

## YOU WANT ME TO BELIEVE

You want me to believe  
 there is a man living on 170th Street  
 in a two-room apartment, with his bed  
 in the kitchen, and books piled in stacks  
 that reach almost to the ceiling.  
 You want me to believe  
 he keeps books on the back  
 of his toilet; books stored in the oven.  
 You want me to believe  
 that when you were hungry  
 and opened his refrigerator  
 there were books in the vegetable bin,  
 books wrapped in plastic in the freezer.

You want me to believe  
 there is a man living on 170th Street  
 who doesn't have any money,  
 and doesn't care.  
 You want me to believe  
 this man is 68 years old,  
 healthy,  
 and generous.

You want me to believe  
 that Delmore Schwartz still lives,  
 still shifts in his naked bed.  
 O impossible life,  
 as strange and necessary as our own lives!  
 Everything I hear tells the story  
 I most want to write:  
 his other life,  
 his possible day —  
 an old man drinking coffee from a peanut-butter jar,  
 the light in his Bronx apartment growing  
 brighter, brighter. . .

## JEWISH SOCIALISM IN EASTERN EUROPE: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Daniel Soyer*

*The idea for this bibliography arose when the Jewish Socialist Community of Oberlin attracted a number of new members who not only thought that Jewish socialism was a good idea, but that we had invented it. There is a wealth of published material in English about the history and theory of the Jewish labor and socialist movements. By providing this annotated bibliography, I hope this history will be more accessible.*

Abramovitch, Raphael R., "The Jewish Socialist Movement in Russia and Poland 1897-1917," *The Jewish People, Past and Present II*, CYCO, New York, 1948.

Written by an important Bundist and Menshevik leader, this is a good summary of the history of the Bund, particularly in the 1897-1905 period. It includes a sympathetic but critical discussion of the development of the Bund's national program, and its conflict with the government. Abramovitch also gives a sketchy account of the beginnings of the other Jewish socialist movements (Poalei-Zion, SERP, etc.).

Abramsky, Chimen, "The Jewish Labor Movement: Some Historiographical Problems," *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, n.1, June 1971.

Abramsky discusses historiographical problems of studying the history of the Jewish labor movement. He suggests looking at its

development in the context of Jewish history (rather than labor history). He sees certain factors (Jewish traditions, community structure, living conditions, economy) as keys to understanding the differences between the Jewish and other labor movements.

Brym, Robert J., *The Jewish Intelligentsia and Russian Marxism: A Sociological Study of Intellectual Radicalism and Ideological Divergence*, Schocken, New York, 1978.

This is a study dealing with Jewish intellectuals who joined one of four social democratic groups in Tsarist Russia: Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, Bund or Poalei-Zion. Brym covers the relevant history of the Jewish community in Russia, the Jewish intellectual's position in society and the social and economic conditions of the Jewish community. He relates the factors which led many students, and especially Jewish students, to join revolutionary movements. Brym is concerned particularly with discovering what led some Jewish activists to one movement and others to another. He examines the extent of Jewish education, the degree of "embeddedness" in either Russian or Jewish culture, region of upbringing and political activity, etc., as factors which would turn an individual toward one or another movement. He also discusses the ideological differences between the factions, and their consequent divergent appeals.

Gitelman, Zvi, *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics*, Princeton U., Princeton, 1972.

In this very important book, Gitelman traces the history (and pre-history) of the Yevseksia, the Jewish section of the Communist Party in Russia, from its origins to its dissolution in 1930. He describes the building of the Communist Jewish institutions following the revolution, e.g. the commissariat, efforts at colonization, etc. He discusses the ambiguous role of the Jewish Communists, and the factional squabbles among them, the Soviet government's attitude toward the national question and the Jewish question in particular, and the final downfall of the Yevseksia. Also included is a large section on pre-war Jewish revolutionary politics, with particular reference to positions on the Jewish question. He covers the Bund, SERP, Socialist-Zionists, and the Poalei-Zion. Gitelman also deals with attitudes within the Jewish community toward the revolution and specific Jewish concerns.

Goldstein, Bernard, *The Stars Bear Witness*, Viking, New York, 1949.

The author was a long time activist in the Bund, and the book includes a biographical sketch. This book is essentially a memoir of the holocaust years, dealing specifically with life in the resistance movement. Goldstein covers the attitude of the Bund toward the approaching war and its initial reaction to the Nazi invasion of Poland. There is an especially interesting account of the regrouping of the Bund as an underground party. Also valuable is the author's description of the relationship between the Jewish underground and that of the Poles (especially with the PPS).

Harap, Louis, "The Jewish Bund Revisited", *Jewish Currents*, February-June, 1974.

