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## Introductory Note

The author of the following essay, Solomon Schiller, was born in 1865 at Mihailova, a small town of Southern Lithuania. He died in Jerusalem in 1926. The name of the great German idealist, poet and philosopher, which he bears, is neither his original name nor his literary pseudonym, but one which he deliberately selected, legally adopted and exclusively used. There is nothing more characteristic of the man and his background. It is, though a mere external fact, a key to this personality and the development of the whole generation, to which it belonged.

After leaving Russia when still in his teens, Schiller lived for many years in the Jewish province of the former Austrian Empire, called Galicia. It is there that he learned German and Polish and came in touch with Western civilization and Western philosophy, to which he soon became passionately devoted. There the names of the German poets had a magic ring, and there Immanuel Kant could become the guiding star of his life. There, too, as a synthesis between his upbringing and the concepts of modern thought, Schiller's Zionism emerged. Before he left Galicia for Palestine, he had written a series of essays and pamphlets on the philosophy of Jewish Nationalism and was recognized as one of the fine thinkers and leaders of the Zionist movement.

In Palestine, Solomon Schiller—as the Principal of the Jerusalem Hebrew College—was one of the well-known and best loved educators and teachers of youth. He was a member of the National Council, and active in Jewish National Fund work. It is only during the later years of his life that he joined the ranks of the Labor movement. He became a member and a spokesman of Hapoel Hazair, the Palestinian branch of the Zionist Labor Party Hitachduth. The following essay is a fruit of this period.

It goes without saying that, even after joining the party, Schiller never was a man of party-routine. His writings cannot be considered “official ideology.” They bear too strong an imprint of a unique individuality. His Zionism was a rare amalgam of Jewish traditions and Kantian philosophy; his socialism, his love for, and faith in, the Palestinian worker, were the natural outcome of his conception of Zionism.

In spite of this fact—or maybe: because of it—his presentation of some of the fundamental principles of Labor Zionism will be able to stimulate the thought and capture the imagination of Jewish youth all over the world. It certainly reflects the passionate moral enthusiasm which was at the base of Schiller's system of life, and which seldom fails to impress the open mind and the sensitive conscience of youth.

CH. A.

New York, October, 1928.

# Principles of Labor Zionism

By SOLOMON SCHILLER

Labor Zionism is a synthesis of two social ideas, nationalism and socialism. This synthesis is actual reality among the Palestinian workers; it is potential reality among those who are about to join Labor in Palestine,—those called *Chalutzim*,—people whose life in the Diaspora is of a temporary character, a period of training towards their future life of productivity in Palestine. On the other hand, those political associates of Palestinian Labor, whose residence in the Diaspora is of a permanent character,—they may call themselves anything they will, Poale Zion, Zeire Zion, or Zionist Socialists,—are suffering from dualism and ambiguity. There is no synthesis and no proportion between their nationalist and their socialist activities, because they have to be carried on on different planes and point in different directions. For this reason one of their characteristics is inconsistency, the tendency towards compromise on the one hand, and the inclination towards extremism in their demands, on the other. They willingly detract from one branch of their activities in favor of the other. Inasmuch as they exert an influence over their comrades in Palestine, their influence is not always sound and useful. Borrowed slogans, which foreign conditions have shaped, do not always fit Palestine reality.

Only in the working community of Palestine there is no dualism or ambiguity. Their Zionism means the establishment of a national home on foundations of labor and equality. In a natural way there evolves a synthesis and an interaction between nationalism and socialism. Every new cooperative settlement adds a brick to the structure of the national home, every new labor institution adds a pillar to the edifice of social reconstruction. Every new national achievement broadens the sphere of the worker's activities in the country. Every basic improvement in the worker's conditions in Palestine strengthens our national position in the country. The

working community, in its very existence closely dependent upon the common weal, is in itself a powerful national stronghold.

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Let us try to explain in detail the correlation and interdependence of the two ideas, nationalism and socialism.

The task set before us by History,—the return of the exiles, of a landless people to the country of its origin, there to start life anew, the spanning of an abyss of two thousand years,—is a phenomenon unequalled in the annals of the world. To turn this ideal into reality, endless sacrifice, intense effort and extraordinary persistence are called for. To keep the ideal undegraded as a living, productive, regenerative force in the nation's life, is rendered particularly difficult by the fact that the soul of the people has been weakened by dispersion and permeated with foreign civilizations, and all of us have become,—more or less consciously,—ridden by assimilation. The mere acknowledgment of the nation's existence does not appear to be a sufficient guard against assimilation, inasmuch as the latter is a natural process. From this it follows that nationalism as an idea is, in itself, too narrow a plank to bear the burden which the renaissance of an ancient people in all the walks of its life implies. It is necessary that another force of a more universal character be added to it. Such a force, adding strength, is the idea of socialism.

Socialism, the striving to reconstruct society in such a way that there should be no more room for people who bask in luxury side by side with those who perish in starvation, a society in which there is no longer any room for exploiter and exploited, is the final word in social ethics. Whoever says that there is a system of social morality ranking above it, only deceives himself. Such an idea, when it becomes a living active force and amalgamates with the idea of nationalism, should work miracles. It may inject a stream of new blood into the veins of a nation and make it fit for its difficult tasks. That these words are not a mere hypothesis can now be proved by present-day Palestine. For, what are the *Chalutzim* who arouse such astonishment in all who see their devoted, indefatigable toil, but the embodiment of the synthesis of these two ideas? That is why the Zionist Organization, in accordance

with its policies of national colonization, is not interested in suppressing the "revolutionary" tendencies of the workers, but, on the contrary, in fostering and strengthening them. That is what makes Zionism a singular phenomenon in history,—in order to solve the national problem, the Jewish people must at the same time lay the foundations for the solution of the social problem. Such has already been the teaching of the founders of Zionism, Moses Hess, Theodor Herzl, and in a certain sense, although in a vague form, Achad Ha'am, who always stressed the postulate of absolute justice. The Palestinian workers are merely the spiritual heirs and the executors of the will of these great men.

