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Mr. Flakser herewith concludes his two-part appreciation of one of the great forerunners of Herzlian Zionism and prophet of Socialist Zionism, Moses Hess.

Hess, Forerunner of Socialist Zionism

IN his youth, Moses Hess was so involved in the general revolutionary movement of his day that he became detached temporarily from his own Jewish environment. Like many other radical intellectuals in the later periods, he needed a shock to be roused from indifference to the complicated Jewish problems. This shock came in 1840 with the Damascus blood slander. But it took two decades more for his complete reorientation.

A half-century later, the assimilated Hungarian Jew, Theodor Herzl, returned to his people and became the father of organized political Zionism under the direct shock of the Dreyfus affair. The Royalists in France had utilized anti-Semitism in their struggle against the Republicans, and anti-Semitism again was on the rise, not only in France but throughout Europe. As a result, a whole generation of assimilated Jewish intellectuals began to feel that the emancipation of the Jews would not solve their national problems. It brought on a deepened estrangement from Jewish life, another form of Jewish national suicide.

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Eyes Are Opened

The impact of the Dreyfus affair opened their eyes: Anti-Semitism did not differentiate between a religious Jew, a national-conscious Jew entrenched in his folk-culture, and the assimilated Jew who does everything to alienate himself from his people. They saw that hiding their identity was not a cure; deserters suffer as much as those who remain within Jewish life.

The Damascus affair came about in 1840 when a Jew was accused and convicted of the medieval "ritual murder" slander. Anti-Jewish disorders followed and let loose a wave of anti-Semitism which horrified all Jewish communities. Hess reacted painfully to the incident, and for the first time began to wonder whether the general solution he had advocated for all human

ills would automatically cure those of the Jews also. But although he went through an inner ideological crisis, he never deviated from his socialist principles.

Twenty years after the Damascus massacre, and after many other experiences and influences had ripened his personality, he published *Rome and Jerusalem*. The book consists of a preface and twelve letters written to a lady. In his first letter, he makes a confession: "It dawned on me for the first time in the midst of my socialist activities that I belong to my unfortunate, slandered, despised and dispersed people."

Rome and Jerusalem deals with a variety of aspects of what the Jews are, and what they should be. While it is not a systematic theoretic structure of Socialist Zionism, his socialism and Zionism comprise an organic union. He continues his confession: "Here am I again, after twenty years of estrangement, in the midst of my people. I take part in its days of joy and sorrow, in its memories and hopes, its spiritual struggles within its own house and among the civilized people in whose midst they live, but with which despite two thousands years of common life and effort, it could not achieve complete unity. One thought which I believed I had extinguished forever within my breast is again vividly present to me, the thought of my nationality."

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Biting Words

Hess uses biting words against those who, in the name of freedom, democracy, socialism and patriotism, negate the same things to their own people. He writes, "The modern Jew is to be despised with his fine words of humanity and enlightenment. These words are only intended to disguise his disloyalty to his own brothers." He asks these self-denying Jews, "Let us get a clear understanding about your notions of 'freedom and progress' which you

throw around so thoughtlessly. As long as the self-hatred of these Jews will last, we cannot expect a change of attitude from the European people towards the Jews. The beautiful phrases of love for humanity with which you try to cover up the betrayal of your own people will not defend you against the anti-Jewish feelings."

Hess apposed vigorously the trends in Jewish life of his time. He felt that the potential forces for re-vitalization were scattered in alien camps. The spirit of assimilation had captured the hearts of the secular liberal Jewish intelligensia. With the growth of the capitalist economy and the trend towards liberalism, the Jews in Germany felt on a more secure base socially and economically. They felt they were heading toward an equal status with the rest of the population which had to come with the general rise of bourgeois liberalism. The pillars of the old traditional Jewish community had been trembling for a long time, and orthodox dogmatism could no longer compete with the rising waves of liberalism and rationalism sweeping through the western world. Those who ran from Jewish life ran from outworn religious dogmas—and they could not run to a Jewish secular world, for there was none.

