy, es ken kholile kumen der moment:
Undzer shtot mit undz tsuzamen
Zol oyf ash avek in flamen.
Blaybn zol—vi nokh a shlakht,
Nor puste, shvartse vent!

Un ir shteyt un kukt azoy zikh...

S'brent! Briderlekh, s'brent!
Di hilf iz nor in aykh aleybn gevendt.
Oyb dos shtetl iz aykh tayer,
Nemt di keylim, lesht dos fayer.
Lesht mit ayer eygn blut,
Bavayzt az ir dos kent.

Shteyt nisht, brider, ot azoy zikh
Mit farleygte hent.
Shteyt nisht, brider, lesht dos fayer—
Undzer shtetl brent!

—Mordechai Gebirtig
 (words and music)

עס ברענט!

ס'ברענט! ברידערלעך, ס'ברענט!
 אוי, אונדזער אָרעם שטעטל נעבעך ברענט!
 בייזע ווינטן מיט ירגזון
 רייסן, ברעכן און צעבלאָזן
 שטאַרקער נאָך די ווילדע פֿלאַמען.
 אַלץ אַרום שוין ברענט!

און איר שטייט און קוקט אַזוי זיך
 מיט פֿאַרלייגטע הענט,
 און איר שטייט און קוקט אַזוי זיך—
 אונדזער שטעטל ברענט!

ס'ברענט! ברידערלעך, ס'ברענט!
 אוי, אונדזער אָרעם שטעטל נעבעך ברענט!
 ס'האַבן שוין די פֿייערצונגען
 דאָס גאַנצע שטעטל איינגעשולונגען—
 און די בייזע ווינטן הודזשען.
 אונדזער שטעטל ברענט!

און איר שטייט און קוקט אַזוי זיך ...

ס'ברענט! ברידערלעך, ס'ברענט!
 אוי, עס קען חלילה קומען דער מאָמענט:
 אונדזער שטאָט מיט אונדז צוזאַמען
 זאָל אויף אַש אַוועק אין פֿלאַמען.
 בלייבן זאָל— ווי נאָך אַ שלאַכט,
 נאָר פּוסטע, שוואַרצע ווענט!

און איר שטייט און קוקט אַזוי זיך ...

ס'ברענט! ברידערלעך, ס'ברענט!
 די הילף איז נאָר אין אייך אליין געווענדט.
 אויב דאָס שטעטל איז אייך טייער,
 נעמט די פֿלים, לעשט דאָס פֿייער.
 לעשט מיט אייער אייגן בלוט,
 באַווייזט, אַז איר דאָס קענט.

שטייט נישט, ברידער, אָט אַזוי זיך
 מיט פֿאַרלייגטע הענט.
 שטייט ניט, ברידער, לעשט דאָס פֿייער—
 אונדזער שטעטל ברענט!

— מרדכי געבירטיג

עס ברענט!
Es brent!

Mordechai Gebirtig

Gm D7 Gm Cm Gm

S' - brent! Bri - der - lekh, s' - brent! Und - zer o - rem shte - tl ne - bekh brent!

E♭ Cm6 D7 Gm E♭7 D

Bey-ze vin-t'n mit yir-go-zn ray-s'n, bre-khn un tse-blo-zn shtar-ker nokh di vil - de fla-men. Alts a - rum shoy'n brent!

Gm Cm Gm Cm Gm D7

Un ir shteyt un kukt a - zoy zikh mit far - leyg - te hent,

Cm6 Gm E♭7 Gm D7 Gm

Un ir shteyt un kukt a - zoy zikh Und - zer shte - tl brent!_

Avreml the Pickpocket

I was left homeless when young,
I was driven out by poverty,
When I wasn't even thirteen years old,
Away from home, far from my mother's eyes,
The street raised me in filth,
I became a grand guy.

