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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF BER BOROCHOV'S SOCIALIST ZIONISM

by Sanford Ragins

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Hebrew Letters and Ordination.

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THESIS DIGEST

Ber Borochov was the first Jewish thinker to attempt a systematic reconciliation of Zionism and Marxism. He lived during the trying years at the turn of the century when the East European Jewish community was in a position of economic prostration and subject to vigorous official antisemitism. The disillusion with the Emancipation had created considerable confusion among the Jewish intelligentsia, and many of them on the political left were torn between allegiance to the proletariat and feelings of loyalty toward their own people. Borochov attempted to create a synthetic ideology which would resolve the tension between Marxism and Zionism.

The ideological traditions Borochov sought to harmonize had been almost universally regarded as irreconcilable opposites. Marx had been an advocate of international working class unity and de-emphasized nationalism; he had also been strongly anti-semitic in his writings and believed that assimilation was the only answer to the Jewish problem. Though the Socialist movement after Marx gave sympathetic consideration to nationalism, it consistently asserted that Jewish national aspirations were incompatible with the interests of the proletariat.

The bourgeois Jewish nationalists, on the other hand, concentrated on the spiritual and cultural aspects of Zionism and gave little attention to economic factors or class tensions. Although Hess, Lazare, and Syrkin had combined ethical socialism with Zionism, no thinker before Borochov had attempted a union of dialectical materialism with Zionism.

The line of Borochov's argument proceeded in several steps: 1) He tried to prove the compatibility of nationalism with working class consciousness by introducing the concept 'conditions of production.' He argued that the proletariat of a given nation cannot conduct a successful class struggle unless its conditions of production, including its territory, are intact. Hence for oppressed or abnormal nations, obtaining secure conditions of production is an essential prerequisite to the prosecution of a successful class struggle. 2) He assumed that the Jews were an oppressed nation, and therefore asserted that the socialist who worked for the establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine was actually fighting the first stages of the class struggle. 3) He attempted to demonstrate on the basis of material factors that the only possible goal of Jewish immigration was Palestine, and that the 'styctic' forces of history were creating a territorial solution to the Jewish problem in Palestine.

An analysis of Borochov's ideology, however, reveals a number of significant inconsistencies which indicate clearly that he was first and foremost a Zionist. Whenever the interests of Jewish nationalism conflicted with the requirements of the class struggle, Borochov denied the latter. His ideology was actually Zionism expressed in the elaborate terminology of Marxism; Borochov's claims notwithstanding, he failed to achieve a synthesis of Jewish nationalism and socialism.

As the Chumash tells us in a heartmoving way,
God did not want to allow the leader to inherit
the pleasure of the triumph of his work and struggle;
indeed God has never bestowed upon man this great
joy. God--is history.

Ber Borochov

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PREFACE

Ber Borochof, the theoretician of Socialist Zionism, lived during some of the most trying years in the history of the East European Jewish community. He was born in 1881, just after the reactionary Tsar Alexander III had come to the throne of Imperial Russia; Borochof died in 1917, on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution. The years of his youth and early manhood coincided with a period of chaos in Eastern Jewry; the entire structure of Jewish society seemed to be collapsing. The answers of yesterday were no longer adequate to the urgent questions of the day, and many sought new solutions that might lead the way to a more secure tomorrow.

In their search for answers the Jewish thinkers of Russia and Poland drew heavily from the warehouse of European political and social thought. Though they adapted what they borrowed to the specific needs of Jewish life, the intellectual traditions of non-Jewish society furnished the material for the Jewish ideologies of the day. The Jewish thinkers took the bricks and timbers of European thought and arranged them according to their own blueprints.

Two of the dominant traditions of thought in Europe at the time were Marxist Socialism and Nationalism. One scholar has commented on the relation between these ideologies:

The nationalist says that nationality is the unit of human society, the Socialist, that the class is the unit. The nationalist affirms that the individual members of all classes within each nationality must work together in harmony; the Socialist that

the individual members of a single class in all nationalities must cooperate. The nationalist insists that the international conflict is normal...the one would break the solidarity of the world's working-men; the other would destroy the solidarity of every nationality and every national state. Between them there may be forced truces, but no real peace--and no real tolerance.¹

Ber Borochov would have disagreed with the thought of the foregoing. He believed that Jewish Nationalism and Marxism were fully compatible and created an ideology which purported to have united the two.

But did Borochov achieve "real peace" between Socialism and Zionism or only a "forced truce"? Did he actually synthesize these apparently antithetical traditions of thought? Or were the requirements implicit in one ideology sacrificed in order to meet the needs of the other? Was Borochov, as he claimed, actually both a Zionist and a Socialist devoted equally to the national liberation of the Jews and the proletarian revolution? Or was he primarily a Marxist who used nationalism to further the class struggle? Or else a dedicated Zionist who adapted Marxism to the needs of Jewish nationalism?

In this study we shall attempt to answer these questions. To do so we must discuss the situation of the East European Jewish community--and especially of the Jewish intelligentsia. Then, after surveying the ideological tools which were available to Borochov, we shall examine his theory in some detail. Finally, when we have examined the evidence and analyzed it, we shall answer the questions posed above. And we shall also be able to offer a suggested explanation for what it was that moved Ber Borochov and his colleagues during those difficult years.

Chapter I - The Background

A. Russia: The Eve of Apocalypse

Russia in 1850 was on the frontier of European society. The urbane and sophisticated of Paris, London and Berlin spoke with condescension of the backward and uncouth semi-barbarians to the east. So the sophisticated of the west might speak, and there was considerable justification for their attitudes. Russia in mid-century was still an agrarian land whose commerce and industry were developed on a small scale. Most Russians were peasants--illiterate and deeply religious as well as poor. They were accustomed to looking up to their betters for direction and guidance, and their betters--the orthodox clergy and the landed nobility--responded by arranging for the disposition of the peasant's soul in the next world and his body in this. And above all, more powerful even than priest or lord, was the Little Father, the imperial ruler of a vast empire, the protector and autocratic master of all Russians--the Tsar.

"The fundamental and most stable feature of Russian history is the slow tempo of her development, with the economic backwardness, primitiveness of social forms and low level of culture resulting from it."^{1a} Thus Leon Trotsky begins his chronicle of the revolution that transformed Russia and influenced the course of all modern history. His remark is

certainly true of Russia before mid-nineteenth century. Despite the earlier efforts of Peter the Great, Russia had remained relatively isolated from the tremendous forces that were restructuring society in the west. The development of capitalism and nationalism, the growth of political democracy and the decay of feudalism--all were practically unknown in the Tsar's dominions. But beginning around 1850 and during the decades that followed Russia imported two exotic western commodities at an ever increasing rate: industrial capitalism, in the form of production methods and investment capital, and ideas. The sudden appearance of both the new economic mode and the novel ways of thinking were hammer blows that eventually shattered beyond repair the peace, poverty, and autocracy of feudal Russia.

Industrialism had developed in a Western Europe which had behind it a long history of commercial capitalism. The large factories of England and France were built with the capital and experience accumulated during decades of free trading. When capitalism came to Eastern Europe, it found feudalism and autocracy not only present but well-entrenched, and when capitalism came it did so quickly. Instead of the gradual evolution of the west, capital poured into Russia and industrialization was exceedingly rapid. Factories were built, hands hired, and goods began to stream out; raw cotton imports increased fifteen fold between 1863 and 1894,² and the railroad mileage of the empire actually doubled between 1889 and 1902.³ Russia had produced 15 million pud of pig iron in 1862, but by 1896 its modern mills were turning out 98 million pud annually.⁴ Even more spectacular was the growth of the oil

industry: in 1875 5 million pud of crude oil were produced, but in 1895 348 million.⁵

The burgeoning capitalism of Russia effected the people and class structure of the land greatly. The population doubled between 1850 and 1900. Cities developed rapidly, and whereas in 1851 only 5% of the population lived in urban areas, 13% did so by 1897.⁶ As great factories grew, the craft industries declined, and two new classes emerged, a bourgeoisie and a proletariat, both industrial in character. Throughout the last half of the century there was a marked tendency for industry to be concentrated in large enterprises, thus increasing the power of the entrepreneurs who controlled and ran them. In 1866 43% of the laborers in the cotton industry were employed in factories of more than 100 workers; by 1894 the figure had grown to 72%. And the same trend was apparent in the rest of the textile industry and in the paper, chemical, and metal-working industries as well.⁷ But if larger factories meant more powerful and wealthier capitalists, they also created a larger and more powerful--and often more exasperated--industrial working class. The discontent of the independent artisan could find expression in organized militancy when he left his cottage for the factory. Trade unions were formed, strikes began to break out, and when conditions were bad, when wages were low or hours too long, the workingmen of Moscow and St. Petersburg became eager audiences for the young students who came to speak to them with bold and stirring words.

The Russian intelligentsia had long faced the problem of

being a well-educated elite in a backward country. Though at home in the languages, literatures, and ideas of France, England, and Germany, they felt terribly alien in their own country. A chasm yawned between the intellectual and the bulk of the Russian people, a chasm equivalent to that which separated feudal Russia from modern Europe.⁸ The problem of bridging these gaps became an obsession with Russian thinkers and writers in the nineteenth century, and a welter of ideologies and isms were offered as the answer to the vexing dual problem: the relationship between Russia and the west and that between the intelligentsia and the people. The Panslavists and Russophiles spoke of the greatness of Russia, of the superiority of the Orthodox east over the decadent Protestant west; they dreamed of the mission of Moscow, the heir of holy Byzantium. But others like Belinsky took a less sanguine view of conditions in their land and were convinced that some form of westernizing was essential; they confessed the backwardness of Russia and urged their people to learn, and learn quickly, from their more progressive neighbors to the west.

The sensitivity of the intellectual to the backwardness of the land was paralleled by the insensitivity on the part of the regime to the need for radical changes. Alexander II freed the serfs but simultaneously loaded them with taxes which were almost as heavy a burden as serfdom had been. His successors to the throne were determined to maintain the status quo and prevent any reforms, no matter how moderate, that might undermine their position and authority. The stubborn attitude of the autocracy was shown dramatically one Sunday in January,

1905 when a crowd of two hundred thousand unarmed workers gathered before the Winter Palace to present a modest petition for reforms. The only reply came from the soldiers who opened fire and shot down hundreds.⁹

In response to Tsarist inertia a new, but extremely important type of figure had emerged among the Russian intelligentsia by the turn of the century. Alongside of the new bourgeoisie and proletariat, and in place of his belletristic predecessors, there now stood the professional revolutionary. The intellectual was now "driven to revolutionary action by the spectacle of his people living in the Middle Ages and unable to climb out of them."¹⁰ No longer content to write essays and visit salons to talk of the new Russia, the revolutionary was now an intense young man, usually a student well-versed in the doctrines and dogma of the party he represented and convinced of the correctness of the tasks it ordered him to carry out. In the 1870's he was likely to have been a Narodnik or populist who went to the people to help educate and elevate the peasantry. In the 1880's he joined the Narodnaya Volya, terrorists who were fanatically active in trying literally to bomb the old order out of power. But by the 1890's the ideas of Karl Marx were being hotly debated and energetically propagated in revolutionary and student circles. Small groups of Russian Marxists developed here and there, and in 1898 the existing Marxist groups united to form the Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party,¹¹--a union of comrades dedicated to creating a revolution, not by patient work among the peasantry or haphazard assassinations, but by agitation, propaganda,

and organization among the laborers in the factories of the big cities.

At the end of the nineteenth century an apocalyptic mood hung like a heavy cloud over Russia.¹² A terrible upheaval was anticipated, one which would overturn the world and destroy that which had been. The end of an entire epoch was expected and, depending on one's position in society, either feared or wished for. The cloud grew bigger and darker until it seemed it would burst any instant and release torrents. The prophets disagreed as to what the downpour would bring, but there was no doubt it was coming, coming soon. All "felt that Russia hung over an abyss."¹³

B. The Jews of Eastern Europe

"How Sad is Thy State"

The Russian census of 1897 showed that there were five million Jews living within the borders of the empire, approximately four per cent of the entire population. But though over ninety per cent of these Jews lived in those provinces which constituted the "Pale of the Settlement", in no location were they a majority; in the Pale itself they were only 11.6% of the population. At this time the Jews lived mostly in urban areas, and even there, though a sizable minority, they were not the most numerous element in the population: though 78% of the Jews were urban dwellers, they made up but 38% of the total urban population in the Pale.¹⁴

Yet the Jews of Poland and Russia had not always been so concentrated in cities and larger towns. Centuries before, at a time of persecution in Western Europe, they had come to the east and, with monarchical protection and encouragement, played a major role in the commercial affairs of the land. Acting as arendars (stewards), financial agents, and estate managers for the nobility, the Jews had been closely tied to the agrarian economy of feudal Poland and were dispersed throughout the villages and countryside. Life in the east was not easy during the medieval era, and times were often hard for the average Jew. His own wealthy and learned brothers displayed the avarice and insensitivity so often characteristic of privileged groups; from time to time anti-semitic violence had come. But though rarely liked and certainly never understood by the peasants and nobles with whom he dealt, the Jew knew he had a place in society, he knew he belonged and he knew who he was. It was "schwer to zayn a Yid", but he was a "Yid", and he had a religion which defined his place in the universe even as his role as a middleman fixed his position in the structure of medieval Polish society. Judaism, as expressed in its sacred texts, told the Jew that he was a member of the chosen people, chosen by the Master of all the Universe as His special treasure. He was one of the children of Israel, and though his ancestors had been exiled from Eretz Yisrael for their sins, he was a Jew-- infinitely better off than the ignorant peasant who bought and swilled his liquor at the inn, and better even than the pan who taxed him so heavily. For his portion was God's only Torah, his yoke that of the halacha, which, if properly

observed, would insure him a share in the world to come. And someday--he knew it was true because so it was written--someday God would send His Messiah to usher in a glorious new day, a day of peace and light, a day of the ingathering of the exiles, a day of the eternal reign of God on earth. In the meantime the Cossack was to be feared, taxes to be paid, and it was the duty of the Jew to pray and wait patiently. And wait patiently and confidently he did, because after all, was he not one of the children of Israel? Was he not one of the chosen of the Lord? Was he not a Jew?

In the last decade of the eighteenth century Russia annexed the eastern provinces of the Kingdom of Poland and thereby inherited the Jewish population of that realm as well. Immediately the Pale of the settlement was created whereby limits were set to the areas in which Jews might live--the Moscovites were determined that their newly acquired subjects should stay put. Both of the Tsars who reigned during the first half of the next century wrestled with the problem of what to do with their new subjects. How could these strange people with their peculiar language, dress and religion be made loyal and useful residents of the realm? Alexander I found what he thought was a solution with the Constitution of the Jews, a curious amalgam of liberties and restrictions. The once independent kahals lost most of the little authority they still retained, and an attempt was made to lure the Jews into agriculture. Though the public schools were opened to Jewish students, the missionizing intent of this measure was easily discerned. Finally Alexander threatened to expel the Jews from the

countryside and restrict their residence to the larger towns and cities, but the outbreak of war in 1812 prevented the carrying out of the proposal.

When Nicholas I came to the throne in 1825, he instituted a more consistent and harsher policy aimed at the Russianizing of the Jews. He issued a ukase ordering the conscription of Jewish children at the age of twelve followed by thirty-one years of military service. Government censorship was extended to Jewish religious literature, and Education Minister Uvarov tried to coax the Jews into participating in a government school system whose barely concealed purpose was the conversion of its pupils to Christianity. But whether the government cajoled or scolded, enticed or threatened, the Jews remained Jews and had become hardly one whit more integrated into the Russian empire.¹⁵

When Alexander II became tsar in 1855 it seemed like a new and better day was dawning. He resolved to try the one tactic his predecessors had ignored--emancipation. The limits of the Pale were extended, and some merchants could even arrange to go and live in the great cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow, there to grow rich and prosperous. It became possible for a Jew to enter the government service, and veterans of the tsar's army could arrange to live anywhere in the realm. Then the Pale was abolished altogether for artisans and their families, and the restrictions on residence and purchase of property in Poland were removed.¹⁶ And as the developing Jewish bourgeoisie responded to the apparent liberalism of their gracious ruler with loyalty, the thinkers among them began to write of an emancipation similar to that already

achieved by their co-religionists in Western Europe.

The intelligentsia of the Jewish middle class called their new outlook Haskalah or Enlightenment. They asserted that it was necessary for the Jews to respond eagerly to the gracious invitation to participate in Russian society. One Hebrew poet, brimming with the optimism of these years, exhorted his brothers:

Awake, my people! How long will you sleep?
Night has taken flight, the sun shines bright.
Awake, lift up your eyes and look about -
Become aware of time and place.¹⁷

The Jew had to cast off the burden of the past, especially the superstitions and foolish notions of his traditional religion. He had to learn to speak the language of the land (without an accent if possible) and cultivate its manners and habits; he could do what he wished at home, but in the street he must be a man, not a Jew. For the ways of his father were not suited for the avenues of St. Petersburg. The Jew must learn new ways, secular ways, and thus he would be readily welcomed to pass through the door which led into the modern age, a door so generously opened by the enlightened Tsar. Had not Alexander II emancipated the serfs? Then why not you, a Jew, as well. So become a man!

On the fourteenth of March, 1881, two bombs were hurled in St. Petersburg. The first wrecked the tsar's carriage, and the second wounded him fatally. In the wake of the assassination came a new tsar and a sudden turn of fortunes for the Jewry of East Europe. For Alexander III was a convinced autocrat, an extreme conservative, a sympathiser

of Panslavism,--and an anti-semite. For the many non-Russians within the borders of his realm, he announced a new policy of Russification, declaring, "We can have no other policy except one that is purely Russian and national."¹⁸ Germans, Poles, Estonians, Latvians, Finns, Armenians--and Jews--all were to be subjected to the demands of Russian nationalism. Liberalism was declared the most heinous of threats to the stability of the autocracy, and, borrowing a technique from Central Europe, the tsarist agents identified the Jews with liberalism. Under the protection and encouragement of the tsar reactionaries became active in every sphere of public life and, in the interests of preventing a revolution, they stimulated the latent anti-semitic prejudices of the Russian people by claiming that the Jews were the source and cause of all ills.¹⁹

Amidst talk in the press of a "secret Jewish conspiracy" against the motherland, tsarist officials circulated through the towns of the Pale fomenting anti-Jewish violence. In April and May pogroms took place in Elizavetgrad, Kiev, and Odessa. Homes and shops were looted, and almost a hundred Jews were killed or maimed.²⁰ When informed of one pogrom at Rostov-on-Don, the Tsar later commented:

It is a great pity, but I do not foresee an end to it. The Russians are too much disgusted with the Zhids and so long as they continue to exploit the Christians this hatred will not diminish.²¹

Whether Alexander was right about Jewish exploitation is highly debateable, but the rest of his statement proved prophetic: the hatred did not diminish.

On May 3, 1882, a set of Temporary Rules were issued and a devastating blow was struck at Jewish life in the Pale. These "May Laws" stipulated that no Jew was henceforth to be allowed to settle anew in any rural area, even within the Pale. By subtle interpretation of what it meant to "settle anew, not only were those Jews living in the already crowded cities forbidden to go to the countryside, but thousands still in the villages were expelled. Small towns were re-classified as villages, and Jews in rural areas found they could not renew their leases. It was now illegal to buy or rent real property outside the cities; Jewish merchants were forbidden to trade on Sundays and Christian holidays. Thousands of Jews were uprooted from their homes and began to flow toward the cities which were ill-prepared to receive them.²² The fabric of rural Jewish life was destroyed and the Jews who had been the middlemen of the feudal countryside now became the unemployed or underpaid artisans of the metropolis. The Russian Governor of Bessarabia watched the stream of rural Jews into the towns of his jurisdiction and observed:

The houses along second-rate and even back streets are occupied in unbroken succession by stores, big and small, shops of watch-makers, shoe-makers, lock-smiths, tinsmiths, tailors, carpenters, and so on. All these workers are huddled together in nooks and lanes amidst shocking poverty. They toil hard for a living so scanty that a rusty herring and a slice of onion is considered the tip-top of luxury and prosperity. There are scores of watch-makers in small towns where the townsfolk, as a rule, have no watches. It is hard to understand where all these artisans, frequently making up seventy-five per cent of the total population of a city or town, get their orders and patrons. Competition

cuts down their earnings to the limit of bare subsistence on so minute a scale as to call in question the theory of wages.²³

Capitalism in the west had developed under conditions which allowed the circumvention or elimination of arbitrary restrictions on freedom of movement of persons or goods. The capitalist in the west could use the power of the state to break down the bonds of feudalism which interfered with the expansion of trade and industry; but the Jewish capitalist in the Pale was encumbered by arbitrary legal barriers which made his success as a bourgeois practically impossible. He could not establish a factory in an area where he was forbidden to live, and thus could not develop industry in those areas where the strong and willing arms of the peasants were being so profitably employed by Christian factory owners.²⁴ By implication the Jews were almost exclusively kept from entering the mining or metallurgical industries, both so important to industrial capitalism.²⁵ The May Laws meant that not only were Jewish merchants and artisans forced from the countryside, but Jewish capital was kept from leaving the cities. Capitalism of itself knows neither nation nor religion, but it was not allowed to follow its own laws of development among the Jews.

With a few exceptions among the extremely wealthy Jewish bourgeoisie, Jews were absent from the developing large-scale industry of Russia. Jewish capitalism was perforce petty capitalism, the capitalism of small merchants, brokers and jobbers. Jewish factories, where they existed, were small and most likely lacked mechanical power. In Poland the

average number of workmen in factories owned by Jews was 30, in those owned by non-Jews it was 102.²⁶ Twenty-seven per cent of the Jewish factories had mechanical power, but sixty-nine per cent of the non-Jewish were so equipped.²⁷ Even in Lodz where the Jews had been active in the clothing industry, the same general situation prevailed: in Jewish factories there was an average of 83 workingmen, in the non-Jewish 282. While only 12.5 per cent of the non-Jewish factories lacked mechanical power, 37% of the Jewish did.²⁸

The occupational structure of the Jews was affected accordingly. Non-Jewish employers preferred to hire the hardy peasants who were more accustomed to heavy labor and would not demand Saturday as a day of rest. Among non-Jewish factories in Poland less than one per cent of the workers were Jews,²⁹ and Jews were almost entirely absent from the sugar-beet, lumber, and mining industries.³⁰ The Jew of the Pale was almost never a farmer, and rarely a worker in a big factory. If he supported himself at all, he was either an artisan in a small shop or a merchant struggling to make a profit in a highly competitive market.

Behind the statistics stood the grim realities of pauperism and general misery. By the end of the century fully 40% of Russian Jewry were completely dependent on charity.³¹ One Hebrew poet of the time noted the increasingly woeful state of his people and noted:

Neither storm, wind, nor starshine by night
 And the days neither cloudy nor bright--
 O my people, how sad is thy state,
 How gray and how cheerless thy fate.³²

The shtetl had given way to the Jewish street where one saw what an eye-witness described:

... destitution, poverty, and privation, need and hunger in the fullest meaning of the word, sweating-system, shrunken chests, lifeless eyes, pale faces, sick and tubercular lungs.³³

The mood in the Pale was one of anxiety, despair, and a growing feeling that the limit had been reached, that something, something radical, had to be done. But what was the answer to this misery of day-to-day existence, a misery suffered because one was a Jew? Pobedonostzev, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, gave his solution to the Jewish problem: "One third will die out, the other third will emigrate, and the rest will dissolve itself without leaving any traces."³⁴ Many did die, thousands of others left in a chaotic flood for better lands, and some converted. But a few, a rather significant few, began to think.

The possibilities for action within the Pale were limited. The Jews had neither the resources nor the power to organize welfare societies or openly combat the decrees handed down from above. But some of them did have the power to think. The Haskalah had created a Jewish intelligentsia educated to the ways and ideas of the modern world. These eager students had come to think of themselves as Russians and had responded with alacrity to the invitation to leave the shtetl. For such maskilim the pogroms and May Laws were an incredible yet undeniable phenomenon. They too, along with their untutored and less wordly brethren, were subject to restrictions. A strict numerus clausus was established for the Russian school system, including the universities. Teaching, open as a

profession to the Jews since 1828, was now considered closed to them, along with all other government employment. The proportion of Jews allowable as members of the bar was cut from 22 to 9 per cent, and many graduate lawyers were forced to seek employment as bank clerks.³⁵

The disillusionment with the emancipation was sudden and practically complete. One Jewish intellectual, writing shortly after the enactment of the May Laws, expressed the frustration of his generation:

When I think of what was done to us, how we were taught to love Russia and the Russian world, how we were lured into introducing the Russian language and everything Russian into our homes; that our children know no other language but Russian, and how we are now rejected and hounded...my heart is filled with corroding despair from which there is no escape.³⁶

The problem of the Jewish intellectual after 1881 was not merely one of professional disappointment or the frustration of not being able to pursue a career. His trouble was deeper than that--it involved the question of his very identity. He suffered the "indignity of belonging nowhere and the great need of belonging somewhere."³⁷ The tenets of Orthodox Judaism had remained the same during the years that he was immersed in Nietzsche and Dostoevsky; he had changed but his people had not. Rejected by Russian society, marked as a Jew and forced to be one, he was rudely cast back into the bosom of his people. Unable to believe or think as Jews had believed and thought for centuries, he was nonetheless a Jew; between himself and his people yawned a gap like that which lay between the Russian intelligentsia and their people--he was related somehow to those who were so different from himself.

