

- (a) How Borochof defines the Jewish question and what he proposes for a solution; (b) the class interest to which the Borochovist solution corresponds; (c) the instrumentality of labor in socialist-Zionism.

A. The Borochovist Conception of the Jewish Question (1900)

According to Borochof:

"Jewish production was characterized by the predominance of the element of human labor over the element of nature, and of mental over physical labor. It was basically invested in the production of variable not constant capital (i.e., in consumer goods). Historically, the greatest concentration of traditional occupations of the Jews is in the category of final level of production (needle-trade, baking, printing), and secondly, in the tertiary-middle level of production (chemical, leather, paper industries), but rarely in primary level of production and in basic industry....The prevailing law in Jewish economics is that the concentration of Jewish labor in any occupation varies directly with the remoteness of that occupation from nature." 42

On the basis of the above characterization of the Jewish employment structure in Diaspora, Borochof concludes that the Jews were "abnormal" people, for their class structure resembled an "inverted pyramid"⁴³ marked by two anomalies: the absence of a working class and the absence of a territory of their own. The solution is, therefore, building a Jewish working class on a Jewish land, Palestine.

Central to his analysis of the Jewish question are the problems of "displacement" and "proletariatizing masses", concomitant with disintegrating feudalism in East Europe and decaying competitive capitalism in the West. It becomes more evident throughout his analysis that his basic concern lies more in the displacement of Jewish masses from their traditional petty bourgeois positions threatened by proletarianization, and less in the displacement of Jewish proletariat by more competitive labor or owing to anti-Semitism.