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On the other hand, there appears, or should appear, the retro-active influence of nationalism upon the socialist idea in the following points. Two prime characteristics distinguish the position of the workers in Palestine and their attitude towards the other classes from the position of labor in other countries. There, life in all its aspects is crystallized, perfected and complete. Here, everything is in the stage of its inception, in a condition of ferment and growth. There the frame rivetting together the working class with the other strata of society is the State, a union essentially formal; here it is the nation. The Palestinian workers, with all their settlements and insitutions, draw their sustenance, both material and moral, from the nation as a whole, more specifically from that part of it, which is organized in the Zionist Organization. Innumerable bonds of practical significance link the workers to the rest of the nation. Here, then, no room is left for segregation of classes, for a seclusion within the sphere of sectional interests. Moreover, the peculiar position of the workers in our world, which is only taking shape, imposes serious national obligations upon them. By that we do not mean compromise with employers or submission to the great "Bread-giver", the Zionist Organization, but something quite different. What is gradually being established by the Labor Federation in Palestine is no more and no less than a basis for the nation's new economic structure. And not, at that, an economic structure in the ordinary sense of the word,—which is no more than an agglomeration of

private households within the boundaries of a State,—but one comprehensive economic body, which is composed of coordinated cooperative units. Here we have before us an economic organism with its cells, the agricultural settlements, — *krutzoth*<sup>1</sup> and *moshavim*<sup>2</sup>, — the contracting agencies, and the industrial cooperatives, and the connective tissue, — the institutions of Labor: the Bank, the Consumers' Cooperative<sup>3</sup>, the *Solel Boneh*<sup>4</sup>. The novelty of this many-sided undertaking, carried through at so hurried a pace, amid the financial difficulties from which the workers have been suffering from the very outset, necessarily caused failures, mistakes, and deficits time and again. There is, therefore, one duty imposed upon Labor in Palestine, a duty towards itself and its future, as well as towards the whole nation called upon to cooperate; that is that each one of its undertakings should be based on consciences, well-ordered, and economizing work. None of its enterprises should have to fear the light of publicity and criticism. In adopting any new measure, the Labor Federation should ask herself not only the question of whether it is desirable from the socialist point of view, but also, and primarily, the other question of whether it is sound from the point of view of national economy, and whether it is likely to grow into a self-supporting enterprise. This is a national duty of prime importance: the more efficiently the enterprises of Labor will be organized, the better fitted the country will be to absorb new immigrants.

As to the second duty, it has already been mentioned, and there is no need to waste words on it. Labor should not divide itself from the rest of the *Yishuv*<sup>5</sup>, nor allow itself to be secluded within the sphere of its party-interests. It should, on the contrary, permeate every representative institution and there disseminate its system of ideas and the principles of Democracy. It should cooperate with the finest minds of our nation in their fight against any social evil, any injustice or wrong—whoever may inflict it and whoever may suffer from it. It should readily participate in every activity, political, cultural or economic, in which the *Yishuv* as a whole engages. It is a matter of common knowledge that the workers have indeed been highly alive to these responsibilities. It is they, after

all, who have been the most faithful advocates of the organization of the *Yishuv* along national lines; it is they who have been ready to submit to national authority for the arbitration of conflicts between them and the employers, even if the awards given were against their most elementary demands. It is not sectional interest that has urged them to fight for the existence of the Elected Assembly<sup>11</sup> or for the recognition of the Jewish Community Ordinance<sup>12</sup>, but the idea of national responsibility, the will to strengthen the unity and solidarity of the *Yishuv* as a whole. All these points reflect the retroactive influence of nationalism on the socialist concept.

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Still, the nature and the significance of the synthesis between nationalism and socialism, as embodied in Labor Zionism, may be further explained from another angle. Both these world-wide movements, nationalism and socialism, all their tremendous importance for the progress of mankind notwithstanding, carry within them, from their beginnings, sinister powers and perilous seeds of poison. National movements, in equal ratio to their advance towards their goal, tend to become chauvinistic, egotistic and imbued with hatred and envy towards other nations. The socialist movement is prone to become submerged in the "world as it is," to lose itself in the trifling matters of the moment. The class-struggle, never more than a means towards the goal, often becomes an aim in itself, a principal and absolute object, and the original aim is lost in the distance. The political party, which ought never to be more than a tool to carry through a program, becomes a many-headed monster that wants to be fed, to thrive and to expand, and the food given it is not always distinguished by its conformity to dietary law.

Now the synthesis of the two elements, the nationalist and the socialist, in Labor Zionism, will certainly be able to mend the defects on both sides. The socialist idea, which stands for justice,—in the broadest sense of the term, even including international justice,—will not allow our national movement to degenerate into narrow-minded chauvinism. On the other hand, the national consciousness of the workers, the knowledge that a whole people knocks at the gates of the country with no one to open them, the feeling that, as things stand at present, each day allowed to pass without



practical achievement, spells irretrievable loss for the nation and its future—all this will not allow them to become submerged in the “world as it is.” They will not rejoice in what has already been achieved. They will not allow themselves, even for a moment, to lose sight of the ultimate aim of their efforts; the upbuilding of a homeland for the whole nation, on foundations of justice and humanity.

And one more general remark. There is a well-known tune, sung in hundreds of variations, on the theme: socialism is a dream, and not even a beautiful one. Equalitarianism and collectivism will stifle the creative impulse. Private property and the competitive system which it implies, are as necessary for the economic progress of society and for the advancement of civilization as air for breathing. Yet this conception, however strong the tone of self-assurance in which it is proclaimed, needs further examination. The truth seems to be that in the heart of every-man there exist two necessities: that of safeguarding his individuality and that of drifting with the stream of social life. The proportion in which these two basic requirements are found within individuals or among the various nations is not equal. Moreover, it is worthwhile adding that the majority of men is unable to bear personal isolation. Life in a community of people who are their kin spiritually is as much to them as the soil is to a plant: the spring of life-sap, the treasure-house of stirring impulses, the source of regenerating vitality. There is nothing nearer to a man’s heart than man himself.