I am Avreml, the most gifted pickpocket,
A great artist, I work quick and sure,
The first time, I'll remember it till my dying day,
Went to jail for swiping bread. Oy, oy!
I don't go to markets like those other common
guys ,
I only steal from stingy, filthy magnates,
I have great pleasure when I tap such a
magnate,
I am Avreml, just a grand guy.

Away from home, had nothing to live on,
Begged for bread, a poor man would still give some,
But those guys, who are always sated,
Would often drive me off with rage.
A thief is raised, it comes to pass—
I am a thief, but a grand guy.

I am Avreml, the most gifted pickpocket,
A great artist, I work quick and sure,
A little guy went into a prison,
Came out mischievous, a rare artist. Oy, oy!
I don't go to markets like those other common
guys,
I only steal from stingy, filthy magnates,
I like someone gentle, a good old pal,
I am Avreml, just a grand guy.

This game will not last much longer,
Sick from beatings, poisoned by jail walls,
But I have one request, I want it so much—
After my death, one dreary day,
Let my gravestone have written on it
In large letters of gold:

Here lies Avreml, the most talented pickpocket,
A person who certainly would have been great,
A fine person, with heart and with feelings,
As honest a person as God Himself would want.
Oy, oy!
If a mother's eye had watched over him,
If the dark street hadn't raised him,
If as a child he'd had a father,
Here lies Avreml, that grand guy.

—Mordechai Gebirtig



Mordechai Gebirtig

Avreml der marvikher

*On a heym bin ikh yung geblibn,
S'hot di noyt mikh aroysgetribn,
Ven ikh hob nokh keyn draytsn yor gehat,
In der fremd, vayt fun mames oygn,
Hot in shmuts mikh di gas dertsoygn,
Gevorn iz fun mir a voyler yat.*

*Ikh bin Avreml, der feikster marvikher,
A groyser kinstler, kh'arbet laykht un zikher,
Dos ershte mol, khvel's gedenken bizn toyt,
Arayn in tfise, far lakkh'nen a broyt. Oy oy!
Kh'for nisht oyf markn vi yene proste yatn,
Kh'tsup nor bay karge, shmutsike magnatn,
Kh'bin zikh mekhaye, ven ikh tap aza
magnat,
Ikh bin Avreml, gor a voyler yat.*

*In der fremd nisht gehat tsum lebn,
Gebetn broyt, an oremer flegt nokh gebn,
Nor yene layt vos zenen tomid zat,
Flegn oft traybn mikh mit tsorn.
S'vakst a ganev, s'iz mekuyem gevorn—
A ganev bin ikh, nor a voyler yat.*

*Ikh bin Avreml, der feikster marvikher,
A groyser kinstler, kh'arbet laykht un zikher,
A yat a kleyner arayn in kutshement,
Aroys a mazik, a zeltener talent, oy, oy!
Kh'for nisht oyf markn vi yene proste yatn,
Kh'tsup nor bay karge, shmutsike magnatn,
Kh'lib a mentshn, a mildn, a nash-brat,
Ikh bin Avreml, gor a voyler yat.*

אַבְרָהַמֶל דַּעַר מַאַרְוויכַעַר

אַן אַ הַיִּים בֵּין אִיךְ יוֹנֵג גַּעבִּלִיבן,
ס'האַט די נויט מיך אַרויסגעטריבן,
ווען אִיךְ הָאָב נאָך קיין דרייצן יאָר געהאַט,
אין דער פֿרעמד, ווייט פֿון מאַמעס אויגן,
האַט אין שמוץ מיך די גאַס דערצויגן,
געוואָרן איז פֿון מיר אַ ווילער יאַט.

אִיךְ בֵּין אַבְרָהַמֶל, דַּעַר פֿעיקסטער מַאַרְוויכַעַר,
אַ גרויסער קינסטלער, כ'אַרבעט לייכט און זיכער,
דאָס ערשטע מאָל, כ'וועל'ס געדענקען ביזן טויט,
אַריין אין תּפֿיסה פֿאַר לקחענען אַ ברויט. אוי, אוי!
כ'פֿאַר נישט אויף מאַרקן ווי יענע פּראָסטע יאַטן,
כ'צופֿ נאָר ביי קאַרגע, שמוציקע מאַגנאַטן,
כ'בין זיך מחיה, ווען כ'טאַפֿ אַזאַ מאַגנאַט,
אִיךְ בֵּין אַבְרָהַמֶל, גאַר אַ ווילער יאַט.