If he was a Jew, he was not one in the same way his grandfather was. What then did it mean to be a Jew? What was he? Who was he?

There were some of Jewish origin who joined the revolutionary movement. The Jewish problem they considered to be but one of the many evils caused by Tsarist oppression. They disclaimed any Jewish identity and found that, though they could find no entrance to Russian life itself, in the revolutionary movement all were comrades fighting together for a new and better world in which national and class distinctions would cease. Leon Trotsky was typical of the Jewish youth of this sort.

The son of a well-to-do landowner in the Ukraine, Trotsky was an outstanding student while a boy and was therefore unaffected by the restriction on Jewish enrollment.³⁸ He recalled that the discrimination he saw in his youth was

one of the underlying causes of my dissatisfaction with the existing order but it was lost among all the other phases of social injustice. It never played a leading part--not even a recognized one--in the lists of my grievances.³⁹

He became a vocal exponent of cosmopolitanism in the Russian Social Democratic Party, and a foe of all expressions of Jewish nationalism. Once in a debate on the Jewish question the Bund leader, Vladimir Medem, hurled a challenge at Trotsky to define his identity: "As for your own person, you cannot ignore the fact that you belong to a definite nation. You consider yourself, I take it, to be either a Russian or a Jew." Trotsky shot back his reply: "You are wrong! I am a social-democrat, and that's all."⁴⁰

Trotsky and those like him had found their way, they knew

who they were: Russian revolutionaries, without hint or threat of hyphenation. But hundreds of others could not, or would not take the road to assimilation. They were united by their determination to do something, to be active and energetic in some fruitful progressive endeavor. They were united by their inability to assimilate, their consequent confusion and searching. They were united, too, by their common longing for a new identity, for some way they could find to end the rent in their souls. They had left the tabernacle wherein were stored the tablets of the covenant, but had remained in the camp. They were lost there, and they called out for someone to guide them:

Even more am I puzzled by the mixture of ideas among us... . We are always engaged in conflict and argument because of our various programs, each one separate... . The devil dances among us and divides us. Therefore I beg you to explain and make clear all these concepts so that we can understand each other and don't become the laughing stock of our enemies.⁴¹

Thus wrote one student to Nachman Syrkin in 1901. He did not complain of a lack of ideas or points of view--these the intelligentsia had in abundance. Some preached a return to the long forsaken homeland in Zion, while others claimed that a spiritual revival was necessary first. The Hebraists opposed the Yiddishists, the socialists fought with the bourgeoisie. Some wanted to help the workers, others the land. And there were some more, not just a handful, who wanted to do both. The student continued his letter:

In our circles are people, chiefly among the young who still study in Yeshivas, who have Zionist impulses and yet believe in a collectivist program, who want a legally

secured homestead and at the same time think of the progress of the proletariat. They dream the national dream, yet are drawn to the masses of workers. These are people who want to hold the string at both ends, and who are left hanging in mid-air. They complain both about Zionism and the Bund...till now it is not sufficiently clear if Zionism is an answer for all or a majority of the people; as an answer for a minority it loses most of its attraction ...the bourgeois character of Zionism antagonizes every decent person...the Bundists follow Marx's point of view about the Jewish masses like cattle. They accept this viewpoint uncritically even though the Jewish masses live in various countries and under economic conditions which are peculiar to the Jewish people.⁴²

Could one be a Zionist and a Socialist? Was it possible to fight for the proletariat and the national homeland at the same time? Many, if not most said, no!--one must choose between such mutually exclusive aspirations. But there were some who would not listen to this negation, and searched for a way to say yes. The times were ripe for a man of determination and energy, of imagination and intellect, to lead the way. The times were ripe for Ber Borochov.

Chapter II - A Biography: Young Man Borochoy

At first glance it appears incongruous that the theoretician of a Socialist Zionist movement should emerge from the quiet Ukrainian city of Poltava. Surrounded by forests and in the heart of a rich agricultural area,⁴³ Poltava lacked both a large Jewish population and big industry. Whereas the percentage of Jews in the local population in the Pale as a whole was 11.6, in the District of Poltava it was only 4%.⁴⁴ Some of the characteristics that marked the mass of Jewry in the Pale were absent from Poltava: the Chassidism of Volhynia, the Orthodoxy of Poland and the yeshivot and talmudic scholarship of Lithuania--all were unknown.⁴⁵ The lack of industry meant there was no significant proletariat, neither Russian, Ukrainian, nor Jewish. Because there were not sufficient numbers of Jewish workers there was no Jewish labor movement in Poltava. Rumors about the Bund were heard from afar, but the Jewish youth of the town, who spoke Russian and hardly knew Yiddish at all, had no access to proletarian propaganda from Jewish socialists.

But the ideas of Marxist Socialism, the theory of the class struggle and the doctrine of dialectical materialism, were readily available. The Tsarist government had chosen Poltava as a center of political exile for convicted Russian revolutionaries, and "among the best of the Russian intellectual

forces,"⁴⁶ including men of the calibre of Martov, were temporarily settled there. One historian of Russia has stressed the importance of distinguishing between exile and imprisonment:

Exiled persons did not necessarily suffer great material hardships... . They were forbidden to leave the place of exile, but within it they could live as they wished...⁴⁷...they could meet whom they wished...⁴⁷

The exiled revolutionaries were quite active in the town; they spoke freely and had considerable impact on the local intelligentsia. Yitschak Ben Tsvi, a younger contemporary of Borochoy, was growing up in Poltava at this time, and he recorded subsequently the vivid impression these exiles made on the Jewish youth:

... a concentration of intellectual forces of this sort stirred up ferment in the midst of the student youth--and first and foremost the students of the government schools--and especially the children of the Jewish middle class, were attracted to the new ideas and were hooked to the wagon of the Russian revolution...⁴⁸

Ben Tsvi concludes that "their influence on the minds of the younger generation was enormous."⁴⁹ If there was an ideological vacuum in Poltava, it was only in the sense that revolutionary ideas, were not being taught to Jews by Jews. Marxism was being taught, and taught very effectively. The youth flocked to the lectures given by the exiles, and heard the views of Marx and Engels being propagated by Russians in the name of the coming Russian revolution.

Though the arrival of the exiles brought socialism into the intellectual climate of the town, the national question was already one of considerable importance. The peasants

of the region were Ukrainians rooted to their folk traditions and language, but in the city the middle and upper classes had adopted Russian culture and engaged in "the worship of Peter the Great."⁵⁰ Though a movement for Ukrainian national liberation was beginning to stir, national oppression was the order of the day: it was forbidden to speak Ukrainian in the schools, and neither press nor theatre in that language were permitted.⁵¹

Against the general background of incipient Ukrainian nationalism, Jewish nationalism, and Zionism in particular, also was evident. The Chibat Zion movement had formed a cell there in the 1880's and a number of the local Jews had taken part in the immigration of the Biluim. Still later several of the Jewish teachers of the town had taken themselves and their families to Palestine. This created "an ineradicable impression in the midst of the entire Jewish settlement... in general, and on the youth in particular."⁵²

This was Poltava at the turn of the century: a theatre where the concepts of both socialism and nationalism received star billing. On her stage the problems of oppressed workers and oppressed nations appeared side by side; the featured performers included both those who proclaimed the coming great day of redemption from capitalism and the Tsar and some who had actually acted to end what they conceived to be the national tragedy of Galut. It was on this stage that Ber Borochoy was to act and deliver his lines.

Ber Borochov was born on June 22, 1881 in the small town of Zolotonoshi in the district of Poltava. Because of the imminent threat of pogroms, his parents moved to the district capital shortly after his birth.⁵³ His father, Mosheh Aaron was a maskil who made his living by teaching Hebrew and who had been one of the founders of the Chovevei Tzion in the region. Young Borochov was nicknamed "Buria" and from childhood appeared to be a talented boy; he learned quickly and was blessed with a good memory.⁵⁴

At the age of eleven he entered the classical gymnasium and completed his studies eight years later. From the time that he entered the government school, his Hebrew education ceased, and he learned Yiddish only at a later age. His father reports that the presence of Chibat Zionism in the home awakened "a longing [In Buria] for the Holy Land".⁵⁵

At the age of ten he actually tried to run away from home to Palestine but failed.⁵⁶ He tried again some years later. One of his biographers notes that

[In school] His instructors acknowledged his scholarship but resented his lack of discipline. Once, having escaped punishment in school, he decided for the second time to leave for Palestine.⁵⁷

The second attempt failed like the first, but we should note the fact that not only was he apparently unruly and rebellious in school, but also that escape from punishment and leaving for Palestine were interlinked. Young Buria was especially irritated, his father writes, by the overt anti-semitic discrimination practiced by some of the teachers in the school.⁵⁸

Buria was a serious student and read widely.⁵⁹ He taught himself classical languages, philosophy, sociology and

economics.⁶⁰ He delved into mathematics, natural science, history, ethics, logic and psychology.⁶¹ In his late teens he organized a group of young people and lectured to them on philosophy and history.⁶² The subjects he chose for his discourses were sober: Ibsen, Nietzsche, the position of woman in society.⁶³ Ben Tsvi recalls that they used to say in Poltava: "It is impossible to get the books of Kant and Schopenhauer in the libraries; it's a sign that Borochof and his group are occupied with German philosophy now."⁶⁴ Borochof's wife remembers that Buria was the organizer and central figure in social as well as intellectual matters among the youth of Poltava; he was recognized as leader and guide. She also remarks on his "serious eyes" and introspective nature as a youth.⁶⁵

As a teenager the pattern of Borochof the adult was already clearly marked. A young intellectual, rebellious in nature, he had himself been subject to anti-semitism at school. Buria, the lad, had been the mentor of his comrades; Borochof, the man, was likewise to provide intellectual leadership for a Socialist Zionist elite.

In September, 1900, Borochof, now a young man of nineteen, joined the Russian Social Democratic Party. Borochof, who claimed he already knew Marx's Capital by heart, had the task of agitating among the workers, both Christian and Jewish.⁶⁶ But by May of the next year he had been expelled from the party. The reasons for his expulsion are not clear, and at

least two different explanations for the incident have been given. One is from Borochoff himself, who looked back more than ten years later and noted:

I do not remember what made me change my ideas. It must have been after a chance joint meeting of Jewish and Christian workers that the truth of Socialist Zionism dawned on me. The committee of the Russian Party then discovered that I had a bad influence on the workers--I was teaching them to think for themselves. I was accordingly expelled from the Russian Social Democratic Party.⁶⁷

But Yitschak Ben Tsvi, who knew Borochoff well at this time, gives a different account of what may have been Borochoff's inner motivation. Ben Tsvi, who generally writes in a highly appreciative manner of his friend Ber, remarks that Borochoff was not satisfied:

...either because his soul thirsted to go deeply and to sink into the complexities of socialist theory and to draw water from the living well--and he was not able to slake his thirst from second or third hand vessels and to be one who pours water on the hands of the great ones of the generation,* or because he did not find an answer and a solution in the existing party and its literature to the Jewish national question which gave him no rest.⁶⁸

At the conclusion of this study, after we have analyzed Borochoff's ideology of Socialist Zionism in some detail, we will be in a better position to evaluate Ben Tsvi's remarks. But we should at least note in passing that one of the reasons for Borochoff's dissatisfaction may have been his subordinate rank in the Russian party. Given what we already know about Buria, the youth who was always the leader, organizer, and planner, Ben Tsvi's conjecture gains in probability. Young Borochoff seems to have been the sort of man who could not

*אם משום שנפשו צמאה להחזיק ולצלול בנכחי החזרה
הסוציאליסטית ולשאוב מים מחוך המעין החי-- ולא
יכול לרווח את צמאוננו מכלי שני או שלישי ולהיות
יוצק מים על ידי גאונני הדור

tolerate being a follower. It was not long before he was once again a leader.

Borochoy, the disenfranchised Social Democrat, now faced a problem. As he himself tells it:

What can an expelled Russian Social Democrat do when he becomes a Zionist unbeliever? I joined a large educational club of Jewish students and made them the first Poale Zionists in Russia.⁶⁹

It is not clear which "club" Borochoy is referring to, and scholarship would benefit if more information on it and its membership were available. Be that as it may, in 1902 an anti-Zionist article by a certain Bickerman appeared, and Borochoy wrote a reply, which was never published. At about this time he began to speak publicly on the subject of Zionism before the various parties of his region.⁷⁰ Shortly afterward an event which had enormous impact on the Jewish youth of the Pale occurred: the pogrom at Kishinev. Until then the young Jews had only heard or read second hand reports of the bloody incidents of the 1880's, but now, for the first time, there had been a major pogrom in their lifetimes.⁷¹ They were stunned and also stirred to action.

In the wake of Kishinev, Herzl proposed to the Zionist Congress that Uganda be considered as a land for immediate colonization in order to provide relief for the Jews of Eastern Europe. Herzl's action split the Zionist organization between those "Zionist Zionists" who believed the Jewish state could be established only in Palestine, and the "Territorialists" who were ready to accept Uganda, or any other land, that might be made available for Jewish colonization. At the end of 1904

embarked on a propaganda tour for the General Zionists to combat Territorialism, which had gained a following in the Pale. He traveled through Lithuania and Poland and then back into the Ukraine, giving speeches and joining in debates.⁷²

David Smilanski has left a memoir recording his impressions on hearing Borochoy speak in a debate at Elizabethgrad in 1904. One by one a number of speakers had mounted the platform and, in the course of expressing their views, also sought to refute the arguments of the other debaters. It was two in the morning before Borochoy's turn came and the audience was eager to adjourn.

He began to speak in a low, hoarse voice, and little by little he raised his voice; and in firm and incisive language he answered his opponents on each point, one by one. He spiced his words with historical, scientific, and logical proofs. His speech lasted more than two hours and all of them sat fixed to their seats, attentively listening in protracted silence to every syllable and word that came from the mouth of the speaker.⁷³

Even allowing for Smilanski's admiration of Borochoy it is apparent that he was a "superb lecturer and debater."⁷⁴ But aside from any effect his speeches may have had, what he saw on the tour had a great impact on Borochoy himself. For the first time he came into contact with the Jewish masses and the Bund which monopolized their organization. Ben Tsvi notes that this experience with great numbers of Jewish workers and artisans showed him "the firm basis for the synthetic movement which he had thought and pondered in his mind for a long time."⁷⁵ And Borochoy must have done much musing and thinking--about Socialism and sufferings of the Jews, and about Palestine and the masses in the hands of the Bund. Soon he would have the opportunity to formulate his musings for others to read.

A number of groups, all bearing the name Poale Zion, had begun to spring up on their own accord in various places in the Pale--in Vilna, Warsaw, Odessa, Minsk, Karim, Ekaterinoslav, and Rostov.⁷⁶ They were united by the common belief that a synthesis between Zionism and Socialism was needed, but by little else. This early period was one of

confusion and creation, a period of stormy disputes and partisan war of ideas, a war which devoured much strength and energy from both sides.⁷⁷

Many different points of view were present in the movement and some had even formed organizational factions of their own. The Zionist Socialists (S.S.) were territorialists, and the Seimists (or Serp), while not anti-Palestine, believed an autonomous Seim or parliament must be achieved before colonization could be effective.⁷⁸ The young movement was groping and might flounder as a result of the disunity unless something were provided to hold it together.

Ber Borochoy, in the meantime, had been married and went with his bride to study in Berlin. While abroad he took part in the Zionist Congress at Basel,⁷⁹ but returned to Russia just as the Revolution of 1905 was taking place. In November of that year he joined the Poale Zion officially and took part in the party council at Poltava.⁸⁰ In December, though ill with a high fever, he left for the party council of the southern area at Berdichev where he was the main speaker for the Palestinians.⁸¹ But the most crucial conference in the history of the young party took place at Poltava in February, 1906, for it was here that its ideology was created. As Borochoy reminisced later:

The conference began on Purim eve...in the presence of thirty delegates. Meetings were held under cover in the small room of a Jewish bakery on the outskirts of the city. For seven days and night we eat and slept there, not taking a step outside for fear the Czarist police would notice us. The profoundest theoretical questions and the most difficult organizational problems were courageously and enthusiastically dealt with in that uncomfortable environment.⁸²

The committee, of which Borochoy was the accepted leader, had the job of preparing a platform or statement of principles which would give direction to the movement and bring order into the organizational and ideological chaos of the time. The way in which the platform was formulated is most interesting: Borochoy would speak first, and when he was finished the others would debate and argue over his presentation. Borochoy later took the minutes of the proceedings and worked them into a symmetrical form.⁸³ Notwithstanding the careful precautions that had been taken, the police detected the traces of the participants in the conference and a number of them, including Borochoy, were arrested and jailed. While in jail Borochoy gave lectures to some Ukrainian peasants who were being held for participating in a recent agrarian revolt; he spoke to them on political and social topics, but especially on the national question. Ultimately a group within the Ukrainian Social Democrats was formed which espoused Borochoy's views in the name of Ukrainian nationalism; they called themselves "Borochovist."⁸⁴

After about six months Borochoy's release was arranged by the party,⁸⁵ and he left Russia to begin a decade of wandering abroad. He went first to Galicia,⁸⁶ and then on to Vienna where he served from 1907 to 1910 as the editor of the Poale

Dion organ, Das Freie Wort.⁸⁷ In 1914, he was in London for three months and spent all day, every day, working in the British Museum, just as had his teacher Karl Marx.⁸⁸ With the outbreak of World War I he went to America with his wife and small daughter, and there he was active during most of the war years as a writer and publicist for the party.⁸⁹ He edited Der Yiddisher Kampfer and Der Yiddisher Arbeiter.⁹⁰

By this time he had become quite a competent scholar of the Yiddish language, a tongue he had mastered only when already an adult. He published such works as The Tasks of Yiddish Philology and The Library of the Yiddish Philologist, and began work on a History of the Yiddish Language and Literature.⁹¹ He also introduced a new system of Yiddish orthography which is the basis for the one in general use at the present time.⁹²

But the role of editor-scholar was not suited to Borochoy. In June, 1917, shortly after the Kerensky government had taken over in Russia, Borochoy returned to the land of his birth, leaving his family in Stockholm.⁹³ He took part in the People's Soviet in Kiev and was one of a delegation sent to the National Congress called by Kerensky. He was feverishly active during these decisive days before the Bolshevik Revolution and, after a strenuous propaganda journey as the emissary of his party, he fell ill with an infection in his lungs. On December 17, 1917, he died of his illness in Kiev. He was thirty-six years old.⁹⁴

Chapter III - The Ideological Traditions

According to dialectical materialism a synthesis is born out of the tension between a thesis and its antithesis. Ber Borochov believed his Socialist Zionism was precisely such a synthetic ideology. He claimed to have resolved the contradiction between two opposed traditions of thought: Marxism and Jewish nationalism. We will be able to determine to what extent Borochov actually achieved a synthesis and brought harmony in place of incompatibility only after we have surveyed the relevant aspects of both thesis and antithesis.

A. Socialism: "Workingmen of all lands - unite!"

1. Karl Marx

The central figure in the development of Socialist theory in Western Europe was Karl Marx, the converted Jew from the Rhineland. To understand his views we must remember that Marx did not formulate "scientific socialism" as an academic exercise in economic theory. His Socialism was not an armchair philosophy but a plan for social revolution;⁹⁵ he was interested in changing society, not merely studying it. Above all he wanted to bring about a radical restructuring of the economic and political conditions of his day.

Marx called his analysis "scientific" because it was based on an appeal to empirical evidence and reason, as indicative

of general laws, rather than tradition. To substantiate his analyses and predictions, he cited statistics and historical facts, not texts or moral principles. Although Marx was a would-be transformer of existing institutions, his system itself was susceptible to institutionalization. In later generations Marxism became a dogmatic faith, a set of principles assumed to be immune from any appeal to data and hence true without question. Ironically, the teachings of the scholar-revolutionary who came to overthrow traditions became a tradition in their own right.

But if Marxism became the dogma of a powerful international movement, it began as the Weltanschauung of a scholarly young man who observed his society closely, disliked what he saw, and sought to do something about it. He 'did something' by formulating the two theories on the nature of society and its dynamics which are the kernel of Marxism: the theories of dialectical materialism and of the class struggle.

The theory of dialectical materialism asserts that matter, rather than any essence or idea, is the foundation of all reality. Matter, the real, nature--all are terms for the same entity, and any attempt to understand human life must begin with its material base. Man's existence depends on his ability to satisfy his life needs within the limits set by his natural environment. And of all the environmental conditions in which man lives, the most important are the economic, for they are the means by which man produces commodities to satisfy his vital requirements. These economic conditions Marx calls "powers of production",⁹⁶ and the position of a man in his society is defined by his relation-

ship to these "powers of production". In other words, the "powers of production" determine the "relations of production."⁹⁷

In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations which are indispensable and independent of their will: these relations of production correspond to a definite stage in the development of their powers of production.⁹⁸

Those members of a society who have the same or similar relationship to the powers of production constitute a class, Although a class is primarily an economic entity, it is not exclusively so. Each class creates a world view consistent with its relations of production:

Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire super-structure of distinct and peculiarly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought, and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations.⁹⁹

Contrary to the assertions of many of his critics, Marx did not try to reduce the ideological aspects of reality to the material; but he did maintain that "what and how men think is greatly affected by the conditions under which they live".¹⁰⁰ In other words, "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary their social existence determines their consciousness."¹⁰¹

The foregoing constitutes the statics of society--how society looks when it is assumed to stand still for analysis and examination. But every society is dynamic; it changes and develops. In social evolution a certain pattern is discernible:

At a certain stage in their development, the material powers of production in society come into conflict with the existing relations of production...from forms for the development of the powers of production these relations turn into fetters upon them. Then comes

the period of social revolution. With the change in the economic foundation the whole vast superstructure is fairly rapidly transformed.¹⁰²

Out of this tension between advanced powers of production and relations of production that have become inappropriate the class struggle is born. Marx's collaborator Engels remarked that since the dissolution of primitive communism:

all history has been a history of class struggles, of struggles between exploited and exploiting, between dominated and dominating classes at various stages of social development.¹⁰³

Marx believed that this class struggle permeated the societies of ancient and feudal times but was especially vigorous in the capitalistic society:

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.¹⁰⁴

The capitalistic form of production is expansive by its very nature; it must continually expand and seek new opportunities for development. This dynamism is capitalism's defining characteristic--and also its fatal flaw. Bourgeois society bears within itself a contradiction that will eventually destroy it. Industrial capitalism continually out-produces itself; the great factories turn out more than the society can consume and cause recurring crises which are ever increasing in severity. As the age of small, independent capital yields to the era of the big bourgeoisie, capital tends to be concentrated more and more in the hands of a small number of capitalists. Gradually the middle layers disappear and society becomes polarized. The class struggle under capitalism is unique because:

... it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting into two great hostile camps; into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.¹⁰⁵

The class struggle crystallizes into two directly opposing forces and larger and larger factories come into the hands of fewer and fewer owners; the last act in the tragic drama of capitalism begins. When in small factories, the workers are competitive and hence easily exploitable. But

The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.¹⁰⁶

The growing strength of the industrial bourgeoisie implies the creation of the even more powerful industrial proletariat. When conditions are ripe, the workers will overthrow the existing society and establish a radically new and different order called Socialism:

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.¹⁰⁷

Classes will be abolished, and the exploitation and oppression inherent in a class society will end forever. Man will live nobly, and creatively, and society will bravely "inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."¹⁰⁸

Several elements in Marx's writings were especially important in the development of the theories which later came to be proclaimed in his name. Although he had declared that the "proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class,"¹⁰⁹ Marx did not mean to imply that the workers themselves had figured out the often complicated and highly technical theories which explained exploitation. Marx had a special place in the class struggle for an intelligentsia not itself of working class origin:

...a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.¹¹⁰

In other words, Marx had a place in his system for himself, and that place, at the head of the rising and destined-to-be victorious working class, was dominant. The workers would take over society and transform it, but the authors of the battle plans and the architects of the new order would be Marx and his associates. In later years and under different circumstances the intellectual elite in many lands would find Marx's analysis useful for analysing the ills of their societies, and they would be grateful that the master had created such a commanding role for themselves. 'Marx has provided the medical text-book, but society cannot be expected to cure itself,' the intelligentsia would argue. 'A doctor is required, one who understands the technical jargon of medical science and possesses the requisite skills for the delicate art of social surgery.'