This is a critical history of the Bund from its origins to the 1970s. There is a strong discussion of the Bund's conflict with Lenin (by an author with leanings in favor of Lenin), and its implications for later Soviet and even American nationality debates. It is especially interesting for its account of post-WWII Bund history.

Hertz, J.S., "The Bund's Nationality Program and its Critics in the Russian, Polish and Austrian Socialist Movements, *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, XIV, 1969.

This article covers the development of the Jewish labor movement, with particular emphasis on attitudes toward the national question. It also discusses the Bund and the development of its national program. Hertz concentrates on the Bund's relations with other socialist parties in Russia, Poland and Austria. He examines the different types of motivations for socialist opposition to the Bund's program.

Johnpoll, B. K., *The Politics of Futility*, Cornell U., Ithaca, 1967.

The premise of this book, as the title indicates, is the futility of politics for a party which cannot gain state power on its own. Johnpoll covers the political context in which the Polish Bund operated (the Internationals, Polish parties), and the background of the Russian Bund. He discusses the founding of the Polish Bund as an independent body and its position on the First World War. He

devotes much space to an interesting discussion of factional disputes within the Bund in the '20s revolving principally around the question of relations with the Communists and the Third International. He also covers government repression of the Bund, the reaction to Pilsudski's coup, relations with the PPS, the rise of the Bund as the largest Jewish party in Poland, and its role in the resistance to the Nazis.

Levin, Nora, *While Messiah Tarried: Jewish Socialist Movements 1871-1917*, Schocken, New York, 1977.

Levin's book covers the parallel histories of the three major branches of the Jewish socialist movement before the Russian revolution: the Bund Socialist-Zionism and the American Jewish labor movement. Her coverage of the American movement deals with the early attempts at organization, the role of Yiddish culture, the ideological debates of the '90s, and the rise of an established movement. Her section on the Bund includes the transition from the circle movement to agitation, the founding of the Bund, the struggle with Lenin, the 1905 revolution and cultural work after 1907. Levin's discussion of socialist-Zionism includes chapters about Syrkin, Borochoy and Ruppin, the early kibbutzim in Palestine and the Zionist attitudes toward the Arab question. This book, if used carefully, can serve as an introductory text.

Mendelsohn, Ezra, *Class Struggle in the Pale: The Formation of the Jewish Workers' Movement in Tsarist Russia*, Cambridge U., Cambridge, 1970.

Mendelsohn's excellent book is a social history of the Jewish labor movement in Russia from the 1880s to 1905. It contains much information, including statistics, on economic and social conditions among Jews around the turn of the century. He describes the process of proletarianization and pauperization of the Jewish masses, the development of worker-intellectual contact and the transition from "propaganda" to "agitation." Mendelsohn also discusses relations between the worker rank-and-file and the intellectual leadership of the movement. He concentrates on the economic struggles and organization of the Jewish worker.

Mendelsohn, Ezra, "The Russian Jewish Labor Movement and Others", *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science*, XIV, 1969.

This is a comparison of the development of the Jewish Labor movement in the Northwest provinces with that of the Russian movement. Mendelsohn discusses the strength and staying power of the "kasses" and the factors that contributed to that strength. The appeal of Marxism over anarchism for Jewish revolutionaries is also discussed.

Mendelsohn, Ezra, "Worker Opposition in the Russian Jewish Socialist Movement from the 1890s to 1903," *International Review of Social History*, 10, 1965.

This interesting article deals with a little discussed issue and strips away some of the mythological qualities with which the Bund is frequently endowed. The conflicts discussed include the differences between the worker-students and the intellectual-teachers of the circle movement. The shift to agitation met with resistance among many workers, who objected to the new tactics and distrusted the intellectuals. Another episode involved the debate over the use of terror and the Lekert affair. Other schisms include the call of the rank-and-file for more democracy in the movement, and the Zubatov (police-socialism) movement.

Mendelsohn, Ezra, "The Jewish Socialist Movement and the Second International", *Jewish Social Studies*, 1964.

In this article Mendelsohn discusses the attempts of the Jewish socialist groups to gain recognition by the international socialist movement. He covers the approach of the International to delegations of national groups without political independence and its ambiguous attitude toward the Jewish question. Early Jewish representation is mentioned, as well as the Bund's representation through the Russian section. Also discussed are the attempts by the Poalei-Zion, SERP and S.S. to gain access to the International as the representatives of the Jewish nation.

Mendelsohn, Ezra, "Jews and Christian Workers in the Russian Pale of Settlement," *Jewish Social Studies*, n.4 1968.