אין דער פֿרעמד נישט געהאַט צום לעבן,
געבעטן ברויט, אַן אַרעמער פֿלעגט נאָך געבן,
נאָר יענע לייט, וואָס זענען תּמיד זאַט,
פֿלעגט אָפֿט טרייבן מיך מיט צאַרן.
ס'וואַקסט אַ גנב, ס'איז מקוים געוואָרן —
אַ גנבֿ בֵּין אִיךְ, נאָר אַ ווילער יאַט.

אִיךְ בֵּין אַבְרָהַמֶל, דַּעַר פֿעיקסטער מַאַרְוויכַעַר,
אַ גרויסער קינסטלער, כ'אַרבעט לייכט און זיכער,
אַ יאַט אַ קליינער אַריין אין קוטשעמענט,
אַרויס אַ מזיק, אַ זעלטענער טאַלענט. אוי, אוי!
כ'פֿאַר נישט אויף מאַרקן ווי יענע פּראָסטע יאַטן,
כ'צופֿ נאָר ביי קאַרגע, שמוציקע מאַגנאַטן,
כ'האַב ליב אַ מענטשן, אַ מילדן, אַ נאַש־בראַט,
אִיךְ בֵּין אַבְרָהַמֶל, גאַר אַ ווילער יאַט.

שוין נישט לאַנג וועט דאָס שפּיל געדויערן,
קראַנק פֿון קלעפּ, גיפֿט פֿון תּפֿיסה־מויערן,
נאָר איין בקשה, כ'וואָלט אַזוי געוואָלט —
נאָך מיין טויט, אין אַ טאַג אַ טריבן,
זאָל אויף מיין מצבֿה שטיין געשריבן
מיט אותיות גרויסע און פֿון גאָלד:

דאָ ליגט אַבְרָהַמֶל, דַּעַר פֿעיקסטער מַאַרְוויכַעַר,
אַ מענטש אַ גרויסער געווען וואָלט פֿון אים זיכער,
אַ מענטש אַ פֿיינער, מיט האַרץ, מיט אַ געפֿיל,
אַ מענטש אַ ריינער, ווי גאַט אַליין נאָר וויל. אוי, אוי!
ווען איבער אים וואָלט געוואַכט אַ מאַמעס אויגן,
ווען ס'וואָלט די פֿינצטערע גאַס אים נישט דערצויגן,
ווען נאָך אַלס קינד ער אַ טאַטן וואָלט געהאַט,
דאָ ליגט אַבְרָהַמֶל, יענער ווילער יאַט.

— מרדכי געבירטיג

*Shoyn nisht lang vet dos shpil gedoyern,
Krank fun klep, gift fun tfise-moyern,
Nor eyn bakoshe kh'volt azoy gevolt—
Nokh mayn toyt, in a tog a tribn,
Zol oyf mayn matseyve shteyn geshribn
Mit oysyes groyse un fun gold:*

*Do ligt Avreml, der feikster marvikher,
A mentsh a groyser geven volt fun im zikher,
A mentsh a fayner, mit harts, mit a gefil,
A mentsh a reyner, vi got aley nore vil. Oy, oy!
Ven iber im volt gevakht a mames oygn,
Ven s'volt di fintstere gas im nisht dertsoygn,
Ven nokh alts kind er a tatn volt gehat,
Do ligt Avreml, yener voyler yat.*

—Mordechai Gebirtig

אַבְרָהַמֶּל דֵּעַר מַאָרוויכער
Avreml Der Marvikher

Mordechai Gebirtig

B C B

On a heym bin ikh yung ge - bli - bn; _____ S'hot di noyt mikh a - roys - ge - tri - bn, _____ Ven