After Marx's death, Engels surveyed what his colleague

had achieved:

...Marx...first discovered the great law of motion of history, the law according to which all historical struggles, whether they proceed in the political, religious, philosophical or some other ideological domain, are in fact only the more or less clear expression of struggles of social classes...¹¹¹

Indeed, basic to Marx's position is the principle that history is moving in a definite and discernible direction. Marx believed that proper analysis of the direction of this historical movement was essential to the revolution. History was on the side of the revolution, and if it were determined where the course of events was going, then the proletariat--or rather its leadership--would know how to plan. History was thus a criterion of proper action and, by implication, the ultimate test of the correctness of any working class ideology. The only problem was deciphering the oracle. Any program that could be shown to be in line with the course of events was 'progressive' or 'revolutionary' and therefore guaranteed to succeed. To oppose the march of history was not only foolish but 'reactionary'. The street-car named history is going where its tracks lead it. To try to stop the car or attempt to make it run in a different direction would be futile. The only thing to do is to get on board, or else push from behind to make it move a little faster.

G. D. H. Cole, the historian of Socialism, has remarked:

...the Materialist Conception of History triumphantly worked--not so as to explain every event, or so as to exclude the operation of other causes, but as providing the indispensable key to an otherwise often unintelligible sequence of historical changes which were transforming the lives of men.¹¹²

This pragmatic success of his theories was exactly what Marx had wanted. Though he did not live to see the revolution, he did witness in his lifetime the creation of a great international movement strongly influenced, if not dominated, by his views and personality. The question of whether Marx's analysis was correct is not relevant; what mattered was that men believed he was right. Socialists were convinced that by utilizing Marx's theories they could understand their societies perfectly. Thus the concepts which Marx formulated became the ideology of a mass movement, and integrally connected with these ideas was a vocabulary or system of words.

From one point of view the Marxist lexicon could be understood as descriptive of objective phenomenon. 'Class', 'means of production', 'surplus value'--these were tags given to entities which Marx claimed were really existent. But of at least equal significance for the history of Socialism were the values beyond the rational and descriptive that much of the Marxist terminology acquired. Words like 'freedom', 'progressive', and 'reactionary' were easily capable of carrying emotional freight in addition to their descriptive cargo. Indeed, for a revolutionary movement much of the jargon was valuable precisely because of its associated feeling tones which could be used to evoke desired emotions in the listener or reader. 'Bourgeois' could be either an adjective referring to a certain class in society or a synonym for evil. 'Proletarian' meant both 'of the working class' and 'nobly virtuous'. The Marxist lexicon was capable of serving two distinct purposes: it could be a tool for the communication of information and an equally valuable means for stirring emotions--and obscuring thought.

Marx, the theoretician of the class struggle, was not overly interested in nationalism; it was a "line of thought peripheral of his principal concerns."¹¹³ He never assayed a definition of the 'nation' and used the term with considerable looseness. On occasion he even took 'nation' to be interchangeable with 'society', as in this passage: "...even a whole society, a nation, and indeed all societies together, are not the owners of the earth."¹¹⁴

In a discussion with Engels Marx once spoke of the "natural basis" of nationality, and remarked that the whole system of production, the natural and artificial material surroundings, was responsible for the differences among nations. Not biology, culture, or historic consciousness but differences in material environment caused the formation of the various nations.¹¹⁵ Marx never developed this notion, and his excursions into the theory of the nation remained what one scholar has called "random and informal reflections."¹¹⁶ Therefore, there is reason to believe that Marx thought that the nation, like the class, was rooted in the natural or material; but it is important to remember Marx did not conceive of the natural as the immutable. Nature must be transformed by man; society actively reshapes the natural to suit specifically human needs and purposes. Consequently Marx believed that one could leave one's nation of birth for another.¹¹⁷ Indeed, he once remarked that "even the natural differences within the species, like racial differences...can and must be done away with historically."¹¹⁸ Nationality was not an indissoluble bond for the man who, though of German birth, lived in many lands and eventually settled in England.

What were Marx's views about the relationship between nationalism and the proletarian movement? In one of the most famous and important passages of the Manifesto he declared:

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself the nation, it is, so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word.

National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world-market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.

The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action, of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat.

In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another is put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.¹¹⁹

The significance of these paragraphs lies in the fact that they were subject to two radically different interpretations. A cosmopolitan Marxist could use this text to support his claim that Marx believed in the end of nationalism. But a nationalist could, with equal justification, point to another section of the same document and argue that the master was really lecturing about the need for progressive nationalism on the part of the working class. The former could stress that "national differences...are daily more and more vanishing," and that therefore it was the job of the proletariat to ignore

nationalism and speed the international victory of all workers. But the latter could retort that the worker was not a nationalist in Marx's day only because he had no stake in the nation. The job of the working class was to "constitute itself the nation," to become what one student of Marx calls the "national class".¹²⁰ These Socialists with nationalist convictions could also cite another passage in the Manifesto to support their contentions:

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.¹²¹

Since the proletariat was always the most progressive class in every nation it was entitled to identify its interests with those of the nation as a whole. From this point of view it could be argued that since the proletariat was the leading class of the nation, the working man was by nature the nationalist par excellence, for his nationalism was compatible with speeding the course of historical development.¹²² Marx's views on nationalism were an ambiguous legacy and were subject to various interpretations. As we shall see, some of these interpretations would have surprised the master.

Though Marx's successors may have become involved in lengthy discussions on nationalism, Marx himself did not. We must remember that he was not a mere theoretician; he wanted to see the revolution and see it soon, if possible. He believed that the revolution would take place in Western Europe, and for him the "core of the universe of Revolution"¹²³ was England, France, Germany, and the United States. For tactical reasons, therefore, Marx did not a priori oppose all

national movements. He thought that the leadership of the proletariat must always carefully examine a national movement to determine whether it should receive working class support, and the credentials were always to be scrutinized in the light of the one supreme criterion:

...the economic emancipation of the working class is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinated as means... .¹²⁴

Nationalism was not always and automatically either a progressive or reactionary force.

Since only a large, unified state could develop the industrial economy which was a prerequisite to revolution, any national movement which retarded the evolution of such states was 'reactionary'. In actual practice, Marx favored supporting the national aspirations of large peoples and denying those of the small. He opposed Irish independence,¹²⁵ called the Czechs a "dying nationality",¹²⁶ and asserted that the Austrian Slavs would fall victim to "the action of historical causes that inevitably absorbs (them) into a more energetic stock."¹²⁷ He called the Rumanians and the Serbs "counter-revolutionary nations",¹²⁸ yet he supported the independence of "heroic Poland" from Russia, "that barbarous power", because it would weaken the strength of the principal reactionary government on the continent.¹²⁹

Zionism as a political movement was not a reality in Marx's lifetime, and he never expressed any opinion about the restoration of Palestine to the Jews. He has not even left a reaction to Moses Hess' Rome and Jerusalem, which was published while he was alive. Nonetheless Marx's views on the

Jews were stated clearly and, especially in light of his general attitude toward the nationalism of small peoples, it is not difficult to project what his opinion of Zionism would have been.

In his younger days, even before he wrote On the Jewish Question, Marx came out in favor of the political emancipation of the Jews in the Rhineland. He justified this action by noting its effect in weakening the clerical state:

As many holes as possible should be driven into the Christian state in order to smuggle in, as much as we can, the rational point of view.¹³⁰

The foregoing remark is obviously not a sign of favorable attitude toward Jewish nationalism.

On another occasion he referred to the Jews as "a religious sect".¹³¹ Once, he commented on the Jews of Poland and Bohemia and remarked that "if they belong to any nationality, they are in these countries rather Germans than Bohemians."¹³²

Marx gave more extensive expression to his views on the Jews in his On the Jewish Question. Here he equated the Jews with all the evils of commercial capitalism:

What is the worldly basis of Judaism?
Practical necessity, selfishness. What is
the worldly culture of the Jews? Commerce.
What his worldly God? Money.¹³³

The Jews are the dung of society,¹³⁴ and their nationality is "chimerical".¹³⁵ They are "a people without a land" and hence really no people at all.¹³⁶ The solution to the Jewish problem will be found only under socialism. In the socialist society of the future the Jews will disappear along with the system of exploitation they represent:

We recognize therefore in Judaism a generally present anti-social element which has been raised to its present peak by historical development, in which the Jews eagerly assisted, and now it has of necessity to dissolve itself. In its final meaning the emancipation of the Jews is the emancipation of humanity from Judaism.¹³⁷

Marx had once remarked that problems are "abolished", not "solved". His solution to the Jewish question was to abolish it by means of assimilation under socialism.¹³⁸ And as to what his views on Zionism would have been, Edmund Silberner is undoubtedly correct when he writes:

It is obvious...that he [Marx] could attach no importance whatsoever to dreams aiming at the political restoration of a group whose very nationality was even unknown.¹³⁹

Marx bequeathed to his inheritors both a major unsolved problem and a clearly marked attitude toward the Jews. The problem was that of accounting for and coming to grips with the phenomenon of nationalism. And in his attitude toward the Jews Marx was one of the founders of what Silberner has called "the anti-semitic tradition of modern socialism."¹⁴⁰ We must now turn to see how the Socialist movement grappled with the problem of nationalism and at the same time developed the tradition of Marxist anti-semitism.

2. Social Democracy in Western Europe

Socialism after Marx was in the embarrassing position of being an international movement in an age of nation states. Along with the growth of industrialism that Marx had predicted, there occurred a progressive democratization of the political machinery of the state. As the basis of suffrage was

broadened throughout Western Europe, Socialists continued to speak of the unity of the proletariat of all lands but also went about the day-to-day business of strengthening their national parties. Behind the verbiage of working class solidarity was the reality of national socialist parties, each politically active in their own countries and some, like the German Social Democrats, quite successful in gaining seats and power in the legislature. As the nineteenth century wore on, West European socialists began to dream of capturing national parliaments with ballots rather than factories with guns.

The decline of revolutionary intransigence culminated in the Paris Conference of the Socialist International in 1900, where representatives of nineteen countries adopted a resolution declaring that:

The winning of political power by the proletariat in a modern democratic state cannot be the result of a coup de main but can come only as the conclusion of long and patient activity for the political and industrial organization of the proletariat, for its physical and moral regeneration, for the gradual winning of seats on municipal bodies and legislative authorities.¹⁴¹

The immediate problems of each party in its homeland tended to make the pan-European revolution something confined to speeches at the congresses. The real field of action however, was the nation, and the International openly confessed this in the Stuttgart Resolution of 1907:

The International is not able to lay down the exact form of working class action against militarism at the right place and time, as this naturally differs in different countries.¹⁴²

The organization which spoke of the unity of the working class

was in actuality a loose federation of national parties, convening regularly to talk and pass resolutions.¹⁴³

Some of these resolutions concerned the Jews, either directly or indirectly. One of the delegates at the Congress in Brussels in 1891 was Abraham Cahan, a representative of the Hebrew Trades of New York. Cahan succeeded in getting the Congress to add to its agenda the consideration of "the policy which the organized working classes of all countries should adopt with regard to the Jewish question."¹⁴⁴ In the discussion on the floor Cahan asked the delegates to pass a declaration of sympathy for the Jewish workers. A vigorous debate followed in which it was noted that since Socialists were in favor of all the oppressed and exploited, it was superfluous to single out one group for special sympathy. Finally a resolution was passed condemning both "anti-semitic and philo-semitic excitations".¹⁴⁵

The apparently innocent wording of the resolution does not hide the fact that it is "the only instance in which friendliness toward any oppressed nationality was ever condemned by any international body."¹⁴⁶ But in Paris, in 1900, the same Socialist International which disapproved of special expressions of sympathy voted a resolution expressing "close and ardent solidarity" with the oppressed Armenians--and remained silent on the question of the persecution of the Jews.¹⁴⁷ Why was the International so loathe to espouse support for the welfare of the Jews? An answer can best be found by examining the specific actions and utterances of the Socialist leaders in two of the largest countries represented in the International--Germany and Austria.

For Western Socialists, German Social Democracy was the very model of what a successful party should be. The German Social Democrats were disciplined, well-organized, and strong. Their strength had been proved by surviving years of hounding under Bismarck and then, once their activities had been legalized, by victory at the polls. German Social Democracy was formidable, and the secret of its power lay in its unity. The French Socialists fought among themselves and squabbled over questions of theory and tactics, but the Germans created an army of voters whose solidarity was tested and proved at election time. To be sure there were national minorities in Germany and the Socialists had to reckon with their presence, but the reckoning was done so as to create one party for the nation as a whole. On the question of Polish workers in East Germany Wilhelm Pfannkuch declared: "We recognize only one German Social Democracy in our organization in which our Polish brothers are comrades with equal rights."¹⁴⁸ There was to be no discrimination among workers: all were German workers no matter what their national origin.

The Jews in Germany were subject to a rising tide of anti-semitic propaganda at this time. Though the Social Democrats did not make anti-semitism a part of their own program, they were not always adverse to others stirring up ferment with anti-Jewish agitation. Wilhelm Liebknecht commented: "Yes, the anti-semites plow and sow, and we Social Democrats will reap. Their successes are therefore not unwelcome to us."¹⁴⁹ Anti-semitism was a sign of social discontent, and ferment was exactly what socialism needed for the revolution; hence some socialists not only justified attacks on the

Jews but eagerly greeted them. One of the party organs wrote in 1881:

...on the path that he Bismarck incites the masses to follow, the Jews are being killed today, and tomorrow it will logically be the turn of the court chaplains, imperial chancellors, kings, emperors, and all the rest of the 'unproductive' gang.¹⁵⁰

Though some Social Democrats opposed anti-semitism, they were careful not to allow their attitude to be identified with "philo-semitism". Eduard Bernstein, the leader of the Revisionists, declared:

...in combatting it anti-semitism I always took care to treat the question as one of democratic equality of rights. It never entered my mind to conceive the Jewish question as a question of a special national right or interest of the Jews.¹⁵¹

After the publication of Herzl's The Jewish State and the convening of the first Zionist Congress at Basel in 1897, political Zionism gained some adherents among the Jews of Western Europe. The German Socialists reacted to this turn of affairs by unanimously condemning Zionism.

Die Neue Zeit spoke for the Orthodox Marxists and called the Zionist movement "the party of the petty bourgeois and intellectuals."¹⁵² For Karl Kautsky the Jews were "a nation of which it is highly debateable whether it really is a nation at all."¹⁵³ Bernstein expressed the Revisionist point of view:

Zionism...is a kind of intoxication which acts like an epidemic...in the last analysis it is only a part of the great wave of nationalistic reaction which has overflowed the bourgeois world and seeks to break into the socialist world as well. Like that wave, it can have only a retarding effect.¹⁵⁴

In other words, Zionism was definitely not a 'progressive' force; affirmation of Jewish national aspirations was equivalent to

denial of the gradually emerging proletarian revolution. Socialists in Germany, whether revolutionary or evolutionary, were confirmed anti-Zionists.

If Zionism was not the answer to the Jewish problem, what was? With one voice, the German Social Democrats reaffirmed Marx's position: the Jewish problem would be solved by the assimilation of the Jews. Bebel believed that "with the fall of bourgeois society, the peculiar nature of the Jew will disappear."¹⁵⁵ Bernstein, himself an assimilated Jew, thought the disappearance of the Jews was unavoidable:

This assimilation is a historical and cultural necessity. If a discussion about it is to reach any fruitful conclusion, the question must not be posed as to whether assimilation should or ought to take place, but as to how it will best take place.¹⁵⁶

In the socialist society of the future there was room for neither Jewish nationalism nor Jews.

Social Democracy in Germany grew strong in a land in the process of unification. But to the south the multi-national Hapsburg Empire was in the course of dissolution; national movements sprang up within Austria and vigorously demanded some form of autonomy. If it expected parliamentary success Austrian Social Democracy was necessarily going to have to develop a policy on nationalities different from that of the German party. The solution of the Austrian Socialists was the organization of their party on the basis of national autonomy. Otto Bauer, worked out a theory by which nationality was to be defined on a personal rather than territorial basis: a member of a national minority was to be guaranteed his national rights wherever he resided. In consonance with the

realities of the Hapsburg Empire, Bauer defined a nation as "the totality of men united through community of fate into a community of character."¹⁵⁷ Bauer's theory was accepted and the prevailing sentiment in the party was that socialism is fully compatible with membership in a nationality. In the words of Engelbert Fernerstorfer, one of the party leaders, internationalism did not require one to "put aside his nationality, that he be non-national or anti-national."¹⁵⁸ At their Congress in 1899 the Austrian Socialists "solemnly affirmed the right of every nationality to national existence and national development".¹⁵⁹ The Congress guaranteed this right to the Germans, Czechs, Poles, Ruthenians, Slovenians, and Italians--but not to the Jews.

Despite the fact that Jewish Socialists were especially active in Galicia,¹⁶⁰ the Jews were denied status as an autonomous nationality. Otto Bauer's remarks are typical of the party's views. He conceded that something of a Jewish nation did exist: "Those Jewish petty bourgeois and workers in Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Galicia, Bukovnia, Rumania, etc. constitute today the Jewish nation."¹⁶¹ But with the advance of industrialism the Jews are being forced into even closer relations with the surrounding nations and hence "capitalist society does not permit them to exist as a nation".¹⁶² Though they are a nation today, "they are ceasing to be one".¹⁶³ Before long, Bauer predicted, they will be completely assimilated:

With the advancing development of capitalism and of the modern state, even the Jews of the East will cease to be a separate nation, and will be absorbed into the other nations, just as the Jews of the West have long since been.¹⁶⁴

If the Jews are disappearing under capitalism, how much the more will they suffer the same fate under Socialism. Victor Adler, himself of Jewish origin, put it tersely if not rather poetically: "The Socialist society will attend the funeral of Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew".¹⁶⁵ Moreover the upsurge of anti-semitism should not bother the Socialist movement. Adler was even willing to grant anti-semitism a 'progressive' role. He declared that the leaders of anti-semitism were actually "promoting the interests of Social Democracy" and that anti-semitism was but a quarrel within the fold of the possessing classes.¹⁶⁶ Hence "Austrian Social Democracy has only the task of taking care not to pull chest-nuts out of the fire either for the Jews or the anti-semites."¹⁶⁷

The Austrian Social Democrats had followed Marx's lead: the future of Jewry was assimilation.

3. Russian Social Democracy

Marx, the International, Western Socialism--all these Borochoy knew only from afar. But Russian Social Democracy was his immediate background. As we have seen, he was actually a member of the party for a brief time, and later fought for the recognition of his Poale Zion group as the Jewish section of the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party. The organizational squabbles of Russian Socialism and the debates over points of theory were part of the ideological atmosphere which Borochoy breathed. From his comrades in Russia, and from those in exile, came many of his ideas; from them too came some attitudes and conceptualizations which he

explicitly rejected in formulating his own ideology.

Marx had considered Russia a stronghold of reaction and the foe from which the developing revolution in Western Europe had the most to fear. Because Russia at the turn of the century was still an autocracy, Social Democracy there necessarily underwent a course of development different from that in the political democracies. There was no Parliament for the Marxists to conquer, no voting proletariat to appeal to. The Revisionism of Bernstein or the moderation of the British Social Democrats were unthinkable in Tsarist Russia. There "the socialist had to be a revolutionary: there was nothing else for him to be."¹⁶⁸ The party's leaders turned their attention to bringing about that revolution.

The Tsarist state was powerful. But the forces of the rising proletariat were even more powerful, and history was working inexorably on behalf of the revolution. All this the Marxist intelligentsia knew and believed. But a dilemma was inherent in this optimistic attitude: what possible role could the individual play in the unfolding drama? What lines could he speak, what action could he perform that would be of any importance? To answer these questions Georgy Plekhanov, the "archpriest of Marxist orthodoxy"¹⁶⁹ in Russia wrote a pamphlet in 1898 entitled "The Role of the Individual in History".

In accordance with the established Marxist tradition, Plekhanov emphasized that the course of history could not be altered. The general trend of events was determined by forces greater than any individual. Nonetheless he affirmed that

"influential individuals can change the individual features of events and some of their particular consequences."¹⁷⁰

Knowledge of historical necessity need not imply quietism. Such knowledge teaches us when not to act--when to abstain from "unnecessary, i.e. useless action".¹⁷¹ But it can do even more than that, for "being conscious of necessity is quite compatible with the most energetic, practical action."¹⁷² Indeed, one who is aware of necessity and consciously identifies with it is the most effective of actors:

... being conscious of the absolute inevitability of a given phenomenon can only increase the energy of a man who sympathizes with it and who regards himself as one of the forces which called it into being.¹⁷³

Flekhanov goes on to comment on Carlyle's concept of the hero and agrees that great men are beginners:

A great man is precisely a beginner because he sees further than others, and desires things more strongly...he is a hero. But he is not a hero in the sense that he can stop, or change, the natural course of things, but in the sense that his activities are the conscious and free expression of this inevitable and unconscious course. Herein lies all his significance; herein lies his whole power. But this significance is colossal, and the power is terrible.¹⁷⁴

The great man, the hero, can influence history. But he can do so only if he concentrates his energies and knows both where and how to bring his influence to bear. As to 'where', Flekhanov believed that "the individual can display his talents only when he occupies the position in society necessary for this."¹⁷⁵ And in discussing 'how', Flekhanov made it clear that the verbal deed of the propagandist or ideologue were especially important:

...if I know in what direction social relations

are changing owing to given changes in the social-economic process of production, I also know in what direction social mentality is changing; consequently, I am able to influence it. Influencing social mentality means influencing historical events. Hence, in a certain sense, I can make history, and there is no need for me to wait while 'it is being made'.¹⁷⁶

In terms of the Russian political scene Plekhanov was saying that an individual at the head of a suitable organization (the 'where', "position in society") who also formulated an influential ideology (the 'how', "influencing social mentality") could make history. We shall shortly see how Ber Borochov, who read Plekhanov as a youth,¹⁷⁷ took these concepts seriously. But first we must note how they were embodied in the thinking and activity of another young Russian, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

Like the Master Marx, Lenin, the apostle to the gentiles, wanted a revolution. To get it he had to have a revolutionary organization, but Lenin realized that closely-knit cells and well-placed conspirators are not enough: "Without a revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement."¹⁷⁸ So Lenin set out to build his revolutionary theory and an organization to go with it.

It would be outside the scope of this study to examine Lenin's revolutionary theory in detail. What is to our purpose is to note that Lenin believed it was essential to adapt Marxism to the special circumstances of Russia. In 1899 he wrote:

We by no means regard the theory of Marx as perfect and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that his theory had only laid the foundation stone of that science on which the socialists must continue to build in every direction, unless they wish to be left behind by life. We believe that it is particularly

necessary for Russian socialists to work out the Marxist theory independently, for this theory gives only general precepts, the details of which must be applied in England rather than in France, in France rather than in Germany, and in Germany rather than in Russia.¹⁷⁹

While paying due respects to the memory of the father of Scientific Socialism, Lenin warned against the folly of using the "letter of Marxism against the spirit of Marxism."¹⁸⁰ The correct Marxist point of view was never determined by the literal text but could be formulated only after judicious exegesis. Interpretation was not only permissible but necessary:

In revising the programme of our party, the advice of Engels and Marx absolutely must be taken into consideration in order to come nearer to the truth, to re-establish Marxism, to purge it of distortions, to direct more correctly the struggle of the working class for its liberation.¹⁸¹

Opening the door for interpretation of Marx meant two things. First of all, it implied the continued flexibility of Marxism. Marx was no longer living to change his mind, and therefore, we, the true disciples, should try to figure out what he would have said about contemporary issues. But allowing for interpretation also meant that new ideas could be brought into Marxism, that new concepts--some of them radically at variance with Marx's own views--could be preached in the name of true Marxism. It meant that Lenin, or anyone else, could defend doctrines that Marx had never held by claiming they were in accord with "the spirit" if not the "letter" of Socialism. And if purists objected, Lenin, or anyone else, could fling the insult of heresy at them saying "A crasser and uglier perversion of Marx's ideas cannot be imagined".¹⁸²

In the Manifesto Marx had noted that "all previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities".¹⁸³ Lenin believed his revolutionary organization was precisely such a minority. The revolution did not require a well-organized mass movement. Such an army of workers and peasants would be useless unless guided by a general staff--a small, well-disciplined revolutionary elite:

We said that in the 1890's there could not yet be Social Democratic consciousness among the workers. This consciousness could only be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working-class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness... .

A small, compact core, consisting of reliable, experienced and hardened workers, with responsible agents in the principal districts and connected by all the rules of strict secrecy with the organizations of revolutionists, can, with the wide support of the masses and without an elaborate set of rules, perform all the functions of a trade-union organization and perform them, moreover in the manner Social Democrats desire.¹⁸⁴

Following Plekhanov's emphasis on the role a single man might play, Lenin believed that "Classes are led by parties, and parties are led by individuals who are called leaders."¹⁸⁵ Lenin's party needed secrecy and "tried revolutionaries",¹⁸⁶ but above all it required unity--not the loose unity of federation like the Austrian party, but the firm and uncompromising unity implied in what Lenin called "centralism". The attack on the entrenched forces of the autocratic Tsar required a "single all-Russian organization of revolutionaries", themselves automatically organized.¹⁸⁷ The elitism implicit in Marx from the start may have been muted in Western European democracies, but in Imperial Russia, where the intellectuals

had long been isolated from the masses, it was developed into a major principle.