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Hess' Attempts

Hess, in *Rome and Jerusalem*, attempted to win over at least some of the Jewish intellectuals to his theories of Socialist Zionism. He felt that abstract theories about the rights of all national groups to determine their own destiny and to work for their own normalization and liberation, could not be able to convince the assimilated Jews, whose national instincts were completely atrophied. They were not capable of regarding the Jewish people as anything but a religious sect. Hess sought to convince these elements that the real Jewish religion is not a set of theistic dogmas but is rather akin to Spinoza's pantheistic philosophy: A national religion steeped in the high morality of the great prophets; a historic religion which must realize itself in national goals and in global ideas of a socialist morality; a national and not a nationalistic religion striving for national redemption and for a higher universal morality. His argumentation with the then-called "modern Jews," fell on deaf ears. His ideas had to wait for a few decades, to be picked up

by a later generation of assimilated Jewish intellectuals.

To Hess, a national homeland was important not only for the sake of the individual Jew, not alone as a hiding place from persecution, but for the national needs of the Jewish people so that they may develop all their national potentialities. It is a historic national need, "the European nations always considered Jews as a historic anomaly. It may well be that the progress of justice and humanity will one day lead to justice for the Jews. They will perhaps be emancipated, but they will never be respected as long as Jews act on the principle of *ubi bene ibi patria* — (where I dwell, there is my country)." This is in part a sharp answer to some present-day neo-Zionists who still act on the same principle; those who consider Zionism only as a charitable movement to help the poor Jews.

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The Homeland as the Base

The banner of enlightenment and the development of democracy would not solve Jewish national problems without a national homeland. With chastening prophetic words, Hess warned those Jews who attempted to hide their identity in the hope that they would not be recognized. He said they sneak through life like cowards, denying their own existence. Hess goes on, "You may don a thousand masks, change your name and your religion and your mode of life, creep through the world incognito so that nobody notices that you are a Jew. Yet, every insult to the Jewish name will wound you more than a man of honor who remains loyal to his family and defends his good name. Neither reform nor baptism, neither education nor emancipation will completely open before the Jews of Germany the doors of social life." This warning served the later generations, and still is apropos for some Jews of the present era.

Jewish national characteristics, peculiarities and abilities have persisted throughout the two thousand years of living in the midst of other nations. Jews cannot run away from themselves. Assimilation would not help, as it did not help eighty years later in the Hitler era. Hess writes, "The Germans hate the Jewish religion less than the Jewish nation; their creed less than their noses."

There were two other groups in Jewish life whom Hess denounced very sharply. On the

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one side were the Orthodox who saw that the danger of assimilation led eventually towards baptism. They attempted to preserve Jewish life by strengthening their isolation from the newly-developed reality. But Hess also criticized sharply the Reform Jews who demonstrated their own spiritual poverty by their efforts to denationalize the Jewish religion and to imitate the church. The Reformers reflected only the cold glitter borrowed from the church and expressing decay. Both groups carried neither the light and warmth nor the Jewish national needs of the new era. He considered both impotent to carry out the Jewish historic mission.

Hess stressed that Jews are not merely a religious sect but a nation which lost its national homeland. Only by the necessary efforts could Jews again be normalized in their historic homeland.

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Eclectic Philosophy

Moses Hess' philosophy of Socialist Zionism was rooted in four separate sources and was synthesized in his *weltanschauung*:

The great influence of Spinoza's pantheistic philosophy, which served him as a glass through which to view the individual, the nation and the universe, from a unified approach.

He was steeped in the Jewish ethical approach to the world and society. His early Jewish education had a tremendous influence on his later life.

The influence of Herder's romantic nationalism which sought the roots of each national entity as a basis for a political nationalism.

His socialist and true international world outlook, which he acquired as participant and leader in the early history of the Western European labor and socialist movement.

Out of these influences Moses Hess formed his unified philosophy of history, nation, society and universe.

From the time Hess published his first book in 1837, *The History of Mankind By a Disciple of Spinoza*, up to his *Rome and Jerusalem*, he remained anchored in Spinoza's philosophy of synthetic monoism, which negated both the materialistic and idealistic schools of thought. Only by a natural fusion of his pantheistic philosophy, his Jewish background and his socialist world outlook did Hess become the great prophet of Socialist Zionism.