9

ikh hob nokh keyn dray - tsn yor ge - hat, _____ In der fremd, vayt fun ma - mes oy - gn, _____

17 C B Am B7

Hot in shmuts mikh di gas der - tsoy - gn, _____ Ge - vo - rn iz fun mir a voy - ler yat, _____ Ikh bin Av -

25 Em B B7 Em

re - ml, der fe - ik - ster mar - vi - kher, _____ A groy - ser kinst - ler, kh'ar - bet laykht un zi - kher, _____ Dos ersh - te

33 E7 Am B7 C B

mol, kh'vel's ge - den - ken bi - zn toyt, _____ A - rayn in tfi - se far lak - khen - en a broyt. Oy, oy! Kh'for nisht oyf

41

Em C B B Em

mar - kn vi ye - ne pros - te ya - tn, _____ Kh'tsup nor bay kar - ge, shmu - tsi - ke mag - na - tn, _____ Kh'bin zikh me -

49

E7 Am B7 Em

khay - e ven kh'tap a - za mag - nat, _____ Ikh bin Av - re - ml, gor a voy - ler yat. _____

57

65

On Siberian Roads

On Siberian roads

One can still now find a button, a piece of string
From my tattered shoe,
A leather belt, a piece of a clay pitcher,
A page from a holy book.

On Siberian rivers

One can still now find a trace, a splinter
From a sunken raft of mine;
In the woods—a dried up-bloody bandage,
In the snow—frozen steps.

—H. Leivik

Oyf di vegn sibirer

Oyf di vegn sibirer

*ken emets nokh itster gefinen a knepl, a shtrikl
fun mayns a tserisenem shukh,
A rimenem pas, fun a leymenem krigl a shtikl,
A bletl fun heylikn bukh.*

Oyf di taykhn sibirer

*ken emets nokh itster gefinen a tseykhn, a shpendl
fun mayns a dertrunkenem plit;
in vald—a farblutikt-fartrikntn bendl,
in shney—ayngefroyrene trit.*

—H. Leivik

אויף די וועגן סיבירער

אויף די וועגן סיבירער

קען עמעץ נאָך איצטער געפינען אַ קנעפל, אַ שטריקל
פֿון מײַנס אַ צעריסענעם שוך,
אַ רײמענעם פֿאַס, פֿון אַ לײמענעם קריגל אַ שטיקל,
אַ בלעטל פֿון הייליקן בוך.

אויף די טײַכן סיבירער

קען עמעץ נאָך איצטער געפינען אַ צײַכן, אַ שפענדל
פֿון מײַנס אַ דערטרונקענעם פֿליט;
אין וואַלד — אַ פֿאַרבלוטִיקט־פֿאַרטריקנטן בענדל,
אין שניי — אַינגעפֿרוירענע טריט.

— ה. לייִוויק



H. Leivik
in chains,
Siberia, 1906.

Generations of the Future

Generations of the future,
Brothers yet to come,
Don't you dare
Laugh at our songs—
Songs of the weak,
Songs of the weary,
In a poor generation,
Before the world's decline.

Completely taken up with
The far-off freedom
We sang these songs
Quietly.

And in nighttime darkness,
Far from our own happiness,
Silently
We built bridges.

We hid from the foe,
Who lurked on the lookout,
And that is why the songs
Sound so melancholy.

And the gray longing
And the secret anger,
That is woven
Into the songs...