The assertion that private property is the only stimulus for creative effort is equally wrong. The foremost minds creative in the field of human civilization—in science, poetry, art, as well as in social reform—were not urged by property-interests to achieve what they did. Even in the narrow province of economic activity there is room for the joy of creation which has no relation to questions of mine and thine. Thus, the problem is a different one: How is individuality, that is to say, personal endeavor, to be preserved within the scope of work of the social group? We shall return to this question later on. In the meantime we want to point out the following: the human soul is plastic, it absorbs impressions, it

retains them, and, in consequence, there ensue changes in the soul itself, in its attributes and its essence. In this way the social struggle which has been carried on for more than a hundred years by millions of workers in European and American society, proves, on the one hand, that the socialist idea is deeply rooted in the human soul. But this is not all. On the other hand, the struggle as such, carried on by means of organization and combination, the continuous and powerful influences ensuing, have brought about fundamental changes in the soul of the workers,—and, perhaps, not in the soul of the working-class alone. As a result, there has been accumulated in their soul a store of energies strengthening the social instincts as against the selfish interests.

As for the Jewish race, there is every indication of a specific social leaning characteristic of it since the earliest days of history. Witness the careful attention paid to the life of the family—which is nothing but society in miniature,—the tendency to crowd together in large centers, the spirit of corporation common to all classes, and the talents of statesmanship which it has produced in the various periods of history. This may be open to praise or blame. The fact remains that the Jewish people has never produced out of its midst great hermits and recluses as the peoples of Aryan race have. Its great men worked and fought within the ranks. While such social sensibility does not yet imply ethical or social ideas, it may serve as their groundwork, just as the senses, in general, form the passageway leading to the edifice of sublime spiritual life. The social sensibility or instinct of the Jewish masses appears crystallized and condensed in the moral genius which reveals itself in the ideas of their prophets. It is, therefore, not out of place to assume that the descendants of this race—the proletariat among races during two thousand years—may be called upon to build a structure of model society, once the day dawns for them to live on their soil in peace, and free to act as their natural instincts bid them.

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At this juncture, it would be proper to examine the specific inferences to be drawn from our concepts of nationalism or socialism and, further, some conclusions common to both.

Our nationalism bids us concentrate our efforts on land settlement and enlarge the sphere of our agricultural activities to the very limits of possibility. In following this course, we are actuated by economic, political, eugenic as well as cultural considerations. The only sound structure of a nation's economic life is that which is fit to satisfy all of the nation's needs. A structure of economic life which does not show a well-balanced proportion between farm and city, which leaves the production of raw materials in the hands of others than the sons of the nation themselves, is like a body whose center of gravity lies outside itself. It is like a pyramid standing on its apex, which any breeze of chance or mischance could topple over. National wealth that is not rooted in the soil is never enduring. This was the cause of our calamity in the Diaspora, the cause of our pauperization, which like a shadow accompanied our people on all its wanderings. Where there is a rural community, urban community will grow of itself; on the other hand, the rural community will never be the outcome of urban life. It is superfluous to waste words on the political importance of agricultural colonization. Many a time, in the lands of our dispersion, were we the controlling force in trade and industry, nor were our numbers trifling, and still we remained strangers, both in the eyes of our neighbors and in our own eyes. Only those who strike root in the soil of a country are its citizens. A nation whose labor binds it to its soil can never be uprooted by any storm in the world. The destiny of a country is truly determined by those who till its soil. With how much strength and self-reliance the soil endows those who are rooted in it (even though they may not cultivate it with their own hands), we had opportunity to observe during the well-known uprising against our colonies in Judæa. Such a natural instinct for defense, welding men into one body, as solid as a wall of iron, is not to be conceived among townspeople. Here there was not present the majestic heroism born of idealist convictions, as there was in the case of Trumpeldor and his comrades<sup>6</sup>, but a living instinct, sublime in its simplicity, molded out of the close contact with the soil in the course of a long period of time. And now let us add that the establishment of commercial and industrial enter-

prise is within our command and control, while land is not. Land has to be acquired from others—and what the future may bring we do not know. That is why the question of enlarging our land area and our agricultural settlements is a problem on which our fate hangs, the problem of “*to be or not to be.*”

The contact with the soil is no less important from the point of view of eugenics, of the health and improvement of our race. In the Diaspora, we were disabled in body, and perhaps even more so in soul. The penning of our people in the atmosphere of the city did not allow our sons' bodies to develop properly. Neurasthenia became a specifically Jewish disease. The spiritual defect which has left its mark on all of us is the disproportion between the senses and the intellect, the absolute hypertrophy of rational over empiric faculties. “*Perception without conceptions is blind; conceptions without perception are empty,*” said Immanuel Kant. Because we have been torn from our soil, we lack the continuous experience of those impressions that only the wide open spaces of nature offer. Thus even our thinking has become warped and impoverished, and the channels of our originality have been choked. That is one of the reasons why we have clung to obsolete traditions during so long a period. For centuries we have lived by acting as middlemen, not only commercial, but also spiritual. The return to nature is the elixir of life for the whole nation. It may restore to it simplicity of outlook and straightforward thinking. The close communion, through work, with the cosmic forces of nature may awaken, in us too, creative powers which have so long been dormant or eclipsed. This is the idea which A. D. Gordon<sup>7</sup> stressed again and again. It is, however, worthwhile adding that in speaking of the return to nature, we have not in mind Rousseau's or Tolstoi's conceptions of renouncing civilization, and of idealizing the backward peasant's life. This conception is fundamentally reactionary and misleading. Civilization, particularly in its intellectual aspects, is doubtlessly the basis of human progress, even if this term is given an ethical interpretation. It is not civilization that has caused the decay of morals, but its agents who have misused it. What we have in mind is a synthesis between nature and civilization, between labor and intellect,

a synthesis we have lacked hitherto, and which, once it succeeds, may give a strong impulse toward a renewal of the nation's creative originality. It is precisely men of higher cultural standard—the type our pioneers are—who, returning to nature, may be able to animate it with all their sensitiveness, while they listen to its voices, so long silent to the Jew.

From what we have said, it follows that the main task imposed upon the political parties of Zionist Labor is to enlarge the area of our agricultural settlements. With this purpose in view, they should actively participate in the effort to increase the income of the Jewish National Fund. They should be equally anxious to see the agricultural budget granted out of Keren Hayesod means not only undiminishing, but gradually increasing. The workingmen are today the only class of agricultural settlers. The period when colonies were started by the single-handed enterprise of individuals is almost gone and not likely to return. The stream of immigrants of the "private initiative" type is flowing into the city. The workers and their political parties are those who bear upon their shoulders the responsibility for the structural design of the National Home. Now, we do not intend to belittle the importance of the activities carried on in the city by the Labor Federation and its institutions. But the city is growing up in an automatic process—for is not the town dweller's psychology planted deeply enough in our hearts? It is only natural that large groups of workers should gather there and stay for good, so that, taking this fact into due account, there is only the need of *kibush haavodah*<sup>8</sup> in the cities and of organizing the work in accordance with the social concepts of the working community. But as a matter of principle, pioneering—that is to say: not the care for the present moment, but the vision of the distant future, not the necessity to manage what is, but the will to create what should be—pioneering ought to be directed towards agriculture.