According to Hess, the need for resettling Jewish people in its historic homeland should

not be motivated alone by the fact that Jews are oppressed in the countries where they reside. There is a greater and more paramount motive: the necessity for a normal national life. His Zionism was an outgrowth of his true socialist internationalism. His attitude towards Jewish problems and the need for a homeland is not only an escape from oppression but a national necessity. Zionism does not run contrary to the struggle for socialism in the countries in which Jews reside. Zionism to Hess is a part of the struggle of all ethnic or national groups, no matter how small, for their independent national existence and development.

Here is where Hess differed from Marx. Marx believed that national entities are caused, shaped and kept alive by the conditions of production. The political state is the superstructure, expressing a national economic entity. With the development of the social division of labor, each national entity becomes more and more dependent on the other, eventually leading towards the fading away of national differences. The economic base is continuously widening from a local feudal economic unit to a national economy which expands towards a world economy. This is the path in the development towards a socialist society. Marx said that a modern national entity lives only within the borders of an economic entity. Socialism, the highest form of economic and social organization, will in time obliterate most of the national and ethnic differences. The wider the economic base, the wider the national entity. Economic development pointing towards socialism is tending towards territorially increased economic bases. Marx, therefore, did not believe in the advisability of the independent existence of smaller nations, and completely disregarded national minorities. He felt that their persistence for existence could only hamper the economic and social progress leading towards a wider socialist society. The Marxian internationalism had its roots in a cosmopolitanism. National minorities should integrate culturally with the majorities. The main social division he recognized was the division of economic classes; that of between the exploited and exploiters.

Hess was the first socialist of his day to link the question of nationalism with the structure of the future socialist society. Other socialist theoreticians followed suit a few decades later. He said that national chauvinism should not

be confused with the real needs of a progressive nationalism, which could come only to its expression through a brotherhood of nations. It is true that reactionaries exploit the term nationalism in order to rule over weaker nationalities. But this type of nationalism is rooted in chauvinism, and is as dangerous as the nihilistic cosmopolitanism in which false internationalism is steeped. Hess sharply differentiated two kinds of nationalism: Chauvinistic nationalism leading to war and oppression, and the nationalism of the people fighting for its normal existence and development. Hess' true nationalism may be defined as the natural pride in the distinctive character of its own national needs and culture.

There was no conflict between Hess' deep devotion to the Jewish people and his devotion to the general revolutionary movement of the working class. National chauvinism in any form was condemned by him in the most passionate terms. At the same time, he felt that to deny one's own nationality, as was the case with the deserters from Jewish life, is at least as repulsive as to proclaim the superior rights and powers of ruling nations. While chauvinists exploit and mislead the natural instinct of love for one's own people, in essence they remain anti-national in regard to other nationalities.

Hess writes that the German Jews of his time were puzzled by German anti-Semitism. They felt that they were true German patriots, the real "Teutomaniacs". They were as anti-French as other German patriots, yet they were not accepted. But "Semites" and "Teutons" are not mere linguistic categories: Each nation or race has its own differences and gifts. Only in a socialist society can each nationality contribute to the enrichment of mankind.

Although Hess does not mention in his works Johann Gottfried Herder who lived a half-century before him (1744-1803), it would seem that he was greatly influenced by Herder in his attitude towards the national problem in general, and in his discovery of living Judaism.

Herder, a pre-eminent literary figure in the early stages of the classic period, exerted a considerable influence on the awakening of national consciousness of many oppressed ethnic entities. His influence was felt strongly in the national awakening of the Czechs, Letts, Serbs, Finns and many other national groups. Herder's teaching began to bear fruit a half-century after his death, in the revolutionary

period of 1848, when cultural nationalism was gradually developing as the foundation of political nationalism.

Herder's theory of nationalism runs partly parallel to Hess'. To Herder each nationality is a living organism, a manifestation of the Divine and therefor something sacred which should not be destroyed but rather cultivated. Each individual could fulfill his human destiny only within and through his nationality. The soul of a national entity lies in its folk-ethos. This is true of all small or large nationalities; all are equally sacred. The destiny of mankind fulfills itself through the roots of the various nationalities.

The intellectual circles of many oppressed nationalities were highly influenced by Herder's approach to nationalism. They began to seek their own cultural and historical roots as a weapon in their struggle for their freedom and sovereignty. Herder's teaching became the basis for all European populist movements, within the non-free nationalities and among the ethnic minorities.