Although Lenin wanted a party with a centralized organizational structure reminiscent of German Social Democracy, he faced a situation much like that in Austria. Like the Hapsburg Empire, Russia under the Tsars was a multinational state. The census of 1897 had shown that over half of the population of the Empire was not Great Russian.¹⁸⁸ The presence of many nationalities constituted both a problem and an opportunity. The Russification policies of Alexander III had turned the nationalities against the regime causing these peoples to become reservoirs of potential revolutionary energy --hence the opportunity. The problem consisted of figuring out how to tap this potential for the overthrow of Tsarist rule without destroying the centralized party structure which Lenin believed so essential. Lenin, like the Austrian Social Democrats, was forced by circumstances to consider the realities of nationalism and formulate some sort of program for dealing with the oppressed nationalities.¹⁸⁹

Lenin believed that "the national state is the rule and the 'norm'...the heterogeneous nation represents backwardness or is an exception."¹⁹⁰ The normal condition was one nationality per nation state. Furthermore, Lenin, like Marx, favored the formation of large nations over small because "the close economic unity of large realms [allows]...the battle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie [to]...develop on a broad basis."¹⁹¹ Therefore he tended to favor Great Russia at the expense of the smaller nationalities:

...the interests of the liberation of a few

large and of the largest peoples of Europe must count more than the interests of a liberation movement of the small nationalities.¹⁹²

Could he have had his own way, Lenin undoubtedly would not have been concerned about the struggles of small nationalities for autonomy. But he could not overlook the reality of national discontent. Russia at the turn of the century was like a tree heavily laden with ripe, red apples, each piece of fruit representing an oppressed minority. Lenin was not interested in apples at all; he intended to cut down the tree itself. But in order to get at the trunk it was best to gather some, but not necessarily all, of the apples to your side. The question was deciding which apples to pluck and which to ignore.

Lenin's criterion in deciding whether or not to support a nation in its struggle against Tsarism was the same as that laid down by Marx: the interests of the class struggle were primary, all else was secondary. National demands were always to be "subordinate to the interests of the class struggle."¹⁹³
The proletariat

attaches supreme value to the alliance of the proletarians of all nations, and evaluates every national demand, every national separation, from the angle of the class struggle of the workers.¹⁹⁴

Therefore nationalism could be endorsed only as a temporary tactic in the class war, never as a principle in its own right. Whenever Social Democracy affirmed the "right of nations to self-determination",¹⁹⁵ it did so only in the interests of ending national oppression. When the proletariat took a stand against national oppression this was not to imply that it favored national rights as a matter of principle:

...the working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken all nations to independent life.¹⁹⁶

But the proletariat should not "brush aside the mass national movements once they have started and refuse to support what is progressive in them."¹⁹⁷ Such movements should be aided, but only because the liberation of oppressed nations is an intermediate step in the journey toward the goal of internationalism:

Just as mankind can realize the abolition of classes only through the transitional period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, so mankind can realize the inevitable fusion of nations only through the period of complete emancipation of all the oppressed nations, i.e. self-determination.¹⁹⁸

Lenin's views on the Jews were forged in the heat of party organizational struggles. The Western Socialists could cavalierly dismiss the Jews without harm to their parties, but Lenin faced realities they did not. Among the Jewish masses of the Pale had arisen both a Zionist movement and the Bund--a well-organized, powerful, and effective Jewish Marxist organization. The Bund had been formed even before the general Russian party. It regarded itself as the representative of the Jewish proletariat, and had carried on propaganda and agitation in Yiddish until it gained a considerable following among the artisans and craftsmen of the Pale. When the Bund began to demand that the Russian party be organized on the federated pattern of Austrian Socialism and that it grant autonomy for all constituent nationalities, Lenin opposed them. He was prepared to grant the Bund the use of Yiddish and the right to attend to "local needs and

demands rising out of the peculiarities of Jewish life",¹⁹⁹ but federation--never. The right of nations to self-determination could never be allowed to weaken the centralized party itself, and to accede to the Bund's wishes would seriously damage organizational unity. It was largely in fighting the Bund on the question of party organization that Lenin expressed himself on the Jews. In his utterances he followed faithfully the universal tradition of the Second International and denied the compatibility of Jewish nationalism and Socialism.

Whatever the Jews were, Lenin was convinced they were not a nation. At the London Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party in 1903, Lenin declared this to be so and claimed that the view that the Jews were a nation was "reactionary".²⁰⁰ While he admitted that the Jews in Russia and Galicia were "unfortunately still a caste", in advanced countries the Jews were definitely no longer a nationality.²⁰¹ True, the Jews suffered a special burden of oppression in the form of government-incited anti-semitism. But this did not mean that the Jews were an oppressed 'nation' like the Ukrainians or Armenians. For these latter peoples national self-determination was the answer to oppression, but for the Jews anti-semitism implied the need for "the most close union between the workers of different nationalities."²⁰² Under no circumstances could a good socialist accept "the Zionist fable about anti-semitism being eternal."²⁰³ Anti-semitism is a product of bourgeois society²⁰⁴ and would be unthinkable after the revolution in the new Russia.

In 1913 Stalin, working under Lenin's direction, wrote a

pamphlet entitled "Marxism and the National Question" in which the Bund and the Jews were dealt with at length. Stalin was accurately representing Lenin's views when he defined a nation as:

...a historically evolved, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.²⁰⁵

Having established a measuring rod for determining nationhood, Stalin then applies it to the Jews:

[a] people...cannot be said to constitute a single nation if they are economically disunited, inhabit different territories, speak different languages, and so forth. Such, for instance, are the Russian, Galician, American, Georgian and Caucasian Highland Jews, who do not, in our opinion, constitute a single nation.²⁰⁶

Stalin concludes that the Jews are a "'nation' whose existence and future are open to doubt."²⁰⁷ Assimilation, a 'progressive' force, is doing its work, and the Jewish problem is being 'abolished':

In brief, the Jewish nation is coming to an end, and hence there is nobody to demand national autonomy for. The Jews are being assimilated.²⁰⁸

Stalin spoke with the voice of Marx and Lenin when he stressed that "workers are primarily members of one class family, members of the one army of Socialism."²⁰⁹ By implication, the Jews must leave behind the ideological ghetto garb of national aspirations and don the uniform of the international proletariat.

Russian Social Democracy was in harmony with the general attitude of International Socialism toward the Jews. The Jews

were not a nation, they had no future existence as a separate entity under either capitalism or socialism, and their present sufferings due to anti-semitism would evaporate after the revolution. Though some theoreticians, notably Bauer and Lenin, had been able to incorporate nationalism into their Socialist programs, all agreed that the Jews had no right to expect consideration for their national aspirations. The ideological deck of Socialism was definitely stacked against Ber Borochov; in Marxism he faced a tradition of thought that was not merely neutral but openly hostile toward Jewish nationalism.

B. Jewish Nationalism

"If you will it, it is no dream"

In the years that followed the trauma of 1881, a welter of Jewish parties sprang up in the Pale. Each professed a platform, and each claimed that it, and it alone, had the solution to the Jewish problem. But with all of their fighting and abundant disagreements, the Jewish ideologues and platform-formulators held certain basic assumptions in common:

1. Assimilation is impossible.

The disillusionment with the Maskalah was practically complete. It was sadly agreed that the attempt at integration into Russian life had ended in an abortion, and it was unthinkable that Mother Russia would try again. Peretz Smolenskin, himself a former maskil, called the Emancipation a "vicious

and corrupt doctrine".²¹⁰ Though Leo Pinsker took his metaphors from his medical profession, he was expressing the mood of his entire generation when he called Judeophobia "an hereditary form of demonopathy, peculiar to the human race."²¹¹ Pinsker believed anit-semitism was due to "an inherited aberration of the human mind"²¹² and was therefore an "eternal, natural antagonism."²¹³ (We can well imagine the tremendous effect on the science-minded maskilim of calling anti-semitism 'natural' and then underlining the word as well!) Like a physician examining a seriously ill patient, Pinsker drew the conclusion "that we must give up contending against these hostile impulses, just as we give up contending against every other inherited disposition."²¹⁴ Other Jewish thinkers might disagree with Pinsker over the origin of anti-semitism, but the overwhelming majority of them did not quarrel with his assertion that it was ineradicable. Indeed, the proposition 'since anti-semitism exists, therefore assimilation is impossible' became an article of faith for the Russian Jewish intelligentsia.

2. Something has to be done.

Activism was the dominant mood, especially among the young. As each new decree or pogrom added to the misery the situation in the Pale became more desperate. After the massacre at Kishinev the poet Bialik poured out his wrath less on the mob that had plundered and killed than on the timid and passive Jews who had submitted to the pogrom unresisting.

Shortly after Kishinev, the historian Simon Dubnow wrote:

The new pogroms have engraved the watchword 'self-help' in flaming letters on the Jewish nation. It is as if a powerful electric charge had passed through the body of our humiliated people.... The principles of self-help and self-defense have never been as clear to all classes of our people, from the highest to the lowest strata, as at the present moment.²¹⁵

It was clear that no one was going to help the Jews unless they helped themselves and the title of Pinsker's pamphlet was as a stirring cry to action--"Auto-emancipation"! Something has to be done, but what? Dubnow answered with candor:

This is the consuming question which has not yet received a satisfactory answer from previous history and which now emphatically demands immediate solution.²¹⁶

"Previous history", the traditions of Talmudism and patient waiting for the Messiah gave no answer. The Haskalah had created a secular state of mind among the Jewish intelligentsia, and the salvatory ideology of traditional Judaism was unacceptable to them. The clergy seemed totally out of touch with the exigencies of the hour. The inability of the rabbinate to comprehend the revolutionary temper of the youth was typified by a rabbi in Minsk. After a Jew had attempted to assassinate the governor of Vilna in 1902, the rabbi issued this proclamation:

A shudder passes over us when we hear the terrible story of what happened in the theatre. How do we Jews...come to get messed up in such matters? How do we Jews, who according to all sense and reason, are always obligated to pray for the well-being of the sovereign power, without whom we would long since have been swallowed alive--how do we Jews dare to climb up to such high places and meddle in politics? Oh, beware, Jewish children! Look well what you are doing! God only knows what you may bring upon

our unfortunate nation, upon yourselves, and upon your families. Our people always were proud of one thing--that they never had any rebels among them; and now you desire to wipe out this virtue too. We hope you will think well about all this and you will not wish to place in jeopardy the happiness of our whole nation, your own fate and the fate of your parents and families."²¹⁷

3. The solution to the Jewish problem is nationalism.

It was generally agreed that nationalism in some form--Zionism, territorialism, or autonomism--was the only answer to the Jewish problem. Finsker had pointed out the direction for his successors when he declared:

The proper, the only remedy, would be the creation of a Jewish nationality, of a people living on its own soil, the auto-emancipation of the Jews; their emancipation as a nation among nations, by the acquisition of a home of their own.²¹⁸

Various views were expressed as to where that home should be, but all concurred that the Jews were, or must become, "a nation among nations."

We can best understand the different ideologies of Jewish nationalism from this period if we classify them into two main groups: those who addressed themselves to the middle class and those who spoke and wrote in the name of the proletariat. Although the ideologues themselves were almost exclusively of middle class origin, we can justifiably speak of 'bourgeois' and 'proletarian' as the two major types of thinking about Jewish nationalism.

The representative par-excellence of bourgeois nationalism was, of course, Theodor Herzl, the Viennese lawyer-journalist and would-be diplomat. Great as his influence was in the organization of the Zionist movement, the Jewish middle class

of Eastern Europe did not have to go to Vienna, Paris, or Basel for their conceptualizations of Jewish nationalism. They had their own thinkers, and were influenced more by Herzl's organizational activity than by his writings. The cultured Jews of Warsaw, Minsk, or Odessa could read Smolenskin who wrote of "national sentiment" as "the basis of our existence", and declared that the Jews "have always been a spiritual nation, one whose Torah was the foundation of its statehood."²¹⁹ Asher Ginzburg (Achad Ha-Am) expressed his concern with the problem of Judaism and was more interested in the resurrection of the Jewish national spirit than in the physical restoration of Palestine. The Jewish state was not to be primarily a refuge from the oppression of the Pale. It was to be a "spiritual center" and provide a "secure refuge" for Judaism and a cultural bond to unite our nation."²²⁰ A "renaissance of the spirit" had to take place, a revivification of Hebrew language and literature. By extending and enriching Jewish education Achad Ha-Am believed renewed expression could be given to the vitality of the eternal Jewish national spirit.

Not all the bourgeois nationalists were Zionists. Simon Dubnow formulated a non-territorialist doctrine of spiritual nationalism. Dubnow took it for granted that nationality was a natural phenomenon, part of the order of things; as such it was "fixed and unchangeable."²²¹ Though he granted the possibility of different parties or even classes within the nation, he believed "they must all subordinate themselves to the highest of all principles, national survival."²²² Like Achad Ha-Am he stressed that

the decisive factor for the destiny of a nation is not its external power but its spiritual force, the quality of its culture and the inner cohesion of its members.²²³

"Nationality is a spiritual community",²²⁴ and therefore Dubnow thought that the existence or non-existence of a Jewish state was relatively unimportant.

Dubnow believed there had been an evolution of national types. He claimed that "development proceeds from the material to the spiritual"²²⁵ and that the national types, in order of increasing perfection were (1) the "tribal", (2) the "territorial-political" and (3) the "cultural-historical or spiritual".²²⁶ The Jews were the last and highest type of nation, one whose foundations were not territorial and hence quite different from the other not-yet fully developed nations. Jewish nationality rested on "ethical standards", not soil.²²⁷ Hence the Zionists erred in claiming that the root of the Jewish problem was the extra-territoriality of the Jewish nation. What they foolishly decried was actually proof that the Jews had "reached the highest stage of cultural-historical individuality."²²⁸ Such a highly developed nation required not a land of its own but rather "communal and cultural autonomy" like that which the Jews had enjoyed in medieval Poland.²²⁹ With such autonomy the Jews, even in Russia, could cultivate the three main aspects of their national life: community, language, and school.²³⁰

Implicit in the spiritual and cultural nationalism of these bourgeois thinkers was a denial of the primacy or even the relevance of economic factors. Dubnow warned against over-emphasizing the economic which was but one element "of the natural and social conditions of the nation's life", and

by no means the most important.²³¹ He argued that national politics and class politics were incompatible, that the emphasis on the latter destroys the "natural feeling of fraternity and friendship among the members of a nation."²³² The Jewish Socialists make their great mistake in that they "measure our internal life by a foreign standard."²³³ They should

renounce their objective to sharpen artificially the conflict between class and national politics, and accept the supremacy of the latter."²³⁴

At least one bourgeois thinker expressed his horror at the possibility of a socialist revolution. Moshe Leib Lilienblum must have shuddered with fear as he wrote:

Indeed there is, as yet, one community, the proletariat, which knows neither children nor aliens--only workers. But if this community should at some time and place gain power--then God protect us from such a day! We may be sure that when the mob is aroused--and evildoers are always trying to incite the mob--almost all of us will be put to the sword. We will be regarded as capitalists, and, as always, we will fill the role of the scapegoat, together with another role that has been bestowed upon us, that of a lightning rod. The self-appointed saviors of humanity among our youth, as well as the complacent who oppose the settlement of Eretz Yisrael should take note of this.²³⁵

While Ber Borochov was not among the "complacent", he was, in a sense, a "self-appointed savior of humanity". He did "take note of this", but not in the way that Lilienblum intended.

The forerunner of Socialist Zionism was Moses Hess, a contemporary and erstwhile friend of Karl Marx. Hess'

socialism was of a religious and ethical bent and thus quite different from the stern secularism of historical materialism:

Socialism is not only the highest religion, it is also the highest science; and the socialists should, to be sure, be apostles, but must also be philosophers, in order to reach their goal.²³⁶

It is likely he would never have expressed any interest in Jewish nationalism had he not experienced anti-semitism as an adult. As if setting the pattern for the intelligentsia of Russian Jewry after 1881, he reacted to anti-semitism by turning his back on the emancipation:

In Germany, the Jews have striven, since Mendelssohn for political and social equality with their German brothers. But despite their participation in German cultural life, despite the denial of their national culture, despite all efforts to become Germanized, it has all been in vain.²³⁷

For Hess the national character of Judaism was a self-evident fact, a phenomenon of nature that did not need to be proved. "...Jewish patriotism is a natural feeling; it does not need to be demonstrated nor can it be confuted."²³⁸ The natural basis of the Jewish nation he found in the concept of race:

The Jewish race is a primary race which, despite climatic influences, accommodates itself to all conditions and retains its integrity. The Jewish type has always remained indelibly the same throughout the centuries.²³⁹

Since Jewishness is racial in character it is impossible to assimilate; indeed the Jew who tries to leave his people is actually a rebel against the order of nature:

Judaism as a nationality has a natural basis which cannot, like a confession of faith, be supplanted by another. A Jew still continues to belong to Jewry by virtue of his racial origin...²⁴⁰

Hess protested that he was still interested in the progress of all humanity, but he believed that the Jews could participate in this general advance only when they had been restored to their national homeland:

With the Jews...all political and social progress must necessarily be preceded by national independence.²⁴¹

The Jewish people will participate in the great historical movement of present day humanity only when it will have its own fatherland.²⁴²

Like so many Zionists after him, from Herzl to Ben Gurion, Hess attempted to justify the return to Zion on the grounds that it was but one scene in a universal drama of human progress. But for Hess the restoration of Jewish independence had religious overtones, for the Jewish people is the chosen people; it not only was but "is still today the organ of the Living Creator in the history of the world."²⁴³ And "only from the national rebirth will the religious genius of the Jews draw new powers...and be again animated by the sacred spirit of the Prophets."²⁴⁴

Where does socialism enter the vision of the restored state? True to his religious presuppositions Hess writes:

The acquisition of a common native soil, the aiming toward legal conditions under whose protection work can prosper, the founding of Jewish organizations for agriculture, industry and commerce in accordance with Mosaic, i.e., socialistic principles, these are the foundations on which Judaism in the Orient will arise again.²⁴⁵

Hess never tried to establish a logical or necessary connection between his socialistic ideas and his views of Jewish nationalism; the best he produced was the assertion that socialism lay at the heart of the Mosaic code. He was not really a 'Socialist Zionist' so much as a Socialist and a

Zionist.

Hess was born before his times. A substantial Jewish proletariat or an organized Zionist movement did not exist until years after Rome and Jerusalem was published in 1862. Because Hess' point of view never became institutionalized in a movement, it was not influential during his lifetime. It was only later, after Pinsker and Herzl, that he was 're-discovered'. But unwittingly Hess was setting the form that later Socialist Zionists, Ber Borochov among them, would have to use. In order to reconcile Jewish nationalism with socialism they would have to follow Hess in trying to prove that Zionism was progressive and for the benefit of all mankind, or at least of the proletariat. If a socialist who was committed to the freedom and advancement of humanity was to be a Zionist also, he would have to show that the restoration of Zion was fully compatible with, if not implied in, the onward march of history. The Socialist Zionism which developed in Russia after Hess paid scant attention either to race or religion; it tended to be uncompromisingly secular and to ignore racial features. But in at least one respect the pattern of argument that Borochov and his followers would employ would be strikingly similar to that of Moses Hess.

When Zionism became established as an organized movement in Western Europe, it was almost exclusively a phenomenon of the Jewish middle class which was openly hostile toward Socialism. True, Martin Buber later formulated a variety of religious or spiritual socialism, but only one other prominent personality in Western Zionism attempted to

harmonize his Jewish nationalism with socialism--the assimilated French intellectual Bernard Lazare. Lazare had been part of a circle of socialist intellectuals who were interested in avant-guard art as well as left-wing politics. The Dreyfus Affair and the anti-semitism which followed in its wake caused Lazare to reconsider his Socialist ideas and to reshape them in accord with his growing feelings of Jewish nationalism. He asserted that "the Jews have never ceased to be a people",²⁴⁶ and he tried to refute Marx's "On the Jewish Question" by citing anti-mercantile texts from the Bible and Rabbinic literature.²⁴⁷ Lazare did not believe his affiliation with Herzlian Zionism in anyway compromised his attachment to Socialist goals:

I find nothing in nationalism which would be contrary to socialist orthodoxy, and I...do not hesitate for an instant in accepting nationalism alongside internationalism.²⁴⁸

But Lazare's views, like Hess', never became widely accepted. The reason is not far to seek, for Lazare himself had noted:

Never has the Jew been studied except in his bourgeoisie; it is time to study him in his proletariat, a mass truly strong and characteristic of the nation.²⁴⁹

Such a mass was almost absent from Western Europe, and besides his fellow intellectuals in Paris, there were few who would even listen to Lazare's views. There was a small but growing Jewish working class in some of the larger metropolises. In London in 1875 Aaron Lieberman earned the title "father of the Jewish Socialists" by organizing the Acudat ha-Sotzialistim he-Ivrim and publishing a Socialist periodical in Hebrew which preached independent revolutionary activity by Jews.²⁵⁰ But

Lieberman was a father without a large family. It was not in London but in Galicia, Poland, and Russia that multitudes of Jewish artisans and factory workers were growing up and forming--not a family--but a militant movement: the Bund.

The Bund was founded in 1887 by groups of Jewish intellectuals in Vilna who began carrying on agitation among the Jewish workers. They originally had no notion of either Jewish nationalism or of a specifically Jewish labor movement. As the Bund recalled this period to the Socialist International in 1900, the Vilna Jewish Social Democrats were:

confined to the Pale and not having the possibilities to dedicate their energies to the Russian Labor movement, they were forced willy-nilly, to start working among the Jews, and thus at least quench to some degree their thirst for revolutionary activity. The Jewish labor movement occupies second place for them; they look chiefly to the Russian worker, upon whom they place all their hopes and from whom they expect also salvation for the Jewish proletariat.²⁵¹

In its early phases, up to 1901, the Bund largely ignored the question of Jewish nationalism and did not formulate any theory concerning it. However out of pragmatic necessity they were forced to pay some attention to specifically Jewish affairs; for one thing they had to frame their propaganda in Yiddish since this was the only language that the Jewish worker understood. In 1895 Lev Martov, one of the Bund's early leaders, said that socialist agitation had to be adapted to the Jewish masses and "that meant making it more Jewish".²⁵² In 1897 Arkady-Kremer spoke of the need for "defending the specific interests of the Jewish workers"

as well as fighting for "general Russian political demands".²⁵³
 The presence of laws discriminating against Jews specifically meant that "the Jewish workers suffer not only as workers but also as Jews, and we dare not and cannot remain indifferent...."²⁵⁴

The Bund had initially been interested only in "Jewish class consciousness" but by the time it held its Fourth Conference in 1901 it was vitally concerned with Jewish nationalism as well. At that conference it adopted a resolution which was to be both the predecessor of bolder national demands, and a source of irritation to Lenin and others who wanted a centralized Social Democratic party in Russia:

The conference holds that it is against the sense of the social democratic program to allow for the oppression of one class by another, of citizens by the government, and also of one nationality by another and one language by another. The conference holds that a state such as Russia, consisting as it does of many nationalities, should in the future, be reconstructed as a federation of nationalities with complete national autonomy for each nationality, independent of the territory in which it is located. The conference holds that the term 'nation' is also to be applied to the Jewish people. In the light of the existing circumstances, however, it is still too soon to put forth the demand for national autonomy for Jews and hence the conference holds that for the time the struggle is to be carried on only against all discriminatory laws directed against Jews, publicize and protest against any suppression of the Jewish nationality, but at the same time to be careful not to fan into a flame the national feeling, for that will only obscure the class consciousness of the proletariat and lead to chauvinism.²⁵⁵

The Bund was trying to walk a fine line. On the one hand it claimed the Jews were a nation and as such entitled to national autonomy in a federated Russia, but on the other hand

the Bund protested that it opposed "chauvinism" and stirring up "national feeling".