It is from the point of view of just this principle that the scheme of establishing suburban labor-settlements in the vicinity of the cities should meet with whole-hearted approval. Such suburban settlements, if organized in the form of garden-cities, may not only prove to be of value economically, inasmuch as they may

alleviate the wretched condition of the urban worker and render his position more stable, but of equal value socially. In this sense they may serve him as a substitute for life in a rural community. Even at this early stage, striking differences between the agricultural workers and their comrades in the cities appear and gradually grow. There are differences between those who are firmly set in the ground, and those who have not yet struck root, between those who live and work in a congenial group of fellow-workers, and those whose ears, every minute, catch shrill sounds from afar. It is a fact that the city is the hatchery of political communism. The obvious duty of safeguarding the unity and solidarity of Labor demands that the sharp edge of these differences be blunted as much as possible. The suburban labor settlements will do their share to effect this. The contact with the soil will bridge the gulf.

Moreover, the nationalist element in Labor Zionism calls for a truly sincere attitude on our part towards the Hebrew language. It is not enough to say that this language links our present to the past and to its spiritual atmosphere, or that an ancient people starting out again from a *tabula rasa* can never be assured of great achievement in the future. It should be added that, at the same time, the language is the only means of amalgamating all the various groups of "returning exiles" who are gathering in Palestine into one, undivided social unit. The increase in immigration, with the confusing variety of languages accompanying it, should bring home to every one of us the graveness of the problem. If there will be no uncompromising stand for safeguarding Hebrew, the danger of cultural chaos in the country is impending. One may paraphrase the well-known saying: *If Hebrew would not exist, we should have to invent it.* The flood of languages, which at present sweeps our country, is apt not only to carry away everything created by the Hebrew language itself, in form and spirit, and to turn it into a kind of Tartar tongue. It is particularly the Labor-pioneer, the *Chaluz*, who should be called upon to show a more positive and more serious attitude towards Hebrew. He, who has burnt all bridges behind him and fundamentally changed all his ways of life, should take upon himself the task of breaking the trail with regard

to the language as well. He even should, if necessary, be able to bind himself by a vow of silence. It is very characteristic, indeed, that those who strive to undermine the foundation of Labor's achievement in the country, are at the same time the opponents of Hebrew, the fanatical champions of Yiddish. There is, then, a definite connection between these two elements. It is, therefore, very desirable that the Labor leaders should change their attitude towards the existing school-system and Hebrew education in general. Let us be quite outspoken: hitherto this question has been treated with unseemly levity. At a moment when every steamer brings hundreds and hundreds of families into the country, the education budget is being cut down. The result is that the activities of the Department of Education have to be curtailed, cut and restricted. The number of children in one classroom has to be increased beyond anything allowed by the laws of hygiene. Nevertheless, many hundreds of children will be compelled either to loaf around in the street or else to knock at the doors of all sorts of Alliance schools. Not one of the party leaders has been lifting a finger in view of all this.

Moreover, measures for safeguarding Hebrew, which are confined to Palestine, are insufficient. In order to prevent the immigrants from importing chaos into our educational system in the country, we must check the evil at its source. We ought to start work in the countries of the Diaspora. Was this not one of the regular arguments of Chaim Zhitlovsky<sup>9</sup> against us: why do you surround yourself with a Chinese wall? Are you not weakening, by that Hebrew of yours, the bond between you and your brethren in the Diaspora? As a means of strengthening this bond, he advocated the establishment of Yiddish schools in Palestine. So let us answer: we do not intend at all to surround ourselves with a Chinese wall. In order to maintain the contacts between Palestine and the Diaspora, it is necessary to secure, uncompromisingly and unswervingly, the ascendancy of Hebrew in the Diaspora.

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So far we have been speaking of some conclusions to be drawn from the national aspect of Labor Zionism. Now let us ask: what are the inferences to be derived from its socialist aspect? The idea of socialism is based on one fundamental principle—economic

equality, a social order where there should be no room for differences in property or income, no room, then, for copiousness side by side with hunger, for competition and hatred that are the outcome of such differences. But equality as such is no more than an abstract principle. To turn it into practical reality, the social system has to be based upon two essentials: the personal obligation of every individual to work and the cooperative organization of individual efforts. The first one makes it the duty of every member of society to contribute his share. It prohibits the establishing of anyone's economic existence upon the use of hired outside labor. It declares work to be the prerequisite for anybody's civic rights. This principle may be able to curtail inequality, but it will never be able to tear it up by its very roots. Economic equality will be fully safeguarded and definitely guaranteed, only when the cooperative organization of the workers will replace the unorganized effort of the isolated individual, when the national wealth, the means of production and the process of production itself, will be controlled by society. (Here, again, there are two possibilities: the control may be vested either in the limited body of workers who are in charge of any given cooperative establishment, or else in the working community of a country as a whole.)

From what has been said, there emerges the clear outline of a program which ought to rule the system of life among the Palestinian workers. The standard ought to be the cooperative workers' group, the *Kvutzah*, both agricultural and industrial. It alone presents a definite guarantee for the principles of equality being put into operation. The tendency which has prevailed in the development of agricultural labor in Palestine, to advance from the stage of hired work in the old colonies towards independent workers' settlements, ought to apply to industrial labor as well. Here, too, the evolution ought to point in the direction of independent cooperative enterprise, following a stage of *kibush haavodah* with private employers. Now, it should be noted that the problem of cooperative industry is much more difficult to solve than that of agriculture on a cooperative basis. But that is just why it calls for our undivided attention.



