



Encyclopedia Judaica: Bund

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BUND (abbr. of **Algemeyner Yidisher Arbeter Bund in Lite, Poyln un Rusland**; "General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia"), Jewish socialist party founded in Russia in 1897; after a certain ideological development it came to be associated with devotion to Yiddish, autonomism, and secular Jewish nationalism, envisaging Jewish life as lived out in Eastern Europe ("Doykeyt"; "Hereness," in Bund ideology), sharply opposed to Zionism and other conceptions of a world-embracing Jewish national identity.

Beginnings (Pre-Bund)

The structure and ideology of the Bund, while stemming from the social patterns and needs, from the problems and tensions within Jewish society in the *Pale of Settlement in the second half of the 19th century, were also an outcome of the aims, tendencies within, divisions in, and methods of the Russian socialist movement in the multinational empire of the czars.

The first stirrings of the Jewish labor movement in general, and the formation of the Bund subsequently, occurred in "Jewish Lithuania," i.e., the six northwestern Lithuanian-Belorussian provinces with some adjoining districts, headed by Vilna. From here came the earliest leaders and pioneers of the Bund. In this region the working element was relatively important in Jewish society and its proportion among the proletariat (occupied in crafts and industry) in the cities and towns was higher than elsewhere. The trend to *assimilation was less strong in a region where sociocultural and political conflict among the Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, and Belorussian elements was rife, none of whose aims appealed to the Jewish population which had attained independently a high cultural standard,