The Bundist theory of Jewish nationalism was formulated by Vladimir Medem and came to be known as "neutralism". Neutralism did not imply that the Bund would abandon its demand for national cultural autonomy within the Russian party. The Bundists continued to assert the right of the Jews to "national self-administration in that area of problems in which the national life as such is expressed, i.e. in the field of culture".²⁵⁶ Medem justified the Bund's position by pointing out that the class struggle, as Marx had noted, "takes on various national forms".²⁵⁷ But nationalism is simply a fact to be noted and tolerated, and should by no means be made a matter of principle by a socialist movement. Hence Medem agreed with Lenin that "the development of national consciousness can never be an end in itself for any social movement".²⁵⁸ Although the Zionists might actively seek to achieve national aims, Medem urged the Bund to remain "neutral" on the question of the future of the Jewish nation and its goals:

What are the tasks and the goals of a nation? In what direction should the course of national development be steered? Such questions no more exist for us than do the class interests which posit them.²⁵⁹

The Bund combined Marxist Socialism with anti-Zionist Jewish nationalism; Nachman Syrkin attempted to unite Zionism with non-Marxist Socialism. Syrkin was pained by the hostility of the Jewish socialist intelligentsia to Zionism and claimed that through their opposition they "reveal their lack of understanding of socialism".²⁶⁰ Syrkin confessed that

bourgeois Zionism was defective but exhorted that

The present reactionary form of Zionism does not free Jewish socialists from their obligation toward the Jewish problem...it places upon them the duty of illuminating this profound national phenomenon (a Jewish renaissance) and transforming it into a socialist movement.²⁶¹

Syrkin took upon himself the task of achieving such a transformation.

His Socialism was of the idealistic or ethical type. Jewish Socialism, Syrkin believed, should not be motivated by class interests "but by ideological considerations"; only thus might it "rise to the level of a true moral protest."²⁶² He believed socialism was basically a struggle against oppression in any form, class or national. Syrkin is innocent of Marxism, for he conceived of the Socialist as a man motivated by a sensitive moral conscience outraged at the sight of injustice or inequality. The Jewish Socialist must look to Amos and Isaiah--and not Karl Marx--for his paragons.

Syrkin did not believe that socialism alone could solve the Jewish problem. The economic structure of the Jews and their lack of political rights, in short, their "peculiar position in society", put them in "a singular situation which cannot be improved, at present, solely through the socialist struggle."²⁶³ A complete solution to the Jewish problem would have to include both a classless society and Jewish national sovereignty.²⁶⁴ Syrkin even went so far as to deny the primacy of the class struggle:

The class struggle does not exhaust all the expressions of social life. When a people is endangered, all parties unite to fight the outside enemy, though in normal times the classes fight each other... . Class struggle

is the main driving force of history, but it is a misconception to explain all social life, in its manifold expressions, in terms of this alone. All defensive, creative, and ideological activities are realized not through the class struggle but despite it. Zionism is a creative endeavor of the Jews, and it, therefore, stands not in contradiction to the class struggle but beyond it.²⁶⁵

Syrkin did not pretend to be speaking on behalf of the Jewish proletariat alone; as a nationalist he was interested in the well-being of all classes within the nation and noted critically that the class struggle "can help the Jewish middle class but little, if at all".²⁶⁶

It is not hard to see why Syrkin's views did not appeal to those among the youth who believed in dialectical materialism. What they took as an article of faith, Syrkin called "a social democratic ideology which thrusts every social phenomenon into the all-inclusive grab-bag of historic determinism."²⁶⁷ While they sought for an 'objective' solution to the Jewish problem, Syrkin accused them of being "foolishly scientific"²⁶⁸ and went on to call attention to the "exceptional spiritual endowment of the Jewish people".²⁶⁹ Syrkin had made Zionism and Socialism compatible by sermonic assertion rather than the iron logic of dialectical reasoning. For a Social Democrat his views tasted too strongly of the spice of bourgeois idealism to be palatable.

There was a missing piece in the complicated jig-saw puzzle of Jewish nationalist thinking at the turn of the century. Practically every point of view was represented and virtually every philosophy prevalent in European nationalism had a Jewish spokesman. Jewish nationalism had

been made compatible with the evolution of mankind, human progress, and the values of liberalism by bourgeois thinkers. Hess, Lazare, and Syrkin had harmonized it with ethical socialism, and the Bund had adapted it to the realities of strike-organizing in the Jewish street. But no one had yet attempted to harmonize Zionism--not just autonomism or mere territorialism but "Zionist Zionism"--with Marxist theory.

There were those who claimed the couple were obviously incompatible, that no amount of compromising or marriage counseling could produce a harmonious and peaceful homelife--bride and groom were both too headstrong, too jealous and vigorous in their demands to be able to be accommodating to one another.

Once in a debate with the Bund, Lenin had hurled at them the challenge that the answer to the Jewish question was either "assimilation or separation."²⁷⁰ Borochov agreed with Lenin. He took up the challenge--and his pen.

Chapter IV

Borochoy's Socialist Zionism: The Disturbing of Marx

Towards the end of his brief life Borochoy remarked that the Jews were suffering from a chronic malady, an ailment that had plagued them for two thousand years.²⁷¹ We can best understand the Socialist Zionism of Borochoy if we take this metaphor seriously, for he was like a medical doctor in his approach to the Jewish question. Like a physician Borochoy had a conception of the normal; he believed he knew what constituted the anatomy and physiology of a healthy society. And after applying these norms of how society should be structured and function in the case of the Jews, Borochoy concluded that there was a serious illness. But his medical training also told him what was the cause of the malady and what treatment should be prescribed. The patient was sick, but there was no cause for alarm. Nature is a wondrous healer and with an assist from an adroit doctor, the patient will recover. Let us examine what Borochoy thought was the normal or healthy, and then we shall turn to the specific case of the 'sick' Jewish people, and consider how he proposed to treat it.

A. The Structure of the Normal

Ben Borochov was neither a philosopher nor a sociologist. Like Marx, he was an ideologue interested in abstract formulations because of the role they could play in achieving certain definite goals. There is an element of teleology in the many generalizations which Borochov seemingly made on a purely theoretical level; although he frequently writes abstractly about the nature of man and society he is always going somewhere. He has a point to prove and he structures his definitions and classifications very carefully so as to arrive at his destination. The most important example of this teleology is found in his description of the nature of the class and the nation.

If nationalism was to be harmonized with the presuppositions of historical materialism, Borochov was going to have to show that the nation was just as natural a form of human group as the class, and that like the class, the nation was rooted in matter. Borochov attempted to solve this basic theoretical problem in his essay "The National Question and the Class Struggle", first published in 1905. He began auspiciously with a quote from Marx's Preface to the Critique of Political Economy:

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces.²⁷²

Borochov immediately adds the following comment:

But this production in the life of society takes place within the specific circumstances of conditions already existing--natural con-

ditions which are outside of the society and historical conditions.²⁷³

In short, there are two essential aspects to the economy of any society: the 'relations of production' and the 'conditions of production'.

The concept relations of production was basic to Marx's theory of the class struggle. Here and there Marx and Engels had made a few comments about what Borochoff called conditions of production but these were essentially stray hints, by-ways of Marxism. In the third volume of Capital Marx had noted:

...[the] economic base...is likely to appear in various forms and endless stages due to various empirical factors...due to conditions of nature, racial relations, historical influences which work from without, etc.²⁷⁴

In the Socialist Academician Engels had made a similar comment.²⁷⁵

Borochoff began with these random remarks by the founders of dialectical materialism and expanded them into what was the cornerstone of his entire theoretical structure: the notion of conditions of production.

Borochoff defined the conditions of production as follows:

They are, first of all, the geographical conditions of climate, land, structure of the terrain, form of the coastline; they are, secondly, the anthropological conditions, and thirdly, the historical conditions which have been formed both within the group itself and outside of it in its relations with its neighbors--that is to say, conditions which were themselves created in the process of production, but which reached a certain degree of independent influence.²⁷⁶

So far Marx would not have quarrelled with Borochoff, for he was only restating and enlarging on what was already written in Capital. But Borochoff went on to argue that the conditions

of production were equivalent in importance to relations of production:

...human collectivity has a dual aspect
 ... (1) those groups according to which
 mankind is divided due to differences in
 conditions of production which are relatively
 distinct are called societies... (families,
 tribes, peoples, nations); (2) those groups,
 according to which the society is divided due
 to different participation in the means of
 production; i.e. due to the different
 relation to the means of production, are
 called classes (castes, ranks, etc.)²⁷⁷

The theoretical tone of this passage should not obscure the fact that the implications of what Borochoff is saying are great. The international Marxists maintained that the nation was no more than a transient form of social organization which emerged in the course of developing capitalism. The nation was product of historical development and was doomed to disappear as that development continued. For them only the class was an inevitable constituent of the economic structure of pre-socialist society. Concern for nationalism could be only a tactical concession in the class struggle, never a principle in the program of the proletariat.

But Borochoff asserts the extremely significant proposition that the nation is a natural entity, rooted in real, material factors. According to Borochoff, both the nation and the class are natural forms of human groups; both are the outgrowth of man struggling to meet his needs in the context of a material world. The nation is not something that emerges in the course of history; like the class, it is inherent in the nature of the productive process. Therefore nationalism is not merely the product of metaphysical speculation by bourgeois politicians and philosophers. Borochoff believed nationalism was

firmlly grounded in matter and hence compatible with the doctrines of historical materialism.

Having asserted his premise that the nation is fully as natural and necessary a form of group as the class, Borochev goes on to outline the structure of the normal nation. The normal nation is obviously one with a complete complement of conditions of production. But not all conditions of production are of equal importance to a smoothly functioning society. There is one that is fundamental to all the others:

As the fundamental form of the national possession serves...that base upon which the conditions of production are joined together; this base is--the territory.²⁷⁸

Before a society can produce the commodities essential for its life, it must have a land adequate to its needs. Before men can organize an effective division of labor for the exploitation of nature, they must have a certain amount of nature available to them in the form of a territory.

In effect, Borochev is saying that all men live on islands. No two islands are alike. One may have richer mineral deposits than another; a second may have great plains in its interior, while yet a third possesses a coastline well-suited to receiving ships. These differences leave their stamp on the societies (i.e. nations) which inhabit the various islands, and therefore every nation is unique. But all nations have this much in common: they all are established on islands, and without that territorial foundation there would be no production, no commodities, and ultimately no society.

A normal nation develops a superstructure on its territorial foundation. It builds a house which has floors as

well as walls and a roof. The walls and roof are what Borochoy calls the national forms of protection; the floors correspond to classes.

The forms of protection are those non-material aspects of a society whose purpose is the preservation of the material inheritance (the conditions of production):

These are the political unity and the political institutions, language, national education and the reality of nationalism as a certain psychic state.²⁷⁹

Borochoy does not deny that these forms of protection are non-material in nature, but he does assert that they are rooted in and ultimately dependent on the underlying material conditions of production.

We must pause to note what this abstract notion of forms of protection meant in the context of the party struggles of Borochoy's time. By speaking of national language, political institutions, and education as forms of protection for the more fundamental material inheritance, Borochoy was arguing against those who said that Jewish nationalism is basically political or cultural. The Seimists spoke of the need for a parliament in galut before going to Palestine, and Achad Ha-Am and Dubnow urged the development of national education and literature. And Borochoy granted that all of them were partially justified in their programs, for the forms of protection are an essential part of national life. But they all make a serious error according to Borochoy, in mistaking the defensive forms for the primary features of national existence. A defensive form must have something to defend. Political and cultural institutions are meaningful

only when built on the firm foundation of a material possession, i.e. on an economic structure supported by a territory.

The cosmopolitan Social Democrats, no less than the bourgeois Jewish nationalists, make the error of mistaking the part for the whole. These socialists are right in emphasizing classes and the class struggle, for both are constituents of a normal nation. Borochof agreed that "...the nation is also divided into classes;"²⁸⁰ the national structure has several stories. But Borochof maintains that classes come into existence only within the context of the nation. There is no such thing as a working class in the abstract; only the working classes of separate nations have reality. It is just as absurd to speak of a workingman without a nation as it is to talk of a workingman without a factory.

It is even more absurd to suppose that the workingman is free of national interests. If every class in the nation has an interest in the national inheritance, it follows that the working class too is necessarily and legitimately nationalist:

One must not think, due to the influence of a widely prevalent error, that the proletarian is outside of any connection to the national possession, and therefore is free of national feelings and interests. The structure of the conditions of productive life leaves its imprint also on the proletariat, in one form or another--for in general there is no class in society outside of these considerations.²⁸¹

Just as class consciousness develops out of relations of production which are shared by the members of the class, so national consciousness arises out of the relation of the members of the nation to the conditions of production.

All socialists would agree that there is no such thing as

class consciousness or class interests in the abstract; only particular classes have such self-awareness and common concerns. And no socialist would condemn all class consciousness or interests; he would always ask which class was being discussed. Is it not then foolish, Borzhev asks, to condemn all national consciousness and national interests without first asking which class in the nation is concerned? When socialists oppose all nationalism they overlook the fact that:

There are no general national interests, but there are national interests for the different classes in the people, and each and every class has national interests peculiar to it, which are different in their essence from the national interests of the rest of the classes.²⁶²

Just as worker and owner are concerned with the same factory in quite different ways, so both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are interested in the nation for very different reasons:

Because the classes see the center of gravity of their interests in different aspects of this possession, different types of nationalism arise.²⁶³

The middle class is nationalist because the nation and its territory are a market in which it can carry on trade unrestricted by tariff barriers. But "for the proletariat territory has an importance of its own, namely that of a place of work".²⁶⁴

The class war cannot be fought in the air. It can take its normal course only when the workers are firmly entrenched in factories which themselves must be rooted in the material foundation of the nation--the territory. When the territorial foundation of the nation is secure, the worker's attitude toward the territory changes. Since he need not be concerned

about the land as a place of work, he can direct his whole-hearted attention to the class struggle. Now the territory is a "strategic base" from which the proletariat wages his ultimately victorious battle against exploitation. The worker who is fighting the class struggle tends to take the existence of the territory for granted and hence is not conscious of his national interests. Nonetheless, Borochoy maintains,

The interests of the class war are always connected in one way or another with the strategic base of the proletariat.²⁸⁵

The worker is not conscious of his national interests only because they are not threatened. In a normal nation, the nationalism of the proletariat may not be overtly expressed, but it is present and real nonetheless. Only a starving man cries out for food; and the worker doesn't talk about nationalism only because he does not need to.

Many theoreticians of nationalism justified national consciousness by postulating the existence of a national Geist or spirit. But Borochoy, the dialectical materialist, shuns idealistic metaphysics and argues that national consciousness is firmly rooted in matter. Just as those members of a society who have the same relations of production form an appropriate class consciousness, each society living in the same conditions of production will develop a national consciousness:

Life in similar conditions of production gives rise to national self-consciousness and a feeling of national relatedness.²⁸⁶

The national tie is based on the material possession of the nation.²⁸⁷ But not every society is a nation; a society

which has only common conditions of production is called a "people". When the members of a people also are "united... by a consciousness of relatedness on the foundation of a common historic past" they are appropriately called a "nation".²⁶⁸ Hence nationalism is defined as:

A feeling of relatedness on the foundation of a common historic past which is rooted in common, harmonious conditions of production.²⁶⁹

National consciousness like class consciousness, is the expression in the realm of awareness of an underlying material reality. National consciousness is not dependent on any essence or sentiment for its existence and is fully compatible with the philosophy of historical materialism.

Borochov claimed that national consciousness is not only justifiable but actually necessary from the point of view of Marxism. Therefore those cosmopolitans who oppose the development of this consciousness are actually opposed to the spirit of true Marxism:

There is always harm in the blurring of self-consciousness, whether it is the product of class or national demagoguery. Whether national or class interests are made indistinct, whether the real disposition of conditions of production or of relations of production are distorted, it is all the same: either way it is reactionary.²⁷⁰

A movement which blurs consciousness of class for the benefit of the nationalism is actually "nationalistic", but a truly "national" movement for furthering national interests is fully compatible with fighting the class struggle.²⁹¹

Borochov's conclusion would undoubtedly have been rejected by the founders of Marxism, had they been living to keep their theories up to date. But Marx and Engels were dead, and their successors openly confessed that Marxism had to be interpreted

and 'revised'--at least in part--in order to keep up with current developments. And once the need for interpretation of Marx was conceded, any interpretation which acted within the framework of presuppositions and terminology of dialectical materialism could claim to represent the true spirit of Marxism. If one conceded that conditions of production were as important as relations of production, then Borochoff's argument followed quite logically. It would be most difficult to refute Borochoff's argument that Marxism implied nationalism within the limits of dialectical reasoning. He did succeed in creating a strong argument which made Marxism and nationalism compatible. He even was able to argue cogently that a proletarian national movement was truly progressive and that those who opposed such a movement were reactionaries.

Thus far we have discussed the anatomy and physiology of the normal social organism. The healthy nation is one that resides on its own territory, develops its conditions of production and evolves suitable defensive forms and a class structure. In the normal nation, as Marx had already indicated, a class struggle is created out of the tension between developing forces of production and existing relations of production. After an intense battle, the proletariat is victorious and the nation passes into a conflict-free state called socialism.

The normal state of affairs is often complicated, however, by the fact of national competition

which is the desire of one nation to control the material possession of another nation, to take it from her,...and to push the competing nation from its position.²⁹²

The class struggle arises out of the economic exploitation of one class by another within the same nation, but the national struggle is a product of the competition between two different nations. Each struggle is an essentially different and independent phenomenon and neither can be explained in terms of the other. Those socialists who think the national struggle is always a mask for class exploitation make a fundamental error of judgement. The national struggle exists in its own right and hence demands solutions suitable to it alone.

Though national competition is not reducible to class competition, it does have deleterious effects on the conduct of the class war. If one nation has been victorious over another in the course of national competition, the defeated people becomes an oppressed or abnormal nation:

Oppressed nations...are always placed in abnormal conditions of productive life. Conditions of production...are abnormal in the case where the territory and its defensive forms are lacking or mutilated.²⁹³

Because the conditions of production are abnormal, a healthy class struggle cannot possibly develop:

Abnormal conditions like these cause harmonization of the interests of the /citizens/ of the nation. Because of the external pressure...the development of the relations of production...and the class war is ruined...class oppositions are blunted in an abnormal fashion, and national solidarity becomes more apparent.²⁹⁴

All classes in the oppressed nation are affected--including the proletariat. Normally the proletariat can use the territory as a strategic basis for conducting his battle with the bourgeoisie. But

As long as the workers of a particular nation have not yet guaranteed their place

of work for themselves, the question of setting work has an urgency incomparably greater than the question of the class struggle....as long as the place of work is not assured, the national question is more decisive than the purely proletarian question.²⁹⁵

Borochoy concludes that the liberation of oppressed nations must precede the attainment of the revolution:

...class self-consciousness cannot develop in a normal manner in a place where the national question has not yet been solved, in what ever form it exists.²⁹⁶

Since only a free nation can conduct a class struggle, each oppressed nation is an obstacle in the path of the steadily advancing revolution. Every truly progressive socialist will realize that the liberation of oppressed nations is a duty implicit in the class struggle and a prerequisite to socialism. If proletarian nationalism in general is compatible with socialism, then a fortiori the nationalism of an oppressed nation's working class is progressive and revolutionary.

An oppressed nation is essentially a sick one. But Borochoy believed such a nation had a powerful ally in the battle for health. In addition to the skillful techniques of the revolutionary leader, there were strong, natural forces at work aiding the physician. Indeed these forces were so strong that the patient would get well largely without the aid of doctor or hospital. Marx had called these forces "historical necessity". Borochoy used this term, but also another, peculiarly his own: "styctic processes".

The word "styctic" comes from the Greek for 'order' and is frequently used in religious literature to designate the forces of nature operating in the universe.²⁹⁷ For Borochoy

a styctic process was one which

will take place and achieve its goals by itself, in an objective way, independent of programs and artificial planning. Whether we want this process to take place or do not...either way it will come to pass in the future.²⁹⁸

In other words, styctic processes are those forces at work in history which are beyond the sphere of man's control and not subject to influence by his will.

Every man, and especially every revolutionary leader, should always remember that "control over events is not within our authority and we do not have the power to direct the styctic processes according to our will".²⁹⁹ Then what could man do? If the styctic forces operate independently of human will what, if anything, was left for an individual or a movement to do?

Borochoy was in a dilemma. As a student of Flokhanov he knew that awareness of being on the side of historical progress could be a terrific stimulus to party activity and comradesly morale. On the other hand, too much awareness of historical necessity might lead to spectatorship. If those who wanted the revolution saw it was coming of its own accord, they might decide to sit back and enjoy the show, without wasting their energy. Borochoy tried to maintain a balance while walking a fine line between utopian voluntarism and fatalism.

He claimed that both the fatalist and the utopian overlook important facts about the historical process:

The fatalists forget that history is made in the hands of men who are working toward conscious goals. But the utopians forget that the results of the activity of men are

equal to their goals only in a case where these goals themselves are suited to the psychic processes being created in the life of society.³⁰⁰

Borochoy believes there is room for realistic idealism: an idealism which inspires men to work toward certain goals which are realistic and within the realm of possibility. The view that man can accomplish everything is just as foolish as that which says he can do nothing. Between these extremes there is a middle ground where men can and should labor.

Socialist theory in particular should not be interpreted as a mandate for passivity. The fatalists fail to see that the historic necessity of Marxism is of two types: the general and the specific.³⁰¹

The realistic program of collectivism, and even that which was designated in the Manifesto by its first two scientific guides (Marx and Engels), says nothing about how to reach the specific goal. In this program only the guiding goals of the struggle are indicated. It would be ridiculous to look for a plan in it.³⁰²

For Borochoy the texts of Marxism are only outlines and line drawings--not detailed blueprints.³⁰³ The ultimate goals which the masters of socialism first pointed out constitute "general historical necessity", the details of the plan, are not fixed in advance. There is, therefore, no room for fatalistic passivity:

If we knew the entire future with all of its forms and many details, then perhaps there would be grounds to fear fatalistic hand-folding and absence of activity...but is it not a sign of the most superficial thinking if one finds fatalism in the case before us where there is only determinism which has been only relatively fixed?³⁰⁴

When faced by "relatively fixed" determinism, what can man do?

...in our prior vision of the inevitable coming of the conditions which will lead to socialism, we have the power to direct our conscious activity in accord with the direction of...development...it should be enough for us if we are able to stand at the head of the stychie stream and not be dragged along after it.³⁰⁵

Though the stychie forces are beyond our control, knowledge of their dynamics and direction should be used to guide us in those activities which we can perform. Such knowledge should keep us from wasting our energy on undertakings that are superfluous (doing something the stychie forces will accomplish) or futile (doing something incompatible with the movement of the stychie forces).

Borochov never wavered in his belief that the course of the unfolding dialectic and its ultimate termination in socialism were certain. He held to this view through the years of reaction which followed the Revolution of 1905 and during the gloom which settled over the Socialist world with the coming of World War One. And he also continued to believe that there was a role in the evolving course of history for himself and his Poale Zion comrades. We must now turn to a consideration of what that role was.

E. The Jews: A Study in Abnormality

Many Social Democrats could have agreed fully with Borochov's view of the normal nation. His materialistic definition of nationalism, his analysis of the problem of the

oppressed nation, and his emphasis on the urgency of solving the national question before conducting a successful class struggle--all might have been accepted by those Ukrainian, Lithuanian, or Polish socialists who were fighting for their national freedom. Indeed, Lenin himself might have commended Borochoy's argument for the support of oppressed nationalities. The only question that would have arisen for these non-Jewish socialists was: did this analysis apply to the Jews? Granted that Borochoy had shown a way of harmonizing the existence of nationalism with socialism. But did his concepts apply to the Jews whom Kautsky had called "a nation of which it is highly debatable whether it is really a nation at all..."? ³⁰⁶

For Borochoy there was no question about it: the Jews were indubitably, undeniably, and irrefutably a nation. They were a sick one, much in need of healing, but a nation nonetheless. The nationhood of the Jews was an a priori principle for him, an axiom which required neither demonstration nor proof. He might bemoan the fact that the "Social Democratic men of the left, the revolutionaries, do not want to recognize us as a special national entity", ³⁰⁷ but he never attempted to convince them or anyone else that the Jews were such an entity. He was certain that they were, and he addressed himself to others who saw "themselves as...loyal friend[s] of the Jewish people". ³⁰⁸ Those who could not see the obvious, and who denied existence to the Jewish nation were to be compared to

...the stubborn Englishman, who all of his life refused to recognize Napoleon as Emperor, which did not in any way prevent the latter from sitting on his throne. ³⁰⁹

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The a priori character of Borochoy's Jewish nationalism is shown clearly in the manner in which he writes about the Jewish people, Palestine, and Jewish history. The Jewish people is equivalent to the Jewish nation, Palestine is the national home, and Jewish history is national in character. Socialists like Trotsky or Rosa Luxembourgy who were primarily cosmopolitans would never express concern for the welfare of the bourgeoisie or the strength and purity of national culture. Lenin might make concessions to nationalism, but he would hardly talk of love for a particular land or speak with pride of the ancient past of a nation. Yet Borochoy did all of these things, apparently without embarrassment or fear of disloyalty to the international struggle of the working class.

Borochoy was interested in the entire Jewish people, in all of its classes. Though he believed that the Jewish proletariat was the only progressive element in the nation, he was also concerned over the fact that:

...the sad fate of the entire Jewish nation is felt, to a greater or lesser degree, by all the classes in it; in every class the pressure of oppression is felt in a special manner... 310

On several occasions Borochoy wrote sympathetically of the sufferings of the Jews, sufferings which he felt deeply because it was Jewish suffering.