The agricultural *kvutzah* was born almost before we became aware of it; it grew out of the social instincts of the labor-settlers. It did not meet—and it could not have met—with any opposition or competition on the part of its predecessors. The old colony, based upon the foundation of non-Jewish labor, had become sterile. It confined itself primarily to the preservation of its existing status. It ceded its place in the history of Palestine colonization to the workers' *kvutzah*. Between these two types of settlement there was no room for competition, or even for friction. In the city the position is different. Private capital flows into the city. It starts factories, and intrenches itself in trade and industry. On the one hand, it draws Labor into the range of its activities by employing wage-earners; on the other hand, any attempt at cooperative enterprise within the sphere which it considers its exclusive domain is likely to meet with its hostile attitude, and the array of all the financial resources at its disposal. The difficulty in establishing cooperative industries lies, therefore, in the fact that the Labor Federation and its executive organs—being under the necessity of securing employment for their members—are fully absorbed in the present-day-problem of organizing the workers within the sphere of activities of private capital. Moreover, every experiment in industrial production on a cooperative basis will have to be prepared to face war from competing private enterprise. Nevertheless, steps in this direction ought to be taken. The establishment of a ramified system of cooperative industry ought to be the ultimate goal of the Labor Federation, to round off its work. It is in this way only that the economic structure built by Palestinian Labor would achieve perfection and unity, and that agricultural and industrial labor would be knit together with a strong bond. The close interdependence between the two will express itself in actual practice. The workers in the city will produce all the implements necessary for the work of their comrades on the farms, and will, in turn, receive from them—as far as it can be reasonably expected—all the raw materials required for manufacturing purposes. The economic

institutions of Labor, the consumers' cooperative society and the Bank, should primarily serve the promotion of this magnificent aim.

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In the preceding paragraphs we have touched upon some characteristics pertaining to each of the two elements which constitute Labor Zionism, the nationalist and the socialist. We should now proceed to examine the features common to both. The trait characterizing both socialism and nationalism—in the concrete shape these ideas have taken in modern Jewish Palestine generally and in the activities of Palestinian Labor especially—is the fact that both are based on freedom of determination or autonomy of will—individual as well as social. In speaking of freedom of determination, we do not mean to suggest a possibility of arbitrarily denying the laws of causality. The will is free, inasmuch as it is exercised within the control of thought and in the guiding light of observation. Well-balanced reasoning and the imperative dictates of the ideal accompanied both the people ever since it started out on its way back to its homeland, and the workers ever since they laid the first cornerstone of their achievements in the country.

In those days, forty-four years ago, when the Palestine movement set in among Russian Jewry, there were, it is true, certain outward causes which contributed to it: hostile government-edicts, pogroms, the bitter disappointment in, and disillusionment from, any hope for international peace or equality of civic rights. But these were never more than external stimulants, impulses revealing at work among the people powerful centripetal forces which, until then, had lain hidden in the depths of its soul. Otherwise one would be at a loss to understand how a race, despised and tormented, impoverished and unsubstantial, should be bold enough to undertake to start its life anew, and to rebuild a deserted country. The migration movement to Palestine was not haphazard, it was not a blind outburst actuated by personal motives, as most of the other migration movements all over the world have been. In this case the social will preceded the will of the individual. The resolutions adopted, the meetings, conventions and congresses assembled, were the torchlights guiding and directing the activities of the individual.

In the beginning was the ideal. Immanuel Kant defines the autonomy of will in the well-known formula: "*You can because you must.*" In this sense, freedom of determination characterized the Zionist movement from its inception to this day. The conclusive proof was given by the nation at the critical moment when Herzl, in spite of all his efforts to influence the Ottoman Porte, had come to a deadlock and, just at the same time, the British Government had come forward with the generous offer of one of its territories. With regard to its historical homeland it said: *We must have it, so we shall be able to win it.*

Similarly, the autonomy of social will marks the character of socialism, as it is taking shape in the constructive achievements of the Palestinian workers. We may survey what they have accomplished up to this day: the agricultural *kvutzoth*, the industrial cooperatives side by side with the cooperative contracting agencies. We may examine the economic institutions—the Bank, *Solel Boneh* and *Hamashbir*—which serve to join together and promote all those productive enterprises. We may realize how one link on the chain is interlocked with the other, how one layer forms the groundwork of the other one, producing, in the end, one perfect and solid structure. And in view of all this, we cannot escape the conclusion that there is a profound design and some intrinsic logic ruling the whole. Not everything that has been achieved in sequence of time, was planned and foreseen, but the whole has organically grown out of the fundamental determination of the working community to create a domain of its own in the country, to establish a system of life in accordance with its own standards and aims. It is not self-acting causes—iron laws of nature—that are the motive-power actuating the Palestinian workers, but final causes, aims set by the leaders and spokesmen of the Labor movement, aims in which the social will expresses itself. Within the sphere of Palestinian socialism there is no room for economic automatism. Nothing happens of itself. There is no room for idle waiting, until the turning wheels of the economic machine may throw up in their sweep the most exalted of ideals for the future of society. As soon as the will is there, everything is there. As long as it is not, there is nothing at all.

(Here it should be noted that the Palestinian workers were in a position to achieve all this, not because they were more intelligent than the working class of other countries, but primarily because they came into an uncultivated, undeveloped country, not yet encumbered by economic traditions. Therefore, their thinking was not forced into submission to any molded set of ideas. It kept sufficiently clear to determine their course towards a system of life of their own.)

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Labor Zionism—as a system of life—will be fruitful only as long as it grows out of the actual conditions of the workers' life, as long as it has root and stem in the soil of their specific situation, in the reality of Palestine. Borrowed doctrines, which have grown up in a foreign soil, are liable to confuse the brains and to misguide activities. Among such doctrines we ought to class the teachings of Karl Marx, both the economic conception of history and, primarily, his particular system of socialism, Marxism.