Mendelsohn's article concerns the important issue of cooperation

between workers of different nationalities. He discusses the separation of the Jewish and Gentile workers, the conflict between the internationalist ideals of the Jewish social democrats and the national organization to which they had resorted, and the attempts of the employers and the police to split apart the workers of different nationalities. Mendelsohn also mentions attempts of Jewish social democrats to organize Gentile workers and examples of cooperation.

Menes, Abraham, "The Jewish Socialist Movement in Russia and Poland 1870s-1897", *The Jewish People, Past and Present II*, CYCO, New York, 1948.

Menes' article is a good history of the Jewish labor movement up to the founding of the Bund in 1897. Especially interesting is his discussion of attitudes toward labor, worker-employer relations, and property in halakha and traditional Jewish society. He also describes the social position of the Jews and the structure of Jewish society in the late 19th century. Menes gives an account of the major episodes in the development of the Jewish labor movement including Lieberman's activities, the 1881 pogroms' effects on the Jewish intelligentsia, the circle movement, and the agitation movement.

Mishinsky, Moshe, "The Jewish Labor Movement and European Socialism," *Journal of World History*, v.XI, n.s 1 and 2, 1968, also reprinted in Ben Sasson and Ettinger, eds., *Jewish Society Throughout the Ages*, Schocken, New York, 1971.

This essay includes an interesting description of Lieberman's Hebrew Socialist Society and the ideological turmoil within that early socialist group. Mishinsky describes the assimilationist trends as well as the "nationalization" of the movement. The Second International's attitude toward the extra-territorial Jewish movement and the movement in the U.S. are also dealt with.

Mishinsky, Moshe, "Jewish Socialism at the Turn the Century," *Soviet Jewish Affairs*, v.III, n.2, 1973.

Although actually a review of Tobias' work, this article makes many interesting points dealing with the historiography of the Jewish socialist movement, especially of the Bund. Mishinsky examines different approaches to studying the history of the Bund. He also discusses the Bund as an outcome of Jewish history, and posits the

tension between national and class loyalties as the most important factor in Bund history.

Mishinsky, Moshe, "Regional Factors in the Formation of the Jewish Labor Movement in Czarist Russia," *YIVO Annual*, XIV, 1969.

This essay covers the pre-Bund period to 1903. Again, Mishinsky examines the development of the Jewish labor movement within the context of Jewish history, particularly regional differences in Jewish social organization and economic position. He shows the importance of Vilna as a Bund center and how activity spread to other regions. Factors contributing to the predominance of the "Northwest" region include more Jewish involvement in industry, less assimilation among the intelligentsia, and compactness of population. Also mentioned are the motivation behind the Bund's choice of name, and relations with Russian and Polish socialists.

Patkin, A. L., *The Origins of the Russian Jewish Labor Movement*, F. W. Cheshire Pty., Melbourne, 1947.

This is an early study of the Jewish labor movement and can serve as a good introduction to its history. Patkin deals with earlier movements in Jewish life, such as Hasidism and the Haskalah. He summarizes the history of Jews in the Russian empire and the economic development of Russia. He covers the rise of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia, its attitude toward the Jews and its social and political concerns. He then examines the rise of the Jewish revolutionary intelligentsia, its involvement in the Populist movement and its conversion to Marxism, as well as its attitudes toward Jewish issues, the nature of the Russian revolution, etc. Patkin proceeds to describe the rise of the Vilna "pre-Bund" group, the founding of the Bund and the development of the new organization's national program. The work includes chapters explaining the theories of individuals and groups which had an influence on the Bund, including Zhitlovsky, Dubnow, and the Austrian social democrats. There are also chapters on the S.S., SERP, Poalei-Zion and the Yiddish-Hebrew controversy

Pinson, Koppel S., "Arkady Kremer, Vladimir Medem and the Ideology of the Jewish Bund," *Jewish Social Studies*, v.VII, n.3, July 1945.

This may be the first scholarly article on the Bund to appear in English. It was originally published on the occasion of the publishing of memorial books in honor of Arkady Kremer and Vladimir Medem (in Yiddish). It gives a rather sketchy account of Kremer, describing his role as a practical leader of the Bund and his important pamphlet "On Agitation" which greatly influenced the entire Russian revolutionary movement. The bulk of the article is devoted to the explanation of the development and content of Medem's theories on the national question and therefore of the Bund's program.

Portnoy, Samuel, translator and editor, *Vladimir Medem: The Life and Soul of a Legendary Jewish Socialist*, KTAV, New York, 1979.