Indeed, I admit and confess: I have sinned. Indeed, I am a philanthropist; I love the Jew-man.* I participate in his affliction, for, in my own flesh, I have felt them, for I myself am a Jew-man. And for the sake of the relief and liberation of my brother--the Jew-man--from the severe terrors of the misery of the Jews, for the sake of the sons of my people, near and...far...I will be ready... 311

He was writing as a Jew, not as a social democrat, when he began an article addressed to the Jewish workers:

The chronicle of Jewish afflictions is written on the pages of history in blood and tears, through many generations. The darkness of the endless night of hardships of the Jewish nation has been illuminated only by the glowing flame of the fires.³¹²

He wrote as a Jew also when reacting to news of a massacre in North Africa. Many Jews and Arabs had been slain in wild rioting and some observers believed that these disturbances were the prelude to the overthrow of the regime and therefore a sign of progress. But Borochoy answered:

All of the peoples may enjoy the fruits of progress, but we do not want to serve progress...all the revolutions which will occur to mankind in the future will collect from it mankind a tax of blood and tears. But Jewish blood is out of the accounting; it serves only as a plaything for the masses of despoilers. Thousands of Muslims and tens of thousands of Jews: it is enough for progress with thousands of Muslims alone.³¹³

As a nationalist Borochoy wanted his nation to continue its independent existence. He was ready to aid the working classes of all oppressed nations "through a tie of partnership--but not through assimilation; through unity--but not through self-denial."³¹⁴ It may not be surprising to find Achad Ha-Am chastizing the Jewish Nietzscheans for borrowing ideas foreign to the Jewish national spirit, but it is rather remarkable for Borochoy, the socialist, to lament that:

Every class in our people has, to be sure, a different psyche and ideals which are opposed to each other. However they do not draw their class content from Jewish life but from outside of it. These ideals...are often full of living content--active and creative--for they are drawn from life. But the life from whence our socialism and radicalism, our liberalism and clericalism, are nourished--is not Jewish life. The life

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of other peoples is reflected in our
ideologies.... 315

Borochov's concern for the continued existence of the Jewish nation extended to its culture as well. He wanted to prevent the possible destruction of that culture in the future Jewish state:

It is possible that when the people is freed from the bonds of galut, it will be placed in such conditions that its independent culture will come to an end, and in its place will come another, completely alien to the original type...in order to prevent such an undesirable eventuality we formulate this regulative principle... 316

On purely Marxist grounds it would be difficult to defend such concern for the preservation of Jewish culture. If Borochov could not offer a justification from historical materialism, how did he vindicate his view that the possible uprooting of Jewish culture was "an undesirable eventuality"? In another context, while discussing the language question, Borochov wrote:

Our love of Hebrew culture ties us...to the Hebrew language; but on the other hand the love of the people for the Yiddish language attracts us. 317

For one who loved Hebrew culture the end of that culture was obviously an "undesirable eventuality".

The importance of this emotional commitment to the Jews and things Jewish must not be underemphasized. Although Borochov was using the terminology and conceptualizations of Marxism, his basic attachments were decided by his feelings of Jewish loyalty, not by dialectical reasoning. His Jewish heart is ever guiding and leading his Marxist head, for though Borochov was also a socialist, he was first of all a Zionist. As we shall see, whenever there was a conflict

between the demands of socialist theory and his commitment to Jewish nationalism, Borochoy modified the former to meet the requirements of the latter.

An excellent example of Borochoy's emotional commitment is his attitude toward the land of Palestine. Borochoy declared that "it is impossible to use proofs to convince someone that he or she should or should not love Palestine."³¹⁸ And therefore

We absolutely refuse to bring proofs concerning the necessity and obligation to love Palestine; we do not intend to urge someone by saying: 'If you please, do me a kindness; for the sake of my love of Zion, please be a Zionist.' No, we seek only to defend our civic and national right to this love.³¹⁹

In other words, Borochoy was not going to use Marxism--or reason --to convince someone to love Palestine. Borochoy did not believe that Marxism could prove or disprove the existence of a Jewish nation, and his very avoidance of all attempts to prove that the Jews are a nation is further testimony to the fact that he did not believe such proof possible or necessary. His purpose was to defend his right to this love by showing that Marxism was not incompatible with Zionism.

As would be expected of one devoted to Palestine, Borochoy reacted quite emotionally to the suggestion of the territorialists that some other land be sought for the Jewish nation:

That Palestine should be lost to the Jewish people forever, that the Jews should lose all hope to return to it: such a sadness like the chill of ice envelops you at the very thought! Such hatred of Zion can be attributed to superficial thinking, or more precisely, to superficial feeling.³²⁰

The territorialists who were now so excited about Uganda had once spoken of their attachment to Zion. For them Palestine

had been only an easily replaceable ornament in their party platform. But for Borochoy Palestine was a "precious and holy desire."³²¹

In one essay, and in a footnote at that, Borochoy mentions his awareness that the term 'nation' is correctly used only in reference to the age of capitalism. He confesses that for earlier periods of history it would be more proper to speak of 'peoples' and 'tribes' rather than 'nations'. Yet he says he will continue to use the term nation indiscriminately "because any other expression, even if it is more scientific, would be more complicated and less understood."³²² For one who was not interested in teaching men but in moving them, there was no need to be scientifically precise, and Borochoy knew that references to episodes in Jewish history as if to events in the national past made excellent propaganda.

Hence he speaks with evident pride of the greatness of the Golden Age in Spain,³²³ and compares the possibility of Jewish culture being destroyed in a restored Palestine with the situation in ancient times when "even in Palestine the danger of Hellenization hovered over us".³²⁴ At one point he ironically compares a proposed expedition to seek out a suitable land for Jewish colonization with an episode in the national past:

...we have once already sent an expedition to Palestine, and at its head stood not Mr. V. but Moses and Joshua Bin Nun. And Mr. C. didn't send them but rather historic fate. It was not two Christians and a Jew who participated in it, but the people of Israel in all of its multitudes. And this delegation did not devote three months to its investigations, and not three years nor three decades, but thirty jubilees. And as a result of this we

received not a meager report but a flourishing Jewish state--and in it a population of millions, blooming gardens, fruitful fields, vineyards, and a highly developed level of society.³²⁵

In fairness to Borochoy it is important to note that these excursions into the distant Jewish past are few, and not at all crucial to his argument. Unlike Achad Ha-Am, fealty to the national spirit was not a basic consideration in his ideology, and Borochoy could have omitted all appeals to Jewish history of the earlier periods without seriously affecting the strength of his arguments.

But Jewish history in modern times was very important for Borochoy. It constituted the case history of the sick nation and therefore was invaluable in arriving at a proper diagnosis. Though some Socialist Zionists like Syrkin might speak of Jewish history in idealistic terms, Borochoy claimed his would be a strictly materialistic interpretation:

We shall argue that the history of the Jews does not have in it any so-called protest against historical materialism, as most of our comrades see it. On the contrary it will be found that the history of Israel, like the history of all mankind, must and can be interpreted with a materialistic interpretation.³²⁶

To understand the Jewish past one needs to consider the economic activities of the Jews in relation to other nations, not the ideals of the prophets.

In feudal Europe the Jews had played the valuable role of organizing commercial ties between otherwise isolated communities. But

With the development of the bourgeois economy in various lands, an indigenous bourgeoisie began to arise, and as soon as it began to stand on its own feet, it entered into competition with the Jews.³²⁷

When the competition reached a certain point it was expressed in the form of anti-semitism. And when the level of anti-semitism had risen sufficiently, the Jews were pushed out of these lands and forced to move on to other countries.

Since the development of capitalism was uneven in Europe and did not proceed at the same pace in all lands, the Jews always found another country, less developed than the one they had just been forced to leave. Here they were welcomed, but in the new land the cycle was destined to recur. At first the Jews were valuable in developing the commerce of the country; then a local middle class evolved, began to compete with the Jews, and ultimately forced them out. Borochoy called this dialectic of settlement-competition-expulsion "normal galut"--a pattern in which the anti-semitism caused by competition takes the form of economic and political expulsion.³²⁸

The emancipation of the Jews in western Europe was by no means an exception to this pattern. The Jews received their political and economic rights in these lands only in the early stages of capitalistic development when there was a need for freedom of competition.³²⁹ But with the end of the phase of individualistic capitalism and the rise of monopolies, Jewish emancipation was bound to be repealed:

...with the restriction of freedom of competition, its offspring--the Jewish emancipation--will lose its force. Amalgamations once again bring up the distinction between 'ours' and the strangers, and with the aid of the organized anti-Jewish boycott, the Jews are forced out of the economy in Western Europe and Galicia.³³⁰

In the Russian Empire the development of capitalism had been so rapid that there had been no stage of individualistic

capitalism. The country had gone directly from feudalism to industrial monopolies.

This rapid leap has pushed an enormous part of the non-Jewish bourgeoisie down to the petty bourgeoisie. And broad layers of the petty bourgeoisie, both rural and urban, were flung into the proletariat. As a result bourgeois and proletarian competition became sharper--both in commerce and in labor, the supply exceeded the demand to a considerable degree. And the Jews are forced out as completely superfluous.³³¹

In Eastern Europe the Jews are being pushed out of the economy at a rate much faster than in the west. Because of the especially intense competition with non-Jewish middlemen and laborers, they are in a state of "abnormal salut"-- a salut characterized by pogroms, anti-semitic incitement and incidents.³³²

The patient was complaining of frequent pogroms, inability to make a living, and chaffing legal restrictions. No one could dispute the existence of anti-semitism in Imperial Russia; it was too obvious a phenomenon to be ignored. But there was more than one explanation for what caused the anti-semitism and how to end it.

The Tsar and his Black Hundreds, of course, were not interested in either analyzing or mitigating anti-semitism. They were active in propagating it. They had found in the Jews a valuable lightning rod for draining off the revolutionary energy of the Russian masses. If the peasant and worker could be made to believe that the Jewish shopkeeper was the cause of his difficulties, they would be less inclined to challenge Tsarist authority. A Russian who was busy pogroming the "Zhids" would not have the time or inclination to participate

in general strikes. The Russian Social Democrats understood the Tsarist tactic. They maintained that anti-semitism was a product of the alliance between exploitative capitalism and an autocratic political system. When the revolution came, anti-semitism, along with all national and class antagonisms, would become part of history. Anti-semitism was something that had been created by capitalism and would follow it into oblivion. Lenin and his followers steadfastly maintained that the only solution to the problem of anti-semitism was the destruction of the existing social order.

Zionism implied a different interpretation of anti-semitism. Since Pinsker, all Zionist thinkers began with the assumption that anti-semitism was an ineradicable feature of exilut. Anti-semitism was not caused by any particular economic or political order and therefore could not be solved by the introduction of a new one. Anti-semitism was an inherent feature of Jewish life outside of an independent Jewish state; it would end only when such a state was established.

An examination of Borochoy's views on anti-semitism will therefore be crucial in confirming our hypothesis that Borochoy was primarily a Jewish nationalist. Socialism and Zionism gave opposing and irreconcilable interpretations of anti-semitism, and if we can determine which interpretation Borochoy offered we will have valuable evidence as to where his fundamental loyalties lay: to Socialism or Zionism.

Borochoy first considered the question of anti-semitism in an article titled "On the Question of Zionist Theory", published in 1902. He notes that the Jews are "always

treated as foreigners...not the sons of a foreign land, but simply foreigners".³³³ He then accounts for this treatment by asserting that "it is in the nature of the coarse man to hate every foreigner".³³⁴ Therefore the root of anti-semitism is a "primeval elementary emotion of fear of the foreigner".³³⁵ He maintains that "anti-semitism is not an economic but a psychological-sociological phenomenon. Its source is in certain forces which are necessarily at work in every society".³³⁶ Like Pinsker, Borochoff asserts anti-semitism is the result of a natural and hence indelible trait of mankind. Men hate foreigners, the Jews are foreigners, therefore men hate the Jews and will continue to do so until they cease to be foreigners.

But Borochoff does not yet follow this line of thought to its logical conclusion, namely, that anti-semitism will not disappear after the coming proletarian revolution. Borochoff wrote this essay before the shock of Kishinev, and he was not yet a confirmed pessimist about the possibility of an end to anti-semitism in Russia. While expressing a point of view similar to Pinsker's, he also keeps one foot in the Marxist camp by remarking that "anti-semitism will cease only due to some decisive social upheaval or by means of gradual atrophy".³³⁷ Any revolution that was not "decisive" would leave anti-semitism untouched, but a thorough-going revolution or else a long period of calm would cause the inherent emotion of anti-semitism to shrivel up and die. Since anti-semitism is not an ineradicable feature of life outside Palestine, why should one be a Zionist? Borochoff's pragmatic reply is that

...we would have to wait very many days for .
salvation, so many days, that in the meantime

it would have been possible to establish
several Jewish states... 338

Since the revolution was not imminent and gradual atrophy implied the passage of a long period of time, there would be no end to anti-semitism in the near future. Hence, in light of the present effects of anti-semitism, the Zionists were justified in working for the establishment of a Jewish state.

When Borochov wrote a lengthy exposition of his ideology in 1905--after Kishinev--he presented a list of over twenty basic theses that must be used in approaching the Jewish problem. Significantly, four of the first five are concerned with anti-semitism.

In his developed ideology Borochov again attempts to explain anti-semitism as a psychological phenomenon. He continues to speak of the "elementary xenophobia which is characteristic of all men in the lower stages of cultural development".³³⁹ Expanding on an idea he had expressed but briefly in 1902, Borochov writes:

...anti-semitism is one of those feelings in which the affectional element impresses its stamp on the object in its entirety, not on some aspect of the object...anti-semitism is grasped in the consciousness as an enmity toward the Jew...without guilt or rationalization; it is enmity toward the 'zhid' simply because he is a 'zhid'.³⁴⁰

Borochov is asserting that anti-semitism is an "emotion which does not depend on a thing"-- i.e. is independent of any particular aspect of Jewish life but is rather directed to the Jew qua Jew. Such an emotion is obviously not liable to be changed by the intellectual progress of those in whom it is rooted.³⁴¹ On the contrary, as these bearers of anti-semitism become more cultured, the negative feeling toward the Jew will

spread through all levels of society and find expression in the group as a whole.³⁴² Advances in education and material well-being will not affect the inner, emotional side of the man who is an anti-semitic.

Borochoy is arguing that the Jews have no hope from progress and that the betterment of conditions in Russia would only aggravate the Jewish problem and not terminate it. But what of the much heralded revolution? Was it included under 'progress' and therefore incapable of ending anti-semitism? Was not the revolution supposed to create a new man, free of class and national hatred?

Borochoy is caught in a dilemma. On the one hand, his belief in socialism entails faith in the coming proletarian revolution as the solution to all social conflicts. But at the same time, Zionism could be justified only by assuming the revolution would leave the Jewish problem unsolved. Whenever possible Borochoy harmonized and combined Socialism and Zionism, but on this issue he had to choose one or the other and show where his basic loyalties lay.

In his first analysis of anti-semitism Borochoy had not explicitly denied that the revolution would solve the Jewish problem; he had simply maintained it would not end anti-semitism soon enough. He had harmonized his faith in the revolution with Zionism by assuming that socialism would not be instituted for many years. After the Revolution of 1905, however, such an argument lost its force. The Revolution gave hope to the many reformers and revolutionary parties in Russia. The dramatic events of 1905 constituted proof that

the fortress of autocracy was not impregnable, and even during the years of counter-revolution and reaction that followed, the revolutionary forces believed that an overthrow of the old order was not only possible but might occur soon.

In an article published in 1907 Borochoy wrote that anti-semitism and the counter revolution were separate phenomenon which had united only temporarily.³⁴²

The Black Hundred is a product of the Russian feudal reaction and will disappear. But anti-semitism will not disappear; the national problems in general and the Jewish problem in particular will not disappear. Even then (after the feudal reaction) there will be pogroms, but due to anti-semitism alone, without any counter-revolutionary character; then there will be social anti-semitism, and boycotts against the Jews by all levels of the people, except for the conscious vanguard of the working class, and this vanguard will continually grow stronger and more compact.³⁴⁴

Borochoy recognizes that the working class leadership is free of anti-semitism, and confesses that this vanguard will gain in influence. Yet he continues to assert that anti-semitism will not disappear:

The revolution will once more be victorious over the reaction--this time with an absolute victory. But it is probable that anti-semitism will be manifested anew as stronger than the revolution.³⁴⁵

Why will the revolution be unable to solve the Jewish problem? Even if we assume that the "elementary xenophobia" of the uncultured will linger in the early days of socialism, would not the new society succeed in at first curbing and ultimately eliminating anti-semitism? Borochoy does not try to answer these questions. Rather he asserts:

The Black Hundred will disappear and of the counter-revolution only a depressing

memory will remain. And only the Jewish question will look forward many days for a special answer which fits it and it alone. 346

Borochov has become a Finskerite. He avoids even discussing the question of why the revolution will not solve the Jewish problem. This silence is embarrassing to the consistency of his socialism and is an unmistakable sign of Borochov's a priori commitment to Jewish nationalism. All Zionist thinkers in Eastern Europe began with the premise that anti-semitism was ineradicable in galut, and Borochov, despite his professed socialism and the elaborate terminology of Marxism, did likewise. In order to argue that Zionism was a necessity he had to prove--or assume if he could not prove it--that the revolution would leave the Jewish problem unresolved. Borochov could not prove anti-semitism was inherent in all societies (including socialistic ones) outside of the Jewish state, and therefore he assumed it. Forced to choose between Socialism and Jewish nationalism he elected the latter.

A severe case of anti-semitism such as that which afflicted the Jews in Eastern Europe was bound to have deleterious effects on both the anatomy and physiology of Jewish society. We have already noted how a normal nation with intact conditions of production develops a normal class structure and class struggle. But the class structure of the Jewish nation was obviously abnormal. An agricultural class was completely absent, and there were only four urban classes: a) the great bourgeoisie; b) the middle bourgeoisie; c) the petty bourgeoisie and those in the process of becoming proletarians; and d) the proletariat. Each of these classes

has a characteristic interest in the nation and hence espouses a form of nationalism peculiar to itself.³⁴⁷

The members of the Jewish big bourgeoisie, like all big capitalists, are scarcely interested in national production or a national market. Their major concern is the broad international market, and they are cosmopolitan and imperialistic in their attitude toward the national question. The Jewish grand bourgeoisie is "permeated with a spirit of extreme assimilationism".³⁴⁸ Its relationship to the Jewish question is at best that of a guardian who grudgingly listens to poor relatives in need of a hand-out.³⁴⁹

The Jewish middle bourgeoisie, on the other hand, has a greater interest in the nation. These baale-batim see the nation as primarily a secure market within which they can dispose of their goods. Since a national market is coextensive with the area in which the national language is spoken, their nationalism manifests itself in a concern for culture, education, and literature.³⁵⁰ Borochoy believed that such national activity as they do engage in "always seems more like a game and a diversion rather than a serious public enterprise."³⁵¹

The most numerous class in the Jewish nation is that of the petty bourgeoisie and the masses in the process of proletarianization. In a normal nation this stratum of society is the vast reservoir from which the proletariat draws its membership and is therefore of crucial importance in the class struggle. As capitalist society becomes polarized, the small shopkeepers and independent craftsmen are forced from their positions down into the ranks of the working class. The

smooth operation of the forces causing proletarianization is a prerequisite to the formation of a strong industrial proletariat.

But in Eastern Europe "the path of normal proletarianization is completely closed to the main body of Jews".³⁵²

The Jewish masses...go out to the labor market and there they meet competition from the masses of other nations in the process of proletarianization. Besides this they find that all the branches of production closest to the basic economic processes are already in the hands of the indigenous proletariat.³⁵³

To this basic fact of competition are added secondary factors which further cripple the processes of proletarianization--physical weakness, lack of technical knowledge, Sabbath observance, etc.³⁵⁴ Instead of becoming factory laborers ready for the class struggle, the Jewish petty bourgeoisie become the totally unproductive "lumpenproletariat" or "lumpenbourgeoisie" of the Pale. Many attempt to eke out a living through swindle or sharp dealing; thousands exist on the subsistence level, barely maintaining their position. Great multitudes are totally dependent on charity and ultimately many are forced to emigrate and seek relief in other lands.³⁵⁵

Under such conditions it is obviously impossible for the Jew to conduct a proper and successful struggle against capital.³⁵⁶ Those Jews who do manage to find employment are scattered in small factories and workshops, and it is extremely difficult to organize them effectively. The class war could be waged only by the proletariat entrenched in the great factories and the primary levels of production. But

instead of operating a machine, the Jew works at a shoemaker's last or sells directly to the consumer.

The Jews who had become true proletarians were few in number but great in importance. They were the national class of the Jewish nation and therefore one "should take the interests of the proletariat as the starting point and deduce the future of the entire nation".³⁵⁷ The Jewish proletariat is unique in that it is both more frustrated (due to anti-semitic restrictions) and better educated than the workers of other nations. "All these factors create a sea of revolutionary energy and fervid dedication which seeks expression."³⁵⁸ "An excess of revolutionary energy" inheres in the Jewish proletariat who is eager to fight the class war, but cannot. He is indeed:

Prometheus bound, ready with all the fervor
of his powerless wrath to pluck out...the
feathers of the vulture gnawing at his heart.³⁵⁹

Within the framework of a Marxist analysis Borochoy was right about every point of his interpretation of the Jewish class structure--except one. All Socialists would have agreed that the Jewish petty bourgeoisie was practically useless in conducting a class struggle and that Jewish society by itself could not possibly bring about a revolution. But they would have pointed out that the weakness of the Jews did not prevent the waging of a successful class struggle in Eastern Europe. Borochoy had proved only that the Jews alone could not carry on the battle. He had not argued--or even tried to argue--that the battle could not be waged without them. It was true, as Borochoy noted, that the Jewish big bourgeoisie tends to

hire non-Jewish workers and hence has no contact at all with the Jewish proletariat.³⁶⁰ But this fact implied only that the Jewish capitalist would not be fought by the Jewish workingman, not that the Jewish capitalist would be unfought. And for a socialist interested in the overthrow of exploitative capitalism what did it matter whether a Polish, Russian or Jewish workingman carried on the battle against the Jewish factory owner? But, as we have seen, Borochoy was a Jewish nationalist before he was a socialist, and therefore wished the Jewish worker to fight his own class war in his own country. Once again we find Borochoy's nationalist commitments limiting his socialism. Indeed a consistent pattern is discernable: whenever socialism implies one thing and Zionism another, Borochoy modifies the former to cohere with the requirements of the latter.

After examining both the case history and present symptoms of the patient, Borochoy offers his diagnosis of the underlying cause of all the abnormalities: the extraterritoriality of the Jewish nation. Without a land of their own the Jews are bound to be eternal foreigners, hated and despised by their host nations. Without a land the Jewish proletariat is unable to wage a war against capitalism and is doomed to weakness. Without a land the Jewish nation is sick. What is the way to affect a cure? Obviously, only one course of action can be recommended: "in summation the need exists to find a territorial solution to the Jewish question".³⁶¹

Borochoy, however, believed that the cure was being created out of the very conditions which caused the ailment itself.

A careful examination of the styckic forces at work in Jewish immigration will lead to the optimistic prognosis that the patient is getting well on his own, naturally.

Borochov did not believe that immigration in itself was a solution to the Jewish problem.

Petty capital and labor in petty production
immigrate together and preserve their national
character even in the course of immigration.³⁶²

Although they did not realize it, the shopkeepers of Minsk and Vilna who scraped their savings together and set out for New York or Buenos Aires were exporting the Jewish problem along with themselves:

The Jewish masses carry the Jewish question with them from the lands they leave and bring it to the lands they enter. Furthermore, as they move along their path they leave behind crowded settlements of Jews who are not able to move further. Thus they sow the Jewish question in the lands they pass through.³⁶³

As long as the Russian Jew stayed at home, the other nations of the world might remain ignorant of the existence of the Jewish problem. But when he started to move westward and passed through Hamburg, Marseilles, and London en route to the New World, the Germans, French and English--as well as the Americans--were bound to become aware of him. "Jewish immigration creates a world-wide Jewish question, both for the Jews and for non-Jewish society."³⁶⁴

Borochov conceded that at first the Jews might find better conditions in the new lands. But ultimately the Jewish national problem would arise there too. Since anti-semitism is a universal psychological phenomenon the Jews would be hated, wherever they were, and the irrepressible dialectic

of galut would start a new cycle: the Jews begin their sojourn as a useful element in society; competition from local population grows, the always present anti-semitism is openly expressed, and the Jews once more become a harmful, anti-social force.³⁶⁵ The only thing immigration accomplishes is the internationalization of the Jewish question--not its solution.