There is no doubt that, in general principle, the materialist theory which attributes to the economic system of a nation—the methods of economic production and distribution employed—a paramount influence over national civilization as a whole, is not only true, but even very productive. But the fate of this theory was like that of many other great concepts. In the wake of every great idea there is a tendency towards monistic exclusiveness. This tendency becomes distinct during the early period, immediately after the idea has made its appearance. It expresses itself in the form of fanaticism, intolerance and absolutism. The motto emblazoned on its arms seems to be: *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*. Thus, the materialist conception of history was not satisfied with stating the influence which the economic factor exerts over the whole of civilized life, but wanted to subordinate it altogether to this factor, as if all the phenomena of life were merely the result of economic necessity. That is how the whole theory came to be exaggerated and false. The truth is that there are two different categories of phenomena to be distinguished in the life of a society or nation. On the one hand, we have politics, the structure of social relations

and the judiciary system. On the other hand there are the specifically cultural phenomena: religion, literature, art and science. Now, the materialist theory of history is absolutely correct, as far as the first group of social phenomena is concerned. The economic conditions are the soil in which they are rooted, the groundwork upon which their structure rests. But with regard to the second category, the cultural phenomena, the most that can be said is that economic conditions lend them a certain coloring, or turn their normal course. The origin of religion, for instance, is based upon primary needs of the human soul, which are not to be deduced from economic factors. Yet, in the course of its further development it was influenced and colored by the economic background—(by assuming the form of an organized church with definite judicial and political regulations it even passed into the first category). And just as it should be impossible to subordinate the cultural life of a nation in general to its economic understructure, it ought to be impossible to do so with regard to nationalism itself—unless it be for a logical *tour de force*. National movement in both its forms, as a tendency to free the nation from foreign domination or else as a tendency to secure the nation's ascendancy over foreign people, is a primitive force of nature. It springs from the racial will-to-live, just as the economic progress, to this day at least, has had its origin in the individual's will for self-preservation. It was, therefore, a grave exaggeration, something like a misrepresentation of the true aspects of history, when Karl Marx declared all history to be nothing but a series of successive struggles between social classes. The age, in which Marx himself lived, offers the most striking illustration against the one-sidedness that such a conception implies. For what left its mark on the development of the whole nineteenth century was just the fact of the close interaction between the two types of conflicts: wars of one social class against another and wars of one nation against another, movements aiming at the liberation of the fourth estate and movements aiming at the liberation of oppressed nationalities.

While the economic conception of history is in itself open to grave doubt, the particular theory of socialism set forth by Marx,

so-called "scientific socialism", is not fitted at all to accord with the actual conditions prevailing among the workers in Palestine. The problem is not whether Marxism generally is right or wrong, but it plainly has no hold on our ground. Marx' theory of socialism is based on immanent forces playing in capitalist production. This process of production shows a tendency towards accumulation, an inherent trend towards the concentration of control in few hands. The destiny, assigned by history to the process of production during the period of Capitalism, is this: the factory gradually supersedes the workshop (as it has at its disposal machinery, which allows a more efficient division of work and the improvement of the manufacturing process proper), the big industries do away with the small ones. Thus, capitalist accumulation gradually advances, spelling ruin all the way, until, in the end, there is only one single capitalist left in the field, society or the commonwealth. There is an additional factor tending to accelerate this process. It is the growth and the organization of the proletariat. All those whom the monster called Capital devours, are not consumed by it; they remain alive in its bowels and, ultimately, by their massed bulk they are going to choke it to death. They descend to the level of a proletariat which offers itself to capital for hire and wage. The exploited become the companions of the exploiter on all his ways. The inherent weakness of the system reveals itself in the fact—to which many recurrent crises bear witness—that capitalism is not able to support the huge masses of people which it has harnessed to its wheels. On the other hand, the vast numerical strength of the masses concentrated within the sphere of capitalism, awakens their self-confidence, and finally leads to the rise of working-class organization under the banner of class-struggle. Thus capital itself gives birth to the very forces that make for its destruction.

Now, let us not reopen the discussion as to whether or not this conception is essentially correct, as to whether it may or may not serve as a standard of measuring all the various phenomena of economic life, especially those of agricultural economics. Many of the critics of Marx' theory, for instance, have tried to prove that the tendency of accumulation is not to be discovered as far as agri-

culture is concerned. Nor shall we even try to decide, whether the Marxian conception is altogether adaptable to the specific conditions of Palestine, its—for the time being—primitive economic structure and its lack of coal and iron, which makes the prospect of heavy industry growing to be the predominant force in economic life a very doubtful one. Apart from all these problems, we can state with certainty that, in their activities up to this day, the Palestinian workers have unconsciously repudiated Marxian socialism and adopted a system which is in harmony with their convictions and the actual conditions of their life. We should indicate two points of fundamental difference between Marxian socialism and the socialist system which Palestine Labor is gradually turning into practice:

(a) Marxian socialism is social automatism. There is no room in it for freedom of determination or the conscious shaping of destiny. The mechanism of production is supposed to do its work, in accordance with the iron laws that rule it. To form a clear conception of the new social order which is going to be established is entirely superfluous, it is a job for utopians and good-for-nothings. On the other hand, whatever has been achieved, up to this day, on a socialist basis in Palestine is the result of the will, the self-determination of Labor. Every ultimate achievement was rooted in foregoing thought. It is constructive socialism. Here it should be added that the application of Marxian theories is primarily intended to cover the problems of the city, of industry, while the field in which, till now, the socialist activities of our labor movement have met with greatest success, is the countryside, agriculture. In the cities we have hardly more than beginnings—the industrial cooperatives.

(b) Marxian socialism is absolute economism. It does not allow for any other factors as dynamic forces in social evolution. The socialism of Palestinian Labor, on the other hand, is essentially nationalism. This holds true in a twofold sense. Firstly, it is only with the assistance and cooperation of the entire nation—vitaly interested in the establishment of a comprehensive economic structure, from bottom to top resting on Jewish Labor—that the workers in Palestine may hope to achieve their socialist plans. Secondly,

though not secondarily, it is the national impulse, the effort to establish their national homeland, that is the strong motive power behind all their activities in the country.

It is, therefore, evident that terms like "expropriation," "proletarianization", etc., which are borrowed from the scientific jargon of Marxian theory do not suit conditions in Palestine in the least. The Palestinian workers may be in bad straits, there may be a great deal of unemployment among them. Still, the cause, which has brought about this situation is not the rapid progress of industrial development, but, on the contrary, its backwardness. It is the fact that the country has not yet reached the stage of being able to build up a big industry, which, in its turn, could support the masses of workers. These workers are not *déclassés* forced down from some higher rank in capitalism. From the very outset they have come to Palestine with the intention to work. Thus, even the name of proletariat is not fit to connote the character of our working community. It may apply to the workers employed by private capitalists in the cities or colonies, it certainly does not apply at all to those working in the various cooperative enterprises, agricultural as well as industrial. This latter group is in actual control of capital, though it may be national property. Likewise, even the title of worker does not include all it should, as it is usually associated with work offered for hire only. Therefore, the *Histadruth*<sup>10</sup> has done well to call itself—not the Workers' Federation, but the Federation of Labor.