—Abraham Reisen

Doyres fun der tsukunft

*Doyres fun der tsukunft,
Kumendike brider,
Ir zolt nit dervegn
Oyslakhn di lider—
Lider fun di shvakhe,
Lider fun di mide,
In a dor an or'men,
Far der velts yeride*

*Mit der vayter frayhayt
Ale durkhgedrungen
Hobn mir di lider
Shtilerheynt gezungen.*

*Un in nakht in khoyshekh,
Vayt fun eyg'ne glikn,
Hobn mir beshtike
Oyfgeshtelt di brikn.*

*Zikh gehit fun soyne,
Vos hot vakh gelayert,
Un derfar di lider
Klingen op fartroyert.*

*Un di groye benkshaft
Un der geheymmer tsorn,
Vos iz in di lider
Ayngevebt gevorn...*

—Avrom Reisen

דורות פֿון דער צוקונפֿט

דורות פֿון דער צוקונפֿט,
קומענדיקע ברידער,
איר זאָלט ניט דערוועגן
אויסלאַכן די לידער —
לידער פֿון די שוואַכע,
לידער פֿון די מידע,
אין אַ דור אָן אָר'מען,
פֿאַר דער וועלטס ירידה.

מיט דער ווייטער פֿרייהייט
אַלע דורכגעדרונגען
האַבן מיר די לידער
שטילערהייט געזונגען.

און אין נאַכט אין חושך,
ווייט פֿון אייג'נע גליקן,
האַבן מיר בשתיקה
אויפֿגעשטעלט די בריקן.

זיך געהיט פֿון שונא,
וואָס האָט וואָך געלויערט,
און דערפֿאַר די לידער
קלינגען אָפֿ פֿאַרטרויערט.

און די גרויע בענקשאַפֿט
און דער געהיימער צאָרן,
וואָס איז אין די לידער
אינגעוועבט געוואָרן...

—אַברהם רייזען

Sh. An-ski (1863-1920)

Pen name of Shloyme Zaynvl Rapoport; Yiddish and Russian writer and ethnographer; organizer of ethnographic expeditions to collect Jewish folklore in Pale of Settlement; famous as author of the play *Der dibek*; a *narodnik* and member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party; nevertheless wrote "*Di shvue*," the anthem of the Bund.

Mordechai Gebirtig (1877-1942)

Yiddish poet and songwriter from Cracow; details of early life obscure; began publishing in organ of the Jewish Social Democratic Party of Galicia (the Galician Bund); many of his songs very popular and widely sung; "*Es brent*" (1938) became popular in the resistance in Cracow Ghetto; murdered during deportation from the ghetto.

Shmerke Kaczerginski (1908-1954)

Yiddish writer, poet, cultural activist; orphaned during World War I; associated with Communist movement, and with literary group *Yung Vilne*; member of FPO (United Partisans Organization) in Vilna Ghetto; part of *papir-brigade* (paper brigade) that hid YIVO materials; wrote "*Yugnt himen*" in ghetto; disillusioned with Soviet Union, settled in Argentina in 1950 and died there in an airplane crash.

H. Leivick (1888-1962)

Pen name of Leyvik Halpern; Yiddish poet, playwright; from traditional family; joined the Bund, ca. 1905; arrested in 1906 and exiled to Siberia; escaped and came to America in 1913; worked as a paperhanger; writing reflects experiences of personal and Jewish national suffering and trauma.

Abraham Reisen (1876-1953)

Yiddish poet, writer, editor; from an enlightened and literate family; received traditional and modern education; began publishing at an early age; a socialist and Yiddishist; wrote for Bundist publications; settled permanently in New York in 1914; many of his poems became popular as "folk" songs.

Nokhem Yud (1888-1966)

Pen name of Nokhem Yerusalemshik; Yiddish poet and fabulist; immigrated to America in 1916; many of his poems were included in Yiddish schoolbooks and readers; staff writer for *Forverts*.



Tsukunft members hiking along the Wisła (Vistula) River, Warsaw, 1934.