We must note in passing that Borochoy definitely misjudged the ability of the Jews to gain and maintain a place in the lands of mass immigration. In particular he evaluated America by his experiences in the development of Russian capitalism and failed to see that the Jews might be welcomed indefinitely in a multi-national land where capitalism enjoyed a process of steady growth. Just as Marx before him, he drastically underestimated the ability of the capitalistic system to adapt itself to new situations and continue its dynamism. To this date, the Jewish problem has not materialized in the United States as Borochoy predicted it would.³⁶⁶

Be that as it may, Borochoy noted that the lands of developing capitalism to which the Jews were flocking were beginning to impose restrictions on immigration. He concluded that: "a turning point has been reached in world immigration, and the increasingly more numerous masses of immigrants turn to the new lands of extensive agriculture".³⁶⁷ Though the Italian, Greek and Slav were less welcome in New York, Argentina and other lands were eager to receive them. And the stychic stream of Jewish immigration, finding the

sluice gates closing in America, will be diverted as well:

The surplus of immigrants in the former lands of asylum and the increasing difficulties of entrance will arouse the need to change the old paths for new in the midst of Jewish immigration too. Do the lands of extensive agriculture and virgin lands in general supply the desired direction for Jewish immigration?³⁶⁶

Borochov answered his own question in the negative. The Jewish immigrant commanded only two things, petty capital for small investments and hands for working. But the former was of little value in the Pampas and prairies of the virgin lands, while the latter could not compete with the stronger hands of the European peasants. Like a mathematician working out a problem, Borochov draws a line under the column of figures and adds them up:

The laws of immigration...have brought us to the conclusion that Jewish immigration is pushed away from both the lands of big capital and of extensive agriculture.³⁶⁹

The stychic forces of Jewish immigration seem to have created a tragic dilemma: the Jews are unable to stay in Eastern Europe and will soon be unable to enter the new lands across the sea. But these same forces are creating a way out of this temporary impasse.

The Jews cannot stay where they are, and they cannot go where the other immigrants are going. Then where are they to go? What sort of land could possibly receive the Jews as welcome settlers?

The economy of the land towards which the Jews will turn their feet cannot be an economy of great capital nor of extensive agriculture. It must be semi-agrarian--a transitional economy. The Jews will turn thither alone, outside of the general stream of immigration. It will have to be a land in which--for other people--

the economic advantages in immigration toward it will be offset by other drawbacks. It will have to be the only possible land for the absorption of the Jews, and of all the lands available for the absorption of immigrants from other peoples this land will have to offer the greatest resistance. It will have to be a land where the political-cultural level is low. It will have to be a land where the backwardness of political life will discourage large capital from entering, and at the same time middle and petty capital must find a requisite demand... 370

In short, the land to which the Jews can go will have to be one so backward that no one else would want to go there, and yet developed enough that the Jews would be able to settle successfully. What land could that be? Borochoff answers with conviction: "The land of stychic concentration of Jewish immigration will be Palestine". 371

Borochoff claimed to have proved that Palestine would eventually be the destination of Jewish immigration--not because the Zionists wanted it to be--but because the powerful material forces of history had so decreed.

With all the love of the people for Palestine they will go to the place whither the stychic forces of hunger and oppression carry them. 372

He had considered in turn every other land that had been suggested for Jewish colonization and had come to the conclusion that Palestine alone could be considered. Uganda, Argentina, Madagascar--all were impossible targets for Jewish immigration because of "objective" material circumstances. His Palestinism was not "sentimental", "subjective", or utopian but "prognostic". 373

History was bringing the Jews to Palestine where they would become a normal nation able to conduct a normal--and successful--class struggle. 374 The prophet of ancient Israel had

said: "Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord". Borochoy declared: not by wish, not by longing, but by my power, saith History.

But was Borochoy's ostensibly objective analysis actually free of subjective elements? If we examine his argument carefully, we find indications of what we might have suspected, namely, that Borochoy was being more predictive and propagandistic than descriptive and scientific. Let us consider the evidence point by point:

1) At one point in his discussion of the possible lands for concentrated Jewish immigration Borochoy considers the Wadi El Arish. As an argument in favor of its suitability he remarks: "The land is hot, subtropical, and the acclimatization of Europeans--except for Jews--is very difficult."³⁷⁵ For some obscure reason Borochoy believed that it would be easier for the Lithuanian Jew than the Sicilian peasant to become accustomed to desert life in the Middle East. Would it not stand to reason that the sickly and weak residents of the Pale would be the last people able to withstand the rigors of colonization?

2) In one essay Borochoy notes that "the conquest of industry [in Palestine] will be much more important for us than agriculture".³⁷⁶ If Borochoy's Palestinism was purely "prognostic" and free of subjective elements, we would expect him to justify this remark by reference to some objective, material reason why the Jews must become industrial workers. But Borochoy supports his preference for the conquest of industry by asserting that if the Jews enter mostly into

* My emphasis

agriculture in the new land, they will ultimately assimilate.³⁷⁷ For an historical materialist dealing with objective reality assimilation was a phenomenon to be noted and described; only for a committed nationalist was it something to be deplored and combatted.

3) Borochoy makes some comments about the Arabs of Palestine which are most interesting, especially in the light of subsequent historical developments in the Middle East. Borochoy thought the land of Jewish settlement should be one "where [the inhabitants] will be close to us in blood and spirit".³⁷⁸ Only an indigenous population of this type could be easily absorbed into the colonizing Jewish nation and through intermarriage ultimately become assimilated to it. Borochoy apparently believed that while the Negroes of Uganda were too distant in "blood and spirit" to allow for smooth assimilation with the Jews, the Arabs of Palestine were not. He fails to demonstrate why a marriage between a European Jew and a Palestinian fellah is easier than between the same Jew and an African Negro. Moreover, he fails to define what he means by "spirit" in this context. On one occasion he described the Jews as a "cultured European people of Semitic origin."³⁷⁹ Borochoy seems to imply that a Jewish cobbler from Grodno and a Bedouin from Beersheba have something 'spiritual' in common because they are both 'semites'. Racism was a prominent element in nationalist thinking at the end of the nineteenth century but was largely ignored or else vigorously combatted by socialist thinkers. Indeed, Borochoy's fellow socialist Karl Kautsky wrote a book entitled Are the Jews a Race in which he endeavored to prove on the basis of statistical

evidence that the Jews were not a racial community.³⁸⁰ Borochoy's concern for race is further evidence that nationalist thinking was predominant in his ideology, and in this case his concern has led him to assert absurdities.

4) Borochoy assumed that the Arabs would welcome the Jews to Palestine, or at the very least would not present obstacles to Jewish colonization:

The indigenous inhabitants of Palestine have no foundation to greet us with enmity. On the contrary they think that the land is the property of the Jews by right, and they call it In Arabic 'land of the Jews'. They also express themselves on this matter in folk tales and proverbs which say that in older times Palestine belonged to the Jews and is destined to belong to them again some day.³⁸¹

The irrationalism of this argument is striking. The same Borochoy who so carefully stressed the material causes behind human attitudes and ideologies in laying the groundwork for his theory now cites proverbs and legends to prove his point. The same Borochoy who believed it was inevitable that the Jewish problem would be recreated in North and South America now asserts that it will evaporate in Palestine. For some reason the Italian competing for a job in Philadelphia will hate the Jew while the Arab in Jaffa will not. Borochoy assumed there would be no opposition to Jewish colonization in the Middle East on the part of the indigenous population; like so many other Zionist thinkers of his time and since, he overlooked the forces of Arab nationalism which, even in his day, were beginning to grow.

5) In 1908 Borochoy wrote an essay entitled "On the National Problem in Belgium" in which he examined the relationship between the Flemish and French speaking populations.

After citing statistics and studies, he carefully draws out of his mass evidence the conclusion that:

...it has become clear that a backward nation can preserve its culture only so long as it is oppressed, but from the moment it acquires true equality of rights, it begins to assimilate into the more developed population.³⁸³

He concludes further that apparently one of the laws of social science is that:

...a mixture of nations, together with a course of capitalistic development, leads not to national unity and autonomy /of the less developed nations/ but to assimilation via equality of rights.³⁸³

The reader cannot help but wonder what Borochoy is leading up to, for it is not likely he had engaged in this analysis for the sake of social science qua science. Indeed, in the concluding paragraphs Borochoy applies his findings to the relation between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine. On the basis of his study he says that "the Arabs will assimilate with the Jews".³⁸⁴ Therefore:

...it is not necessary for the Jews in Palestine to form a majority at the outset: they have only to occupy the most important economic positions. And even if the Jews do not constitute a majority in Palestine... there is...no danger /of assimilation/³⁸⁵

In other words, as long as the Jews hold the key positions in the economy Palestine is destined to become an all-Jewish country. Yet precisely the same evidence and conclusions that Borochoy has brought to support his argument could be used with equal validity to bolster the contention of the Russian Socialists that the Jews will ultimately assimilate to their host nations. If Borochoy's study shows that a less developed nation living alongside a more developed one tends to assimilate, why is this a lesson in Arab-Jewish

relations only? Were not the Jews in the Pale precisely such a 'backward nation'? Did not Borochov believe the Jews in the Pale would eventually get equality of rights? Therefore does it not stand to reason that the same 'law' which causes the Flemish and Arabs to assimilate applies equally to the Jews of Eastern Europe? Borochov has once again engaged in one of his characteristic polemical tactics: he structures a discussion in such a way as to appear to be presenting an objective or scientific argument only to reach a conclusion that is not at all the only one implicit in his evidence. Here, as on other occasions, he gives pseudo-science in the guise of science and rationalizations dressed up like reasons.*

*The collected works of Borochov published so far include only his earlier writings. But several secondary sources consulted observe that the later Borochov abandoned all pretenses to being a consistent materialist. He began to use the term "Eretz Yisrael" instead of "Palestine" and spoke of the "spiritual imponderables which linked the Jew" to his homeland.³⁸⁶ The following is an example of the idealism which was submerged in his early work and was expressed openly in his last years:

Men, at different times, have in their own way envisioned "the days to come". Some envisioned it through the power of prophecy; others, at a later period, envisioned it through mystical ecstasy; and still later, others have envisioned it by cabalistic calculations. The great revolutionists of England and France have by means of their "common sense" and "mathematical proof" predetermined that "day to come". Marx did it on the basis of his "historic necessity", concentration of capital, and the laws of proletarianization. In my opinion, all were correct; for after all, those predeterminations, whether made by mystics, logicians, or scientists, were guided by the powerful voice of man's will. They dreamed because they wished, and all of them wished freedom, fraternity, and equality. Each conceived it differently, in accordance with the spirit of his time; each interpreted it differently in accordance with his particular terminology; yet, each desired the same. And today we witness the fact that the will for independence rules the world--that is the will of which it was said "where there is a will there is a way".³⁸⁷

We have already noted the a priori nature of Borochoy's commitment to Jewish nationalism and have seen how the axiom that the Jews are a nation was determinative in his discussion of anti-semitism. The foregoing analysis of details in his "prognostic Palestinism" confirms once again the hypothesis that Borochoy was first and foremost a Zionist and that Marxism was an important, yet secondary element in his ideology. For though his belief that Palestine was the only land of Jewish colonization is not implied in historical materialism, it is thoroughly consistent with Zionism.

C. Therapy

The examination is practically complete now. The physician has noted the symptoms and drawn what he believes are the correct conclusions. He has made his diagnosis and determined the prognosis. But before proceeding to write out his prescription, Borochoy pauses to note, and refute, the opinions of the other attending physicians. There were many specialists clustering around the patient and there were as many different diagnoses as would-be healers. Each doctor maintained that he and he alone was correct, and Borochoy was no exception. His ideology was not only a theory for the solution of the Jewish problem; Borochoy claimed his ideology was the only valid one and therefore he denied the truth of all other points of view.

Although Borochoy expressed himself frequently on the issue of whether his Poale Zion group should affiliate with the World Zionist Congress,³⁸⁸ he devoted no space to a con-

sideration of Herzlian Zionism as a theory. Herzl's point of view was not a serious competitor to his own within the Russian Jewish intelligentsia and could therefore be safely ignored. But Borochov did have something to say about Herzl, the man. In an eulogistic essay written in 1907 he noted that Herzl had been "a great man of the Jewish bourgeois world...in whose great soul the hopes and aspirations of an entire social stratum found a powerful and emotional echo".³⁸⁹ In other words, Herzl's Zionism was essentially the ideology of a class, the Jewish bourgeoisie. Hence Borochov, the self-appointed spokesman of the Jewish proletariat, need pay little attention to the details of the theory in order to refute it. He had only to point out its class origin and the Herzlian Zionism was false as far as the working class was concerned.

For Borochov, as for Marxists before and after him, the truth of an ideology is determined by ascertaining which class expresses it. Identification of a theory as non-proletarian is equivalent to denying its truth for the workingclass. Borochov takes this mode of argument out of the Marxist arsenal and uses it as a weapon to defend his point of view against the claims of other Jewish nationalists. He uses the rich verbal symbolism of Marxism for his own purposes in the propaganda battles of Jewish nationalism. With scant attention to ideational content, Borochov takes the Marxist lexicon and uses its emotive overtones to discredit his opponents. In considering a competing ideology, Borochov is not interested in actually determining what objective merits or demerits it might have. He is more concerned with arguing

pilpulistically until he can apply a class label to a theory. And what self-respecting young materialist could possibly give his support to a party that was 'reactionary' or 'petty bourgeois'?

Achad Ha-Am and Dubnow are easily dismissed as "reactionaries".³⁹⁰ With equal deftness Borochoff does away with the Chovevei Tzion as the party of men who are "middle or petty bourgeois in all their patterns of life and habits."³⁹¹ The Seimists overlook the fact that a nation must have a land of its own³⁹² and hence their advocacy of a Jewish parliament as the solution to the Jewish problem is a "mere palliative".³⁹³ They are actually "opportunists"³⁹⁴ and "utopians"³⁹⁵ who disguise their ideology in "pseudo-proletarian phraseology".³⁹⁶

Even the mighty Bund, with its thousands of members and a long record of successful strikes, is not a truly proletarian organization. Borochoff urges his readers not to be misled by the Bund's prestige:

...if...the program [of the Bund] achieves success in wide circles of the proletariat, this does not yet indicate that this program in itself expresses the truly advanced ideology of the proletariat as a class.³⁹⁷

It is only natural that the Jewish proletariat should first try to solve its problem in terms of the conditions in which it was first raised--and this the Bund has done. But the "most truly advanced ideology of the proletariat as a class" is that of the Poale Zion, i.e., of Borochoff himself.

Borochoff's Zionism constitutes a more radical solution and hence is obviously further advanced dialectically than the Bund's 'neutralism'.³⁹⁸ The Bund's "inability to fix its

position clearly, one way or the other" on the issue of Jewish nationalism proves that it is "opportunistic".³⁹⁹ Moreover, the Bund leaders have transgressed the first law of historical materialism:

It is an unpardonable sin for a social democrat to interpret a real and complex phenomenon in the life of society as a national phenomenon in cultural-spiritual terms alone. It is an unpardonable sin to consider that a social question of such immense importance can be solved--ever to the slightest degree--by cultural-spiritual means.⁴⁰⁰

The Bund's faithlessness to the tenets of Marxism is proof that their ideology is "reactionary without a doubt, and bears all the characteristics of a petty bourgeois source".⁴⁰¹

When he considers the ideology of the Zionist Socialists (S.S.) Borochoy is speaking of former comrades in Fossil Zion who broke with the party over the question of Territorialism. They followed Zangwill and the I.T.O. in their belief that Palestine was not necessarily the best land for Jewish colonization. For the sake of argument Borochoy admits the hypothetical possibility of a non-Zionist solution to the Jewish problem and states that if it were a choice between the Jews without Palestine and Palestine without Jews, he would unhesitatingly elect the former.⁴⁰² But Borochoy believed no such alternative faced him; he claimed to have proved conclusively that Palestine--and only Palestine--could be the land for Jewish colonization. The S.S. have arrived at the idea that the solution to the Jewish problem must be territorial, but they have failed to show that historical necessity guaranteed this solution.⁴⁰³ Their inadequate

understanding of the forces of history is proof that:

...the national program of the S.S. serves as an expression for the psychology of the masses in the process of proletarianization ...and has not yet developed to the level of the true proletariat.⁴⁵⁴

So much for his Jewish rivals. Achad Ha-Am and Dubnow were obviously bourgeois and hence 'reactionary'. The Sakhists were definitely not proletarian, and the Bund and S.S. represent respectively the attitudes of the petty bourgeoisie and the masses in the process of proletarianization. All the labels have been licked and securely fixed, except one: that of spokesman for the "true proletariat". And this label Borochov reserves for himself and his followers.*

There was only one party of major significance that Borochov did not attempt to refute or discredit: the Russian Social Democratic Party. He chastises the Jewish Iskraites for failing to see the "positive foundations in proletarian nationalism and therefore foolishly considering it as merely reactionary".⁴⁵⁷ He complains that his Russian comrades

*It is interesting to note the attitude of Soviet Marxism to Jewish nationalism. In the 'official' notes to the English edition of Stalin's pamphlet on the national problem, the Bund is referred to in almost exactly the same language as Borochov used: "The Bund--the General Jewish Labour League of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia, a Jewish petty-bourgeois opportunist organization..."⁴⁵⁵ But Borochov would have undoubtedly been chastised by the Soviet definition of Zionism as: "...a reactionary nationalist trend, which had followers among the Jewish bourgeoisie and intellectuals and the more backward sections of the Jewish workers. The Zionists endeavored to isolate the Jewish working-class masses from the general struggle of the proletariat."⁴⁵⁶ Ironically the very label Borochov sought to attach to others, were applied to himself. The weapon of Marxist terminology was a two bladed sword.

"do not yet understand that separate national proletarian organizations are in no way opposed to proletarian solidarity".⁴⁰⁹ And he laments over the fact that the Russian party recognizes some national claims but neglects those of the Jews because they are weak.⁴⁰⁹ Borochoff chastises, complains and laments, but he never tries to prove the Russian Socialists are in error for ignoring Jewish national demands. His silence in this regard is significant, for it supports our contention that Jewish nationalism was something Borochoff took for granted as an unquestioned and undemonstrable first premise.

Borochoff believed that his prescription for the Jewish problem was both socialist and national. He was quick to point out, however, that his Jewish nationalism was quite different from that of the pre-modern era:

Jewish nationalism is renewed, but its features are quite different from the nationalism of the middle ages. First of all, the normalization of galut fills this nationalism with natural content, and the general spirit of scientific enlightenment which is predominant today aids this. The ideal is freed from all alloy of religion. In harmony with the economic conditions of capitalism it is impossible to formulate an ideal unless it illuminates existent reality. Therefore we are no longer able to include the establishment of Jewish religion and the renaissance of worship in our ideal.⁴¹⁰

Borochoff did not intend to be a witch-doctor; he would be a scientist and present a purely secular formulation of Jewish nationalism. Some Zionists spoke with pride of the "Jewish nationalism of the middle ages" and pointed to the prayers for the restoration of Zion in the liturgy as justification for their platforms. But Borochoff explicitly rejected the religious content of the "national ideal".

What content would his Socialist Zionist ideal have?

He believed three criterion must be met:

The content of the Zionist ideal must meet these three demands: a) it must be in accord with the real conditions of the suffering masses of the Jewish people, b) it must be in accord with the real conditions of life of the pioneering elements in the people, that is those who are most isolated from Russian society due to anti-semitism, and are sensitive to this isolation, and c) it must be in accord with the objectives which are maturing in the development of galut.⁴¹¹

In other words, the content of the Zionist ideal would have to meet the needs of the masses and of the "pioneering elements in the people" and at the same time be nonutopian,⁴¹² i.e., in harmony with the stychic forces of the unfolding dialectic.

Below we shall consider in more detail what Borochoy meant by "pioneering elements". First we must note that the formulation of an ideal of the sort Borochoy thought essential posed a crucial problem: how to get the unsophisticated masses to accept a program based on an analysis they do not understand. The "suffering masses" were not in a position to understand what were "the objectives which are maturing in the development of galut." The struggling Jews of the Pale lacked the education and perspective needed to perceive what were the real causes of their misery. Therefore, cold objective facts were not in themselves enough for the content of an ideal:

...besides suitable objective conditions, these subjective conditions are also required: the existence of a beloved and attractive goal, defined in a concrete manner--a goal for which one would fight...⁴¹³

Pure logic was not enough. To inspire the masses, to arouse them and set them into motion, the emotions must be stimulated:

...an ideal which is built on 'pure logic', on the purity of 'clear reasoning' is utterly without value in the struggle. Only the feelings--the 'sentiments'--can inspire an ideal with such value.⁴¹⁴

What every mass movement needs is an ideal which will touch men in their very heart of hearts. But where does one find such an ideal? How is it created?

It must be understood, in the final analysis, that ideals are not created in a factory, they are not ... constructed, but are given already prepared, growing and rising out of the material conditions of our socio-economic life, independent of our desires.⁴¹⁵

One need not create a new ideal. One had only to look around, in the real conditions of life in the Pale; there one saw poverty and extreme suffering. But the same bewildered Jewish masses who reeled from the blows of May Laws and pogroms also preserved bits and shreds of hopes inherited from the past. And these hopes, nourished by the synagogue and siddur, had been focused on God, on His Messiah,--and on a return to Zion.

An ideal needed something more than dialectical validity and harmony with stychie forces. Borochov believed that 'something more' was

nourished from the psychic content of the Jewish people. This content is combined from the totality of Jewish national values. This totality, freed...of the religious and mystical element--gives us territorial Zion in its threefold unity: the people, the culture and the homeland.⁴¹⁶

When God and Messiah were omitted and replaced by history and stychie processes a national ideal resulted which could stir the masses and satisfy the scientific temper of the "pioneering elements". This ideal was a "threefold unity" committed to the welfare of the people, the resurrection of its culture, and the return to the homeland.

We have already seen that Borochoy did not try to prove the necessity for a Zionist to love any part of the threefold ideal. It was a love he assumed was already there in those who read his platform and affiliated with Poale Zion, and he admitted freely that "there was no logical dependence"⁴¹⁷ of one part of the ideal on the other two. But though there was no demonstrable relationship between a love for people, culture, and land, he did maintain they were nonetheless interconnected:

Zion is not three separate ideals for us. It is one threefold ideal. For even though there is no theoretical, logical tie between its elements, they are nonetheless bound to each other with a firm psychological tie. Our love of the people, of the culture, and of the homeland cannot be divided; one without the other appears defective and undesirable to us.⁴¹⁸

By maintaining that there is a "psychological tie" rather than a rational one between the elements of the Zionist ideal Borochoy has retreated from the realm of rational discussion. His critics might point out the lack of connection between concern for the welfare of the Jews and their culture. They might note the lack of evidence or logic behind the assertion that a Zionist must love the land and the people and the culture. But their arguments would be in vain. For Borochoy had already left the debating platform, saying as he went down the steps: we love the threefold ideal of Zion because we love the threefold ideal of Zion. In his discussion of the "threefold unity of Zion" we have one of the most glaring examples of how Borochoy's a priori commitments and emotional loyalties determined essential points in his ideology.

In his first extensive treatment of the Jewish question in 1905 Borochoff expressed a completely negative attitude toward life outside Palestine:

We are not able to love anything connected with galut. All of galut is hateful to us, in its entirety, as something foreign which been imposed upon us against our will... galut is not only scattering, dispersion; no--it is exile, enforced separation from all that is close to your soul, from all that belongs to you. Zion, as the comprehensive negation of galut is the answer to our condition of absolute alienation. 419

Borochoff had pushed his thought to its logical, if severe, conclusion.

But when Borochoff created the 'public image' of the Poale Zion by formulating its platform, he softened his tone remarkably. He was competing with the Bund and other parties which offered concrete programs for improving conditions 'here', in Russia. If Borochoff could promise only long range results 'there', in Palestine, he would not have received much of a hearing. In "Our Platform", published just one year after the statement cited above, Borochoff writes:

...first, the realization of territorialism is an extended historic process, and all of that intervening time we face the task of defending our needs in exile; second...we assume that a considerable part of the Jewish people, together with a considerable part of the Jewish proletariat, will always remain in exile, as a regular national minority. 420

In addition to the plank calling for a Jewish state in Palestine, Borochoff believed his platform must include a separate one proclaiming the need for "national political autonomy for the Jews in the lands of exile". 421

The party must work both 'here' (Russia) and 'there' (Palestine):

We are interested in elevating life here for two reasons: because we live here, in exile, and because it will make the conquest of rights easier there, in Palestine, whether the styck process is gradually transferring the center of gravity of our life. We are interested in life there, also for two reasons: because of the center of gravity of our life is being transferred thither in a styck manner, and because the strengthening of our position there implies a guarantee for our rights here.⁴²²

Borochov's interest in guaranteeing "our rights here" should be noted carefully. He believed that life in galut would become progressively democratic and the Jews would eventually achieve more rights.⁴²³ until they attained national political autonomy in Russia. These comments are significant, especially in the light of Borochov's other statements to the effect that the only possible solution to the Jewish problem is Zionism. He had argued that national competition and anti-semitism were permanent features of Jewish life outside of Palestine. But now he says that part of the Jewish nation will remain in exile permanently. What will be their status? Will they be any less superfluous in the local economy? Will they be admitted to branches of industry closer to nature and thus be able to participate in the class struggle? Or are they fated to remain petty artisans and harassed middlemen? Will the instinctive hatred of the Jew as a foreigner cease in Poland once Palestine is an independent state? Borochov, the platform writer, is not quite so consistent as Borochov, the dialectical theoretician.