The terms of class and class-struggle, too, require a special examination. The word "class" contains a twofold meaning. First it means a group of individuals ranked together in one social body, on account of their common occupational position. This category is called in German: *Stand*. In the period of the French Revolution there were three such classes, the Estates. During the nineteenth century a new one, the fourth estate, Labor, appeared on the scene. Yet, there is another meaning hidden in the same term which, in German, is expressed by the word: *Klasse*. In this sense it means primarily the clash between different groups of people who, though clasped together in the economic process, are divided by an ever-virulent antagonism of conflicting interests: the employers and the



wage-earners. In the first sense the class-term may apply to the whole working community of Palestine, in the second sense only to those who are employed as hired workers.

The term of class-struggle (class used in the second sense), too, allows a two-fold interpretation. It may mean a method of improving the workers' standard of life or else—in accordance with its Marxian usage—a method of accelerating the process of transfer of capital from the control of individuals into the control of society. This is, so to say, a war for its own sake, a war which is an aim in itself. As to the conception first mentioned, it goes without saying that those groups of workers who are in paid employ of any kind, are fully entitled to fight for their livelihood and to use, to this end, every lawful means. The workers who are members of any of the self-governing cooperative enterprises should be ruled out altogether in this consideration, since none of the terms could be reasonably applied in their case. As, however, to the second, Marxian, interpretation of the theory of class-struggle, it ought to be stressed again that Marxism in general is a strange plant on Palestinian soil. Our Labor movement should not waste its energies in a fight against wind-mills. In Palestine there is a safer way towards the establishment of an economic system controlled by Labor—the way of constructive enterprise. As a matter of fact, our workers have already decided in favor of this course.

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Whatever the Labor movement has achieved in Palestine, has been interpreted, as far as these pages go, as a result of the autonomy of will, of freedom of determination. Still, it is insufficient to state it as a mere matter of fact. Freedom implies an obligation as well. It ought to remain in the future the star, guiding the activities of Labor, which it has been in the past. If Labor Zionism is a synthesis of Jewish nationalism and socialism, the socialist ideal, as it is being turned into practice in Palestine, ought to be a synthesis of liberty and equality. Liberty without equality means anarchy and dissipation of energy. Equality without liberty means stagnation and checking of creative effort. The doings of the leaders of Bolshevism, who certainly were imbued with lofty ideals of equality, should serve as a deterrent illustration. Since they imposed

equality by violence, without even a trace of liberty in the balance, they have quenched every spark of independence among the people and turned the whole country into a penitentiary. Dictatorship in any form, be it vested in the majority or in the minority, is a deadly poison to social life; it is bound to end in corrupting the very ideal of equality to which it proclaimed allegiance. In speaking of liberty, we have in mind, not only social liberty, but personal as well. The aim of life is life itself, and the focus of life is the individual.

How will equality and liberty be able to live under one roof? How will it be possible to safeguard the activity of the individual or the group within the boundaries of social control? In answer to these questions let us point to two factors:

(a) As far as the social type of settlement or, generally, the system of life is concerned, there should be no compulsion, no dictate from above, on the part of either the Zionist Organization or even the Labor Federation itself. There is no reason for canonizing any one of the existing types of settlement, be it the large and the small *kvutzah* or the *moshav*. The matter should be left entirely to the independent self-determination of the settlers. It is thus only that the interplay of social energies and the intimate contacts between the individuals may be preserved within the ranks of Labor. The different types of settlement will be like the trees in one nursery, where every sapling and every young shrub has its own characteristic fragrance.

(b) A steady stream of cultural energy—from universal as well as national sources—should be directed into the channels of the whole working community. Culture does not only enhance the joy of life; it is, at the same time, the most important means towards the perfection of personality and the plastic development of the talents and the character of every individual.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. **KVUTZAH** (pl. kvutzoth.) — A cooperative group of workers in agriculture or industry working on communal lines in production and distribution of income. Most of the kvutzoth are agricultural settlements, the first ones, started before the war, being Merhavia in the Valley of Esdrelon, and Dagania and Kinereth on the Lake of Tiberias. When colonization activities were resumed after the war, the kvutzoth settlement got a new impulse. Among the recently established colonies in the Emek, there is a number of kvutzoth, some of them, like Ein Charod, Tel Joseph and Beth Alfa, of a new large type. At the same time, many kvutzoth in the building trade and in several crafts developed in the cities. At present there exist about thirty-five agricultural and about 120 urban kvutzoth. For further reference see Dr. A. Ruppin, *The Agricultural Colonization of the Zionist Organization in Palestine*.

2. **MOSHAV** (Moshav-Ovdim, pl. Moshavim.) — A type of agricultural workers' settlement, corresponding to the settlements called cooperative elsewhere (e. g. cooperative settlement scheme of Western Australia.) In the Moshav, production is being carried on in individual farms, while sale of produce, purchase of commodities and machines, use of big machinery and institutions of mutual aid are on a cooperative basis. Land in the Moshav—as well as in the Kvutzah—is the property of the Jewish National Fund, that is, owned by the nation, therefore not transferable and not saleable. The first Moshav, Nahalal in the Emek, was established in 1921. Since then many others, like Kfar Jezechiel, Ein Hai and Kfar Jehoshua have sprung up. For further reference see Dr. A. Ruppin, l. c., Eliezer Yoffe, *The Foundation of Moshavei Ovdim* (Hebrew).

3. **HAMASHBIR** — The consumers' cooperative society, controlled by the General Federation of Labor in Palestine. Hamashbir was established in 1915. In the beginning it served only certain definite purposes, arising out of the emergency of the war years, in supplying the working population with food and clothing and disposing of the harvest of the agricultural workers' settlements. In the course of time it developed into a ramified system of cooperative societies, combining the functions of a producers' selling agency and a regular consumers' society. Its turnover in 1927 was \$1,045,000.00. In that year it had about fifteen branches all over the country and was running a bakery in Tel Aviv and several workmen's kitchens.