This is a translation of Medem's two-volume autobiography originally published in Yiddish. It includes an introduction by Portnoy summarizing the history of the Bund and Medem's own involvement with it. Medem was the most important figure in the ideological development of the Bund as well as one of its major political leaders. His autobiography is especially interesting for many young American Jewish radicals. Medem came from a highly assimilated family and was baptized at birth into the Russian Orthodox church. His father was a doctor in the army. Medem first became involved in the revolutionary movement, and was only then drawn to the Jewish people. He then became immersed in Jewish culture and the political problems of the Jewish people. He learned Yiddish and eventually became one of the most revered leaders of the Bund. This is a valuable addition to the stock of information on the Bund in English.

Scherer, Emmanuel, "The Bund," in Gross and Vlavianos, eds., *Struggle for Tomorrow*, Arts, New York, 1954.

Scherer was an important leader of the Bund for many years. This article has a rather partisan, but good, account of the history of the Bund. It also constitutes the most complete statement and explanation of Bundist ideology, both as it relates to the national (Jewish) question and to socialism. Written in the early '50s, this article represents an application of Bundist ideology to the post-Holocaust and post-1948 era.

Schwartz, P., "Revolutionary Activities of the Jewish Labor Bund in the Czarist Army," *YIVO Annual*, 1965.

This is part of a larger work written in pre-war Warsaw. Schwartz discusses the importance attributed to the army in Russian revolutionary strategy. He also describes the rise of revolutionary agitation within the army up to the Russo-Japanese war. Schwartz details the Bund's work in the field, and its suppression by the state.

Szajkowsky, Zosa, "Paul Nathan, Lucien Wolf, Jacob Schiff and the Jewish Revolutionary Movements in Eastern Europe 1903-1917," *Jewish Social Studies*, n.s 1 and 2, 1967.

Szajkowsky examines the relations between the most important (rather bourgeois) Western Jewish leaders and the Jewish revolutionary movement in Russia. Topics covered include the change in Western attitudes toward Russian Jewry following the Kishenev pogrom. Western leaders support for revolutionary groups including their ambiguous relations with the Bund (given their assimilationist and liberal leanings), and their efforts to influence the foreign policies of their own countries.

Tobias, Henry Jack, *The Jewish Bund in Russia*, Stanford U., Palo Alto, 1972.

Tobias' book is probably the most important work on the Bund. It covers the period from 1897 to 1905. He gives the necessary background, including the living conditions of the Jews in the Russian Empire, and the effects of the dissolution of the old order on Jewish life. He then relates the early history of the labor movement, going into the backgrounds of the pioneer organizers, the circle movement, as well as the factors which led to a more Jewish orientation. Tobias describes the founding of the Bund and the issues it faced in the first years. Included in this discussion are the relations between the Bund and other Socialists (RSDWP and PPS), the issue of economism, the confrontations with the Zubatov movement, and Zionism. There are also interesting sections on the development of the Bund as an organization and its role in the 1905 revolution.

Tobias, Henry Jack, "The Bund and the First Congress of the RSDWP: An Addendum," *The Russian Review*, n.4, 1965.

This article discusses the role attributed to the First Congress of the RSDWP by Soviet historiography. Tobias points out the relationship between the Soviets' view of the Congress and the Bund's important role in it.

Tobias, Henry Jack, "The Bund and Lenin Until 1903", *The Russian Review*, n.4, 1961.

This interesting article details the important struggle between the Bund and the *Iskra* faction, led by Lenin and Martov. It includes background material on the Bund and a summary of the development of both the Bund and *Iskra* between 1898 and 1903. Tobias presents the Bund's national program and requests for certain organizational forms and also *Iskra's* (Martov's) response. Also interesting is the account of Lenin's machinations leading up to the Second Party Congress in 1903.

Wildman, Allen K., "Russian and Jewish Social Democrats," in Rabinowitch and Rabinowitch, eds., *Revolution and Politics in Russia*, Indiana U., Bloomington, 1972.

This is an interesting article which deals with the role of the Jewish social democratic movement in the All-Russian movement. Wildman shows how the Vilna Jewish social democracy not only formed the nucleus for the Jewish movement, but the general movement as well. This is shown by the importance of Vilna "colonizers" in organizing the movement in other areas. Also, Kremer's pamphlet, "On Agitation," is shown to have had widespread influence.

Woodhouse, Charles E. and Tobias, H. J., "Primordial Ties and Political Process in Pre-Revolution Russia: The Case of the Jewish Bund," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, v. VIII n.3, April 1966.

Woodhouse and Tobias use the Bund as an example of the problem of "primordial ties" in the development of nationhood in emerging countries. They posit the problem of minority political movements in reconciling political and economic assimilation with cultural autonomy. They then discuss the Bund, its background and responses to the problems of Russian Jewry—especially how the Bund served as a new definer of Jewish identity, in a previously highly traditional society. They discuss Bundist cultural work as well as the Bund's conflicts with the advocates of other concepts of Jewish culture.

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