GLOSSARY

Historical Figures, Non-English Words, Terms

**(F) French (G) German (H) Hebrew (P) Polish
(R) Russian (Y) Yiddish**

Aleynu prayer (H)—closing prayer of daily services

Arbeter-ring (Y)—Workmen’s Circle

Aryan side—During WW II, any area outside of the Warsaw Ghetto

“Bontshe the Silent”—Yiddish story by Y.L. Peretz

CC—Central Committee of the Bund

CE—Central Executive of the Bund

CLEJ—*Club laïque de l’enfance juive* (F)—Secular Club for Jewish Children

CYSHO (CYSZO)—see TSYSHO

Di shvue (Y)—“The Oath,” Bund anthem—words by Sh. An-Ski

denkmol (Y)—a memorial

Dubnov, Shimon—major modern Jewish historian, father-in-law of Bund leader Henryk Erlich

Folkstsaytung (Y)—“People’s Paper,” Bund daily in interwar Poland

folkshule (Y)—secular Yiddish school

Foyer Ika (F)—Hall of Ika, mansion in Corvol, France, used as children’s home

FPO—*Fareynikte partizaner organizatsye* (Y)—United Partisan Organization in Vilna Ghetto

ghetto benches—segregated seats for Jewish students in Polish universities

Hashomer Hatsair (H)—The Young Guard—Secular Socialist Zionist movement founded in 1913

Hechalutz (H)—The Pioneer—Zionist movement that trained Jews in agricultural work founded in 1905

hemshekh (Y)—continuity—Camp Hemshekh was founded in 1959 in upstate New York to foster Bundist ideals among a new generation.

kase (Y)—mutual-aid or strike fund

Katsetler farband (Y)—Union of concentration camp survivors

kehile (Y)—Jewish religious community council

khaverim (Y)—comrades

khurbn (Y)—destruction, Yiddish term for the Holocaust, references back to destruction of First and Second Temples

landsmanshaft (Y)—an organization of immigrants from the same home town in the country of origin

Lebns-fragn (Y)—“Life’s Questions,” bimonthly Bundist journal in Israel

Medem Sanatorium (1926-1942)—health and educational institution for poor Jewish children, named after Bundist leader Vladimir Medem

Mendele Moykher Sforim—one of the three “classical” Yiddish writers—the “grandfather”

Morgnshtern (Y)—Morning Star—Bund’s sports organization

Narodnaya Volya (R)—People’s Will, 19th-century Russian revolutionary populist organization

narodnik (R)—member of the late-19th-century Russian revolutionary populist movement

Pale of Settlement (ca.1791-1917)—defined (though shifting) territory within Russian Empire outside of which Jews were not allowed to live

Peretz, Y. L.—one of the three “classical” Yiddish writers—the “father”

pogrom—violent anti-Jewish riot

RSDRP—*Rossiiskaia Sotsialno-Demokraticheskaia Rabochaia Partiiia* (R)—Russian Social Democratic Labor Party

shepn nakhes (Y)—draw satisfaction

Sholem Aleykhem—one of the three “classical” Yiddish writers—the “son”

shule (Y)—see *folkshule*

SKIF—*Sotsyalistisher kinder farband* (Y)—Socialist Children’s Union—Bund’s children’s organization

Solidarność (P)—Solidarity—Polish democratic movement begun in the 1980s

svive (Y)—environment, milieu

TSYSHO—*Di tsentrale yidishe shul-organizatsye* (Y)—Central Yiddish School Organization, a secular Jewish school network in interwar Poland

Tsukunft (Y)—Future—Bund’s youth organization

Umschlagplatz (G)—collection point—during WWII throughout Polish cities, usually near a railway, where Germans gathered Jews to be sent to death camps

Unzer shtime (Y)—“Our Voice,” Bundist newspaper in France

Unzer tsayt (Y)—“Our Time,” Bundist newspaper in the U.S.