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Hess' Nationalism

Herder was not a chauvinist and not an anti-Semite. He was a national romanticist who despised Prussian militarism. As a result of his credo, that each nation has to be crystallized as a unified free entity, it brought him to the conclusion that the Jews would remain strangers in Germany because they were a separate nation living in the midst of other nations. Even though they do not have their own territorial base, Jews still keep alive their national characteristics. But in order to live their own fuller national life, they need a territorial base. They are dispersed only temporarily among other nations, and dream their eternal, healthy, national dream, the return to Zion. They have to be regarded as strangers, but at the same time they have to be assisted in their return to Zion. The Jewish nation is not based on power and worldly glory, but on a national ethical civilization.

To Herder as well as to Hess, "real" nations with deep historical and cultural roots cannot and should not free themselves from these deep wells feeding their existence; therefor, nations are fixed entities.

Hess believed that just as it is necessary to find a way to regulate the distribution of goods within the community in order to give

each individual an opportunity to develop his personality, so is it necessary to find a way for nations, so that each nationality may be able to develop its distinctive culture. In his work *European Triarchy*, he writes, "The problem of elimination of national hate is intimately bound with the problem of egoistic competition. International war cannot cease until individual war of competition ceases. All the problems, all the difficulties, all the contradictions which have arisen flow out of this fundamental question."

False nationalism breeds a false internationalism, which is only a form of rootless cosmopolitanism. True internationalism recognizes the necessity of distinct cultures and nations. "Only the individual is real, and nationality is the individuality of a people. It is no more possible for humanity to exist without particular peoples and nations, than to exist without particular individuals."

Hess had a strong belief not only in the existence of national traits and characters, but in their fixity. The French historian Augustin Thierry, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, maintained that history is dominated by the struggles not only of classes but also of races and nationalities. Hess agreed with this premise. He did not mean by nationality the citizenship of a given country, as it is held synonymous in the present mono-national states. Political affiliation is an artificial and an ever-changing thing. Many national groups were ruled by oppressor nations. Their citizenship was changed, but not their nationality. To Hess, it is rather a historical category. "A nation is a natural historic growth like the family."

Hess' Socialist Zionist was not like Borochoy's, tied up with the class struggle of the Jewish working class. We must bear in mind that in Hess' era, and especially in Germany, there was no Jewish working class. There was not even a Jewish democratic movement. Hess made an all-out attempt to swim against the stream at his days.

The most important significance of Hess' *Rome and Jerusalem* is the fact that he foresaw the rebuilding of a Jewish homeland as a prerequisite for any social and political progress of the Jewish people. Zionism and socialism are not contradictory but, so far as Jewish life is concerned, complement each other.

Dateline Israel

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veloped a certain atmosphere of snobbery in our concert audiences. The female concert-goers apparently use the occasion to show off their latest fashions, and the music might even take a second place to clothes in the view of Tel-Aviv's upper crust. This, of course, is no reflection upon the high artistic standards of Israel's musicians. Rather, it hints at a rather regrettable tendency to sacrifice simplicity in dress for over-expensive and elaborate attire in order to "keep up with the Cohens."

None of this was in evidence when the Mann Auditorium was guest to the combined Kibbutz Symphony Orchestra. The audience, like the players, came for the purpose of enjoying good music. (Anyone who has seen kibbutz children growing up knows that there is little relationship between simple beauty and over-expensive dressing-up.) Neither the audience nor the players were disappointed with this musical evening. The orchestra, composed of kibbutzniks from all parties who for the most part devote themselves to their music after their day's work, is inevitably an amateur group. But it reaches surprisingly high standards considering the minimal amount of time available for preparations and rehearsals, and the critics gave it high praise, as it deserved.

As for the audience, composed of kibbutzniks and their friends, they were proud to hear "their" orchestra bringing credit to their way of life. And incidentally, what a surprise to see that on this particular evening there was a standard price for all the seats in Tel-Aviv's cultural centre, when workers and farmers took it over for the evening.

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THERE have been too many cases in Israel of public servants betraying the trust which they carry, and nothing more effectively under-