4. **SOLEL BONEH** — The building guild controlled by the Palestine Labor Federation, a cooperative contracting agency of workers in the building trades. Solel Boneh employed from 1921 to 1926 about two thousand workers in the various branches of the building industry. During this time it was the biggest building contractor in the country, carrying through, besides the construction of houses in the cities, a number of contracts in road and bridge construction etc. Solel Boneh was the official contractor of the Public Works Department of the Palestine Government. In 1927, owing to financial difficulties, it had to suspend activities.

5. **YISHUV** — The Hebrew term corresponding to the English settlement and community, but more comprehensive than either, used in current speech to denote the Jewish population of Palestine as a national, political, social and cultural entity. At the same time, "old yishuv" means in Palestinian vernacular, those strata of the Jewish population, mostly Sephadric and orthodox, which existed in the country prior to the modern immigration and colonization movement, the latter being called "new yishuv."

6. **JOSEPH TRUMPELDOR** — Born 1880, died 1920 in the defense of Tel Hai, one of the Jewish workers' settlements in Upper Galilee, against raiding Bedouins. Trumpeldor, who was of Russian-Jewish origin, and had won distinction as the only Jewish officer in the Russian army during the Russo-Japanese war, came to Palestine and began to work in one of the kvutzoth. As soon as the World War came, and the first Zionist detachment, the Zionist Mule Corps which fought at Galipoli, was organized, Trumpeldor enrolled and was appointed captain. From Galipoli he hastened back to Russia, and undertook to organize throughout Russia the pioneer movement Hechalutz, of which he became the founder and recognized leader. In 1919, at the head of one of the first Hechalutz groups to reach Palestine, he returned and resumed his work at the kvutzah of Tel Hai. Following his and his comrades' heroic death, he has become one of the most popular figures all over Palestine, especially among the youth and in the labor movement.

7. **A. D. GORDON**. — Born 1857, in Russia; died 1922, in Daganian, on the Lake of Tiberias. Gordon, who had spent most of his life in various subordinate clerical and commercial positions, came to Palestine and turned agricultural worker, when he was more than forty years old. After having worked for some time as a hired laborer in the private plantations of Judea, he became a member of the kvutzah Daganian, to which he belonged to the day of his death. During the years of his work in Palestine, he published periodically essays of a philosophical character, dealing with problems of labor, nationalism,

nature and social regeneration. These essays, which in type and tendency are related to the writings of Tolstoi or Edward Carpenter, left a deep impression on the evolution of Palestinian labor. Today, Gordon is considered one of the spiritual leaders, not only of his party, Hapoel Hazair, but of the movement as a whole. His writings have recently been collected and published in four volumes by the Central Committee of Hapoel Hazair. For further reference, see biographical introduction to the first volume of Gordon's Essays, (Hebrew.) Hechalutz Book (English, published by Zionist Labor Party Hitachduth of America, and the Avukah.)

8. KIBUSH HAAVODA — Literally: "conquest of work." The earliest slogan of the Palestinian Labor Movement, formulating its first aim, the securing of all employment available within the sphere of Jewish enterprise in Palestine for Jewish workers. When this formula was proclaimed, about 1905, most of the unskilled, as well as the skilled, labor in the Jewish plantation colonies was done by Arab journeymen. The groups of young Jewish pioneers who came into the country, had to compete with this cheap, primitive and unorganized type of worker. They proclaimed "Kibush Haavoda" as the only means of creating a Jewish working population in Palestine, that is to say, the only means of carrying through the Zionist program. Before the war, Jewish labor was practically confined to agriculture. After the war the formula of Kibush Haavoda was extended to include all the industrial and technical branches of economic life, especially the building industries which developed in the Palestinian cities.

9. DR. CHAIM ZHITLOVSKY — Well-known Jewish writer and sociologist, advocating the adoption of Yiddish as the living national language of the Jews. He is considered one of the outstanding spokesmen of a synthesis of Jewish nationalism and socialism.

10. HISTADRUTH. (Histadruth Haovdim Haivrim Haclalit Beeretz Israel.) — The official Hebrew name of the General Federation of Labor in Palestine. The Histadruth was established at Haifa in 1920. Prior to this date the various economic institutions of the workers were controlled by the different political parties. The Histadruth has at present a membership of about thirty thousand, out of which a third are women workers. It represents, on one hand, a central trade-union organization, of the type of the "One-Big-Union"-organization aimed at by Labor movement elsewhere. It is, however, by no means confined to trade union activities. On the contrary, its activities are primarily colonization as well as cultural and social work. It supervises the labor settlements and the agricultural work in the private colonies. It controls the economic institutions of the labor movement, the most important of which is the Palestine Workers'

Bank. It manages the Workers' Sick Fund and the Central Cultural Committee as well as various other social and cultural institutions. The Histadruth is represented in the Trade Union International and the British Empire Labor Conference.

11. ELECTED ASSEMBLY. (Asephat Hanivharim, full title; Elected Assembly of the Jews in Palestine.) — The representative assembly of Palestinian Jewry, elected by a popular, proportional and equal vote. The first Asephat Hanivharim was elected in 1920, the second one in 1925. It was semi-officially recognized by the High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir Herbert Samuel, as the legal representation of the Jewish Yishuv as a whole. The main obstacle to be overcome in its organization was the controversy around the women's vote, which was strongly opposed on religious grounds by the orthodox wing of the Yishuv. The final settlement, giving women the active and passive franchise for the Elected Assembly, led to the withdrawal of the extremist orthodox faction. In both Assemblies the two Labor parties—Hapoel Hazair and Achduth Haavoda—held about forty-five per cent of the seats. The scope of activities of the Assembly included the political representation of the Yishuv towards the government and the arrangement of its inner affairs. Its executive organ is the Vaad Leumi or National Council of the Jews of Palestine.

12. JEWISH COMMUNITY ORDINANCE. — An ordinance promulgated by the Palestine Government in 1927, regulating the legal status of the Elected Assembly and the National Council. It outlines a comprehensive scheme for an officially recognized organization of the Jewish Yishuv and confers upon the constitutional organs of the Jewish community inner autonomy and powers of taxation, especially for purposes of education and social welfare. The elections for the first Assembly, under the new ordinance, are planned for the beginning of 1929.

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