Warsaw Ghetto Uprising—April 19, 1943

Warsaw [Polish] Uprising—August 1, 1944

YAF—*Yidishe arbeter froy* (Y)—Jewish worker woman—Bund’s women’s organization

yoyvl (Y)—celebration, jubilee

YIVO—*Yidisher visnshaftlekher institut* (Y)—YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

Yugnt bund-tsukunft—see *Tsukunft*

zhargon (Y)—jargon, i.e. Yiddish (often pejorative)

ŻOB—*Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa* (P)—Jewish Fighters Organization of the Warsaw Ghetto

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די שבועה
Di Shvue

Text: Sh. An-Ski

Resolutely

Dm A Dm

Bri - der un shves - ter fun ar - bet un noyt, A - le vos zay - nen tse - zeyt un tse-shpreyt, Tsu -

5 A Dm Gm A

za - men, tsu-za - men, di fon___ iz greyt,___ Zi fla - tert fun tso - rn, fun blut iz zi royt! A

9 Dm Gm A Dm D7

shvu - e, a shvu - e oyf le - bn un toyt. Hi - ml un erd_____

13 Gm C7 F Gm D7

veln undz oys - he - rn,___ Ey - des veln zayn_____ di

17 Gm A7 Dm Gm A7

likh - ti - ke shte - rn, A shvu - e fun blut un a

21 Dm Gm Dm Gm A7

shvu - e fun tre - rn, Mir shve - rn, mir shve - rn,

25 Dm A7 Dm

mir shve - - - - rn!

The Oath — Sh. An-Ski

Brothers and sisters in work and in need,
All who are spread out and scattered,
Together, together, the flag is ready,
It waves with rage, it's red with blood!
An oath, an oath, of life and of death.

Heaven and earth will hear us out,
The bright stars will bear witness,
An oath of blood, an oath of tears,
We swear, we swear, we swear!

We swear our boundless loyalty to the Bund,
For only it can free the slaves now.
Its red flag is high and broad.
We swear our loyalty of life and of death!
An oath, an oath, of life and of death.

Heaven and earth will hear us out...

Di shvue — Sh. An-Ski

*Brider un shvester fun arbet un noyt,
Ale vos zaynen tsezeyt un tsheshpreyt,
Tsuzamen, tzuzamen, di fon iz greyt,
Zi flatert fun tsorn, fun blut iz zi royt!
A shvue, a shvue oyf lebn un toyt.*

*Himl un erd veln undz oyshern,
Eydes veln zayn di likhtike shtern,
A shvue fun blut, a shvue fun trern,
Mir shvern, mir shvern, mir shvern!*

*Mir shvern a trayhayt on grenetsn tsum bund.
Nor er ken di shklafn bafrayen atsind.
Di fon di royte iz hoykh un breyt.
Mir shvern a trayhayt oyf lebn un toyt!
A shvue, a shvue, oyf lebn un toyt.*

Himl un erd veln undz oyshern...