In view of the organizational rivalries of the Pale, however, he had to be inconsistent. The logical conclusion of his argument for Socialist Zionism was a complete negation of galut. But the Bund's program of autonomy in Eastern Europe was a stern competitor for the allegiance of the Jewish

masses. At the expense of consistency and in order to meet competition, Borochoff expands his program to include that of the Bund. Like an automobile dealer taking on a new line, Borochoff tells his customers: If you don't want a Ford, I can sell you a Chevrolet; no need to shop down the street--you can find everything you want right here.

Borochoff proclaimed that the two main elements in his program of Jewish nationalism were the threefold ideal of Zion and the betterment of conditions for that part of the nation remaining in galut. A Zionist could have accepted these ideals without hesitation. But what was there in Borochoff's formulation of the Zionist platform that was socialistic? Where in all the pilpul and fine distinctions is the connection between this program of Zionism and that of Marxist Socialism?

Borochoff's argument has proceeded in four major steps:

1. He has argued that nationalism and Marxism are compatible and that the fulfillment of the national program of the proletariat of an oppressed nation must precede the successful waging of a class struggle. In a sense, therefore, working for the liberation of an oppressed nation is equivalent to fighting the early stages of the class struggle.

2. He has assumed that the Jews are an oppressed nation.

3. He has argued that the stychic concentration of immigration in Palestine is liberating the Jewish nation.

4. He has argued that only the threefold ideal of Zion can galvanize the Jewish masses into furthering the development of the stychic processes.

Driving his argument toward what he thinks is its inevitable and logical end Borochoff concludes: "Our call for terri-

terialism is a call for the class struggle, and so it is also our call for socialism".⁴²⁴ Borochoy believed he had proved that for the Jews "the receiving of territorial autonomy [In Palestine] is the revolution".⁴²⁵ By subtle argument Borochoy has equated Zionism with Socialism; he believed that when the Jewish worker bands his efforts toward the realization of the Zionist ideal he is at the same time fighting the class struggle. History was moving toward an independent Jewish state in Palestine. Since the proletariat --by definition--is always in the forefront of history, the dedication of the Jewish proletariat to Zionism is truly progressive and revolutionary.

Unwittingly, however, Borochoy has maneuvered himself into a trap from which, within the limits of his premises, no escape seems possible. According to Marxism, the proletariat was not only always leading history; it also had but one weapon--the class struggle. Borochoy himself described what the class struggle meant in concrete terms:

The organization of the Jewish proletariat defends all its interests and for this purpose it uses only one means--the class struggle. The class struggle of the proletariat assumes different forms: economic strikes, the activity of trade unions, cooperation, political fighting in parliament and in the streets, all sorts of political demonstrations, political strikes and uprisings.⁴²⁶

This description of the class struggle is one no Marxist could quibble with, and once the Jewish worker was entrenched in Palestine it is clear that he could utilize all the above techniques to bring about the revolution. But, if this is what the class struggle actually means (strikes, uprisings, etc.) it remains to be seen how such activity furthers the

aims of Zionism. How could a strike by Jewish workers in Kiev move the Sultan in Constantinople to grant independence to a Jewish Palestine? What relation was there between trade union activity in Vilna and the strengthening of Jewish culture? As a Marxist Borochov believed the "only correct means" the proletariat had for furthering its ends was the class war. But as a Zionist Borochov set certain ideals which could not be achieved by the only weapon the Jewish worker had.

There is another and even more fundamental contradiction in Borochov's conclusion. Borochov argued that the Jewish proletariat cannot conduct a successful class struggle in its present 'abnormal' circumstances because "in no place do we have any social power".⁴²⁷ And yet he has also told us that:

...territorialism is a profound revolutionary struggle...and the proletariat takes part by means of the class war.⁴²⁸

On the one hand the Jews must have Palestine in order to be able to fight a class war, and on the other Palestine can be achieved by conducting the class war in galut. The Jewish worker in galut is supposed to do precisely that which Borochov claimed he could not do anywhere but in Palestine: wage a successful class struggle.

Borochov failed to demonstrate how the waging of the class war is possible in galut or, if possible, how it leads to accomplishing the ideals of Zionism. But he has done something else. For Borochov created a system of words which made it possible for young Jewish socialists like himself to believe that by being active Zionists they were not betraying the class struggle. His assumptions are

challengeable by an outsider and his logical consistency is often in doubt after close scrutiny. But for those who were neither outsiders nor overly critical, in other words, for those who wanted to believe him, Borochoy's ideology must have had a tremendous psychological effect. He deftly syllogized and attempted to avoid dangerous conclusions here and a trap there. For the reader who had followed him loyally along the twisting trail of argument there finally came the moment of excitement when they arrived at the eagerly awaited destination. There a banner was hung out to welcome weary travelers: Do not worry! You need not choose between Zionism and Socialism. You can have them both, work for them both, and be a loyal son of the Jewish nation and a champion of the international proletariat at the same time.

The diagnostic interview is almost over now. The patient has been examined and the complexities of medical science have been invoked to understand his malady. A favorable prognosis has been rendered and a prescription written. Only one thing remains: to work out the actual course of treatment. For Borochoy believed it was not enough merely to let events take their course. There was work to be done, very delicate work requiring specialized skills. He believed, in short, that a small and dedicated intellectual elite had a crucial role to play in the realization of the ideals of Socialist Zionism:

The most healthy elements in our people are those most fit for life and sacrifice, those who are most able to be organized for the

sake of the work of national liberation. They have a healthy self-consciousness and are not crushed and broken like the rest of the mass of the people. They are the elements which lead the way...they are the loyal vanguard of the movement... 432

Borochov was talking, of course, about himself and his comrades in Poale Zion. He did not mean to imply that the Jewish intellectuals had not suffered from anti-semitic restrictions. But he did stress that, though the masses of Jews were crushed and bewildered, the healthiest part of it, the intelligentsia, was never bewildered, even when crushed. The Jewish tailor suffered from pogroms and sank into despair. But the Jewish student watched the same bloodshed, became aware of what must be done, and then organized in order to do it. For though the army of Zionism drew its infantry from the suffering masses, its officers were "always from the most advanced levels of the people--the intelligentsia". 430 Zionism was a movement with two interdependent and equally essential elements: a large mass of Jews steeped in woe plus a small elite, capable of dreaming dreams.

Borochov claimed it was unrealistic to imagine that the masses could formulate a program and carry it out by themselves:

Deliver the 'people' over to 'free development' without any interference on the part of the liberative avant-guard--will much good result for the people from this? 431

In order to succeed, Zionism needed more than just the masses:

It is clear...like the sun at noonday, that if everything depends on the people, if Zionism is purely a movement of the people--then it is nothing more than a delusion. 432

Because Zionism is first of all a "therapeutic movement" 433 concerned with removing the obstacles to free and natural

growth

'the people' cannot take a considerable part in the movement at first. Their needs...do not have decisive value in the choice of the first part of the way and the determination of the final ideal. These are determined by the aspirations and interests of the pioneering elements in the movement. And their natural and immediate ideal is that of the threefold unity of Zion.⁴³⁴

Borochov warned his readers not to be misled into thinking that the conception of an avant-guard directing and leading the people was undemocratic. He urged them to "distinguish between the democratism of conceited rhetoricians and true democratism..."⁴³⁵ Not everyone is so graced with the depth of intellect needed to be able to read the oracle of history and determine where the styctic processes are going. Is such a gifted individual undemocratic if he seeks to guide those who are less fortunate? Is a general undemocratic because he deploys his units so as to attain the quickest victory? Obviously not, and neither is the historical materialist for imposing his ideal on the masses:

Social Democracy is entitled to speak in the name of the entire proletariat and to influence its fate by means of its free institutions; likewise...the free Zionist institutions are permitted to speak in the name of the entire Jewish people and to influence its fate.⁴³⁶

Borochov's attitude toward 'the people' is like that of Marxists before and after him. It is the attitude of one observing from a distance, with interest and sympathy; but the distance blurs the reality and creates romantic distortion.

We must note in passing the incongruity of the above remark in light of another in which Borochov criticized "our galuti intelligentsia who seek only to rule over masses and to assure themselves, even if only slightly, the faith of the masses."⁴³⁷

Like the 'noble savage' of American folklore and the 'socialist realism' of most contemporary Soviet art, the worker for Borochoff is unspoiled and inherently virtuous, free of the contamination of party politics:

It is possible and necessary to love the people. But this does not free us of the obligation to act honorably toward it... turn to the simple Jew, who has not been corrupted by debates, who has not been fattened on party rhetoric... 438

Borochoff's concept of the relationship between the intellectual elite and 'the people' is identical with that of Marx in the Manifesto. Like Marx, Borochoff's conception of the dynamics of history created a special and even crucial role for himself and his comrades in the party leadership. They stand in the conductor's podium and the baton is in their hand. True, they did not write the music; history has done that. And of course, they could not hold such a position unless there were an orchestra--preferably a large one. But there they stand in the spotlight, directing the performance.*

Though Zionism is destined to evolve into a mass movement of the people, it must begin as the undertaking of a small group of idealists.⁴³⁹ At the beginning the numbers

*The style of Borochoff's essays is further evidence for his elitism. His style, even as determined from the Hebrew and English translations available to me, was hardly what could be called popular. His sophisticated terminology, the many references to learned works, and the fine line of argument were obviously intelligible only to those who were members of the intelligentsia. The few articles in his early works which were written for 'the people' are strikingly different in tone from his theoretical writings. For the privates he wrote propaganda; but for the captains and majors--his comrades in the party--he wrote 'science'.

of comrades in the movement is unimportant. In its first phases Zionism requires not lengthy membership lists but "the highest possible quality of discernment and dedication".⁴⁴⁰

A heavy task weighs on this small elite. Awareness of their responsibility for the success of the entire movement must keep them from relaxing or sentimentality:

Before everything else, severity is required of a man who has a social ideal. There is no place for softness of heart when creative and historic work is before us.⁴⁴¹

If this be true of any idealist, it is especially true of the socialist, for socialism is "an ideal which is embodied in every single hour of life".⁴⁴²

The time is short, the work is much, and the forces of history are imperatively surging forward. But if history is going its own way and the stychie forces are solving the Jewish problem, is there anything left for the avant-guard of Zionism to do? Borochov believed there was. We have already seen that he was not a fatalist; though stychie forces could not be created it was possible

to order them...this implies: to ease and hasten their course, to preserve social energy in order not to expend it at too great or exaggerated a rate, to make the results of these investments purposeful and fruitful as much as possible; in essence--to introduce economy and rationalization into the stychie forces.⁴⁴³

In concrete terms, Borochov believed there were three things the Zionist elite could and should do to speed the course

of history:

1) It should engage in vigorous propaganda in order to extend to the masses the consciousness that had first developed among the avant-garde.³⁴⁴

2) It should "begin, with the greatest possible speed, practical work in Palestine";³⁴⁵ i.e. aid in the establishment of settlements there.³⁴⁶

3) It should hasten and ease the course of stychic immigration by means of a suitable organization to aid immigrating Jews.³⁴⁷

This then was the treatment, the practical steps to be taken for the accomplishment of the Socialist Zionist ideal. Borochof believed it was neither utopian nor fatalistic, but a modest and realistic program.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

Much has happened in the decades since Ber Borochov wrote his last essay. The revolution he dreamed of took place and created a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' which in turn gave way to the era of Stalinism. The Nazis came to power in Germany and European Jewry was largely destroyed in the course of World War Two. And, in 1948, an independent Jewish state was established in Palestine.

It would be too easy, and too unfair, to judge Borochov in the light of history since his death. The events of recent years have created ammunition for both friendly and hostile critics. Borochov's followers can invoke the Nazi persecution and the creation of Israel as confirmation of the predictions of their leader. But others can appeal to the Stalinist reign of terror and the absence of a vigorous class struggle in Israel as proof of his inadequacy. It is only just, however, that we evaluate Borochov in his own terms. Rather than lecturing him with the course of history since 1917, we shall try to determine in the light of his own goals what it was that Borochov actually did and did not achieve.

Borochov failed to achieve his major stated objective: he did not create an actual synthesis of Socialism and Zionism. Our analysis has documented the contention that Borochov's ideology was essentially Zionism in Socialist dress. Behind the elaborate Marxist terminology and the professed concern

for the class struggle, Borochoy was first and foremost a Zionist. Aside from his own confession to being an a priori nationalist, we have noted that his 'objective' analysis of the processes of Jewish immigration was in reality quite 'subjective.' And we have also seen that whenever there was a conflict between Zionism and Socialism on a significant issue (e.g. the question of anti-semitism), Borochoy sacrificed the class struggle to the requirements of Jewish nationalism. Borochoy was succinctly describing what he had done when he wrote on one occasion:

Of late several young theoreticians have activated the heavy weapons of historical materialism for the aid of Zionism. They have even disturbed Marx himself to witness to the scientific character of Zionism.⁴⁴⁸

Borochoy also failed to solve the structural problems of Jewish society in Eastern Europe, but this was something no ideology could do. Powerful historical forces were at work and they left their tragic traces on Jewish society. The problems created by the rapid industrialization of Russia were overwhelming in and of themselves. But when the autocracy sought to drown the coming revolution in Jewish blood the position of Jewry became intolerable--and no words or theories could have improved it. As had happened so often in their long history, the Jews were the victims of historical circumstance, and, Borochoy's hopes to the contrary, no conceptual system could have solved the Jewish problem.

But though it could not have solved the Jewish problem in Eastern Europe, a suitable ideology might have accurately accounted for the problem, made it more understandable,

and showed where amelioration could be introduced through human agency. Yet Borochoy's ideology did none of these things; neither of the intellectual traditions to which he was committed accurately or adequately accounted for the facts of Jewish existence at the turn of the century. Both of these traditions were dogmatic in character, and, needless to say, when combined they lost none of their rigidity.

Marxism had contributed certain insights into the nature of society that were potentially valuable for the solution of social problems. In particular, by emphasizing the importance of economic change and its relation to ideology, Marx made a significant contribution towards the understanding of society in the age of industrialism. But as a dogmatic ideology Marxism interfered with the free and rational operation of human intelligence. The assumption that the utterances of the working class and its leadership have the highest truth value is hardly justified. Likewise, the rigid Marxist position on the Jewish problem failed to account for the rise of Jewish nationalism; the Marxists might believe that the only solution to the Jewish problem was assimilation, but thousands of Jewish nationalists felt otherwise. Furthermore, the experience of the Soviet system has shown that when applied to concrete realities

...the social democratic values...are no longer working ideals, helping to shape and define specific political objectives. They are, rather, utopias--symbols of an indeterminate future lacking any concrete linkage with the problems of the present. As such, they are central to the ideology and provide a focus for loyalties and identification. But they play no part in the choices actually made from day to day; and it is these that make the future.⁴⁴⁹

Borochohov's Marxism, no less than that of the Bolsheviks, had precisely this utopian character. He was committed to the revolution and eagerly urged others to affirm their allegiance to the progress of the proletariat. But his concrete program of action is only remotely, if at all, connected with the realization of socialism. The practical program of Borochohov's ideology called for propaganda, the organization of immigration, and settlement in Palestine. To the extent that these activities were related to the realities of life in the Pale, they may have been justified. But only the most tenuous chain of argument--and a chain with missing links at that--had related this program of action to the goals of Marxism.

Borochohov's Zionism, like his Marxism, was dogmatic in character. It committed him to certain concepts that are of highly questionable value for the understanding of the relation of the Jews to their non-Jewish background. His defense of the psychological unity of the threefold Zionist ideal is an example of how dogmatic nationalism forced him to abandon rationality altogether, and we have seen that his argument for the stychic concentration of Jewish immigration in Palestine bears all the earmarks of a rationalization.

Borochohov's commitment to Pinsker's theory of anti-semitism led him to ignore certain facts which, had they been taken into account, would have contributed greatly to the understanding of the Jewish problem. True, anti-semitism was prevalent in Tsarist Russia, and even a part of the working class espoused it. But many social democrats actively fought proletarian anti-semitism because it

obscured 'class consciousness.' In short, anti-semitism was not a universal phenomenon, and as Borochoy himself admitted there were forces at work in Russian society which counteracted the influence of the Black Hundreds. But by assuming anti-semitism was implicit in galut Borochoy precluded a more rational explanation.

Borochoy's assumptions that the Jews are a nation and that the Jewish problem is national in character were hardly justified. Zionism--with a healthy assist from history--succeeded in creating a Jewish state, but it cannot be demonstrated that the Jews were already a nation in Borochoy's time. But it can be shown that the breakdown of Jewish society in the Pale was the result of structural changes in the total pattern of life in Eastern Europe, and was not due to national oppression. Despite the claims of those who are a priori committed to Jewish nationalism, a non-nationalist conceptualization of the Jewish problem would have better suited the objective realities of the situation of the Jews in Eastern Europe.

Perhaps the most serious defect in Borochoy's ideology is the persistent note of self-deception. The bourgeois Zionists were often romantics, and Syrkin made no pretense to the hard-headed analysis of historical materialism. Borochoy, however, spoke with the voice of sophistication and wrote as one who saw behind the facades of his competitors. His discussion of the Bund's neutralism shows how he could use the analytical tools of Marxism to reveal the contradictions and inconsistencies in the ideologies of his opponents. But he failed to apply these same analytical tools to his own ideology.

Rather than consciously realizing the influence of structural or class factors on all ideologies, including his own, Borochoy assumed that everyone--except himself--was rationalizing. We have seen that this assumption was not justified.

Though Borochoy's ideology was neither a synthesis of Zionism and Socialism nor an accurate analysis of the Jewish problem, we must not draw the conclusion that it was without historical significance. Erik Erikson's provocative study of Martin Luther deals with many of the same phenomena encountered in the personality and ideology of Ber Borochoy. Erikson notes that

In some periods of his history, and in some phases of his life cycle, man needs (until he invent something better) a new ideological orientation as surely and as sorely as he must have air and food.⁴⁵⁰

By ideology Erikson means

...an unconscious tendency underlying religious and scientific as well as political thought: the tendency at a given time to make facts amenable to ideas, and ideas to facts, in order to create a world image convincing enough to support the collective and individual sense of identity.⁴⁵¹

Erikson's emphasis on the unconscious aspect of ideology is especially important. An ideology is not a photographic reproduction of reality; rather an ideology implies a restructuring of reality in such a way as to make it comprehensible to man. An ideology does not describe reality so much as it relates man to his world, tells him what his place is in the universe and society. Actual correspondence to objective fact is but one factor

in determining whether or not an ideology will be accepted; an ideology must also correspond to the subjective individual and group need for a sustained sense of identity. If it creates "a world image convincing enough to support the collective and individual sense of identity" the ideology will be accepted.

Erikson notes further that the need for an identity-defining ideology is crucial at certain times in the life cycle of the individual. In his analysis of Luther, Erikson was most concerned with the period of late adolescence. At that phase of the life cycle the individual often undergoes an "identity crisis", analogous to that of society in certain periods of history:

...in adolescence an ideological realignment is by necessity in process and a number of ideological possibilities are waiting to be hierarchically ordered by opportunity, leadership, and friendship. Any leadership, however, must have the power to encase the individual in a spatial arrangement and in a temporal routine which at the same time narrow down the sensory supply from the world and block his sexual and aggressive drives, so that a new needfulness will eagerly attach itself to a new world-image. At no other time as much as in adolescence does the individual feel so exposed to anarchic manifestations of his drives; at no other time does he so need over-systematized thoughts and overvalued words to give a semblance of order to his inner world. He therefore is willing to accept ascetic restrictions which go counter to what he would do if he were alone...good and evil must be clearly defined as forces existing from all beginning and perseverating into all future; therefore all memory of the past must be starved or minutely guided, and attention focused on the common utopia.⁴⁵²

Though Erikson makes these remarks in the course of discussing Martin Luther, they are also applicable to Ber Borochov and his comrades in the Poale Zion. Borochov, like Luther, lived during a period of profound social change.

In both Catholic Germany of the sixteenth century and the Jewish Pale at the dawn of the twentieth the feudal world and its Weltanschauung were being transformed. Both Luther and Borochoy lived when the old patterns of economic, political, and social life were being attacked and men were forced to reconsider the axioms of their traditional patterns of thought. In short, both Luther and Borochoy lived in eras when the need for a new ideology was felt to be essential.

Erikson showed what happened when the identity crisis of a gifted individual coincided with a period of social transformation. In Luther's case the ideology he developed to solve his own identity problem awakened echoes in the hearts and minds of many of his contemporaries; in solving his own problem he created an ideology which helped them solve theirs. In Ber Borochoy's case there was a similar confluence of individual and social needs for redefined identity.

We must be extremely cautious in drawing conclusions on the basis of the scanty biographical material available about Ber Borochoy. We know very little about the details of his life, and we are especially ignorant of his inner life. No diaries or letters from his pen have been published, and most of the reminiscences of those who knew him are written with admiration for a fallen comrade or fondly remembered son and husband. Nonetheless, a rather clear picture of Borochoy emerges from the available data, and this data can be used to suggest certain highly probable conclusions about Ber Borochoy--and especially about young Ber Borochoy.

By no means the least significant fact about Borochoy's ideology is the age at which he wrote it--young manhood.

His first work on the Jewish problem appeared in 1902 when he was twenty-one. He laid down the basic elements of his ideology in Our Platform which was published in 1906 when he was but twenty-four.

Borochov was apparently a highly intelligent and intense youth, one who was both a recognized leader and an introspective student. Buria gave scholarly lectures to his colleagues; yet he had difficulty in listening to others give them, and his rebelliousness in school strongly suggests he had difficulty in relating to authority figures. When he joined the Social Democratic party he soon found the role of follower unbearable. He had to be the lecturer; he had to be the leader. And he created an ideology which allowed him to be both.

By formulating the platform of the Poale Zion Buria, the rebellious student and social democratic subordinate, became Ber Borochov, the ideologue and respected mentor. Plekhanov had taught him that a single individual could influence history by shaping social mentality, and Borochov had learned this lesson well. As the platform writer of his party Borochov was not only the leader but a historically significant individual. He believed he was making history and therefore he was important, though only an individual. Although he was undoubtedly unaware of it, when Borochov became the ideologue of Poale Zion he resolved his identity crisis and told himself who he was.

In light of the relationship between ideology and identity the inconsistencies in Borochov's theory become comprehensible. The very a priori assumptions and irrationalities

which rob his ideology of scientific accuracy made it valuable in solving Borochoy's identity problem. To admit the Jews were not a nation would have required the repudiation of a part of his psyche; Trotsky may never have felt Jewish, but Borochoy did. Jewishness was a part of himself, something that had become rooted in his soul during childhood, and it was therefore something he could not deny without grave damage to that soul. Likewise, to admit that anti-semitism could be solved by the revolution would have put Borochoy out of a job. It would have removed any justification for the existence of a separate Jewish Social Democratic organization like Poale Zion. The confession that anti-semitism was not inherent in galut, in other words, would have deprived Borochoy of the leadership position he needed so much. We can safely conclude that the logical inconsistencies in Borochoy's ideology are in reality proof of its psychological consistency.

Like Luther's Protestantism, Borochoy's Socialist Zionism was accepted because it eased the identity problem common to thousands of sensitive souls. We have noted that Borochoy assigned a crucial role to the intelligentsia in his theory. Whatever it ^{may have} implied about Zionism and the class struggle, Borochoy's platform told the Jewish intellectual elite which was torn between Socialism and loyalty to their people who they were. It related them to their nation as leaders to followers, and called upon them to make sacrifices and devote themselves to the welfare of their oppressed brethren. It related them to history and gave them the assurance that the forces of the universe were on their side, aiding and guiding their efforts and insuring their success.

Borochov's ideology told the Jewish youth who they were and what they should do, and it did so without equivocation. Borochov writes with the conviction of a man who is absolutely convinced he is right; nothing is left to chance in his carefully organized essays. His writing is pervaded with a horror of the unclear and the unsystematic; certain words become almost magical in importance, overvalued: galut, proletariat, reactionary, progressive. The very pseudonym Borochov adopted for signing his articles is significant; in the Yiddish he was "Ständiger" and in the Hebrew חסיד . This name is consistent with what we know of Borochov and accurately represents his own self-image: he did so much need to be the firm and unbending leader who neither erred nor tired.

In his essay on Herzl Borochov referred to the tragic fate of the first leader and law-giver of his people. Ironically, he was writing his own epitaph:

As the Chumash tells us in a heartmoving way, God did not want to allow the leader to inherit the pleasure of the triumph of his work and struggle; indeed God has never bestowed upon man this great joy. God--is history.⁴⁵³

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