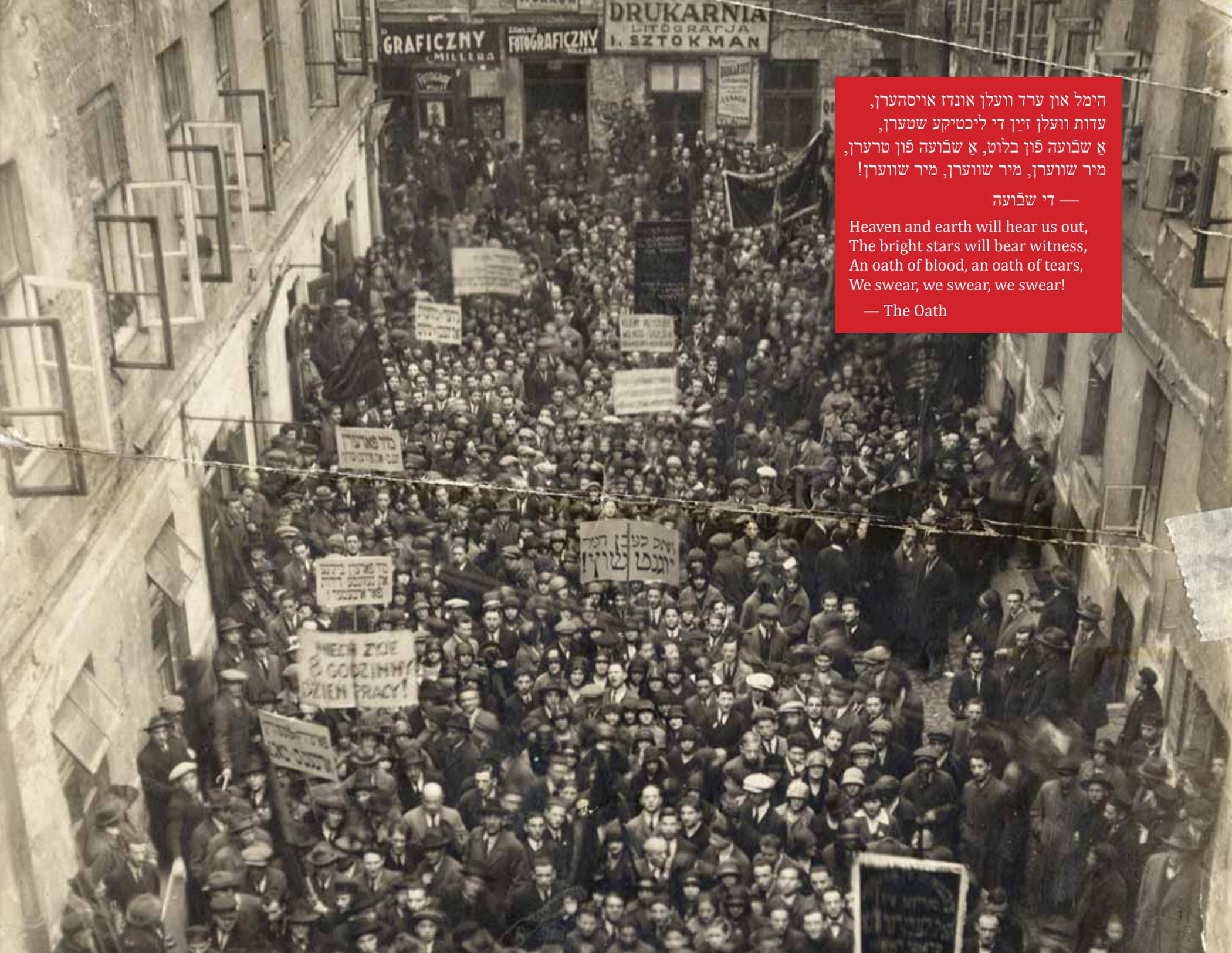
די שבועה — ש. אַניסקי

ברידער און שוועסטער פֿון אַרבעט און נויט,
אַלע וואָס זיינען צעזייט און צעשפּרייט,
צוזאַמען, צוזאַמען, די פֿאַן איז גרייט,
זי פֿלאַטערט פֿון צאָרן, פֿון בלוט איז זי רויט!
אַ שבועה, אַ שבועה, אויף לעבן און טויט.

הימל און ערד וועלן אונדז אויסהערן,
עדות וועלן זיין די ליכטיקע שטערן,
אַ שבועה פֿון בלוט, אַ שבועה פֿון טרערן,
מיר שווערן, מיר שווערן, מיר שווערן!

מיר שווערן אַ טרייהייט אָן גרענעצן צום בונד.
נאָר ער קען די שקלאַפֿן באַפֿרײַען אַצינד.
זײַן פֿאַן די רויטע איז הויך און ברייט.
מיר שווערן אַ טרייהייט אויף לעבן און טויט!
אַ שבועה, אַ שבועה, אויף לעבן און טויט.

הימל און ערד וועלן אונדז אויסהערן...



הימל און ערד וועלן אונדז אויסהערן,
עדות וועלן זיין די ליכטיקע שטערן,
אַ שבועה פֿון בלוט, אַ שבועה פֿון טרערן,
מיר שווערן, מיר שווערן, מיר שווערן!

— די שבועה

Heaven and earth will hear us out,
The bright stars will bear witness,
An oath of blood, an oath of tears,
We swear, we swear, we swear!

— The Oath