The Jewish labor movement of Saloniki, of which little or nothing was known in the Jewish world at large, was introduced to the readers of this journal in 1945.1 Insofar as the available sources permitted, Joshua Starr’s survey of the political role of the Socialist Federation constitutes a valuable study of a movement, in the leadership of which I took a prominent part. Further details may be found in my series of 35 articles, which appeared in a Greek newspaper (Takhydromos, March 4–April 8, 1931), and which deal with the history of socialism in Greece from 1908 to 1928. During the second of these two decades the Socialist Federation continued to exist on a new basis, as the local branch of the Greek Socialist Party, with which I was associated as founder until my expulsion in 1924 by the controlling communist group.

In my articles I made no attempt to discuss the place of the Federation in the framework of the local Jewish community, nor to describe various activities outside of politics, which that organization sponsored. The co-operative movement, the social work, and the cultural functions associated with the Federation are no less interesting than its political record. All this forms a story, which has yet to be told, and I hope to take it up on a future occasion. In the meantime, there are a few points in connection with the sketch contributed by Starr, on which I offer some observations.

Beginning in 1910 Alberto Arditti was one of the militants of the Federation and among its most popular figures, but was not president, for there was no such officer. Arditti was a graduate of the lycée maintained by the Alliance Israélite Universelle, and a pupil of Joseph Nehama. I consider his entry into the Federation (1910) among my most important personal achievements; he joined only after repeated efforts made by me. In addition to taking the most active role in the co-operative movement, Arditti was the link for a group of intellectuals, which included David Recanati (E. Rod), who joined earlier, and Joseph Hazan who came in at the same time. Starting as an employee in a business firm, Arditti soon became an independent merchant, one of the most important in Saloniki, but never abandoned his liberal viewpoint. He met his death at Auschwitz.

Shortly after joining, Joseph Hazan became second secretary, and succeeded me as secretary-general when I went into exile in 1911. Hazan was one of the founders of the Federation and the leading spirit in the co-operative movement. Hazan was a dissident who attempted to launch a more moderate organization than the Socialist Federation, and then devoted himself to the co-operative as a practical alternative. He too died at Auschwitz.

At the time of the protest meeting regarding the Ferrer case (1909), the central figure was not Hazan but Abraham Hasson, a tailor by trade, and a native of Strumitsa (Macedonia). Hasson had little education and was under the influence of the socialist emigrés from Bulgaria; hence, his opposition to the federative principle, and to collaboration with the Freemasons. I was personally also opposed to a joint meeting with the Freemasons, but for other reasons; I advocated a separate socialist meeting with a view to promoting the influence of the Federation. Confined to bed by illness, however, I had to yield to those who favored a joint meeting, and Alberto Dassa spoke for the Federation. Dassa was a member of the intellectual group, which founded the Labor League, forerunner of the Federation; he subsequently immigrated to France. Through Hassan the sectarianism of certain Bulgarian socialists affected some members of the Federation and provoked lengthy discussions.

It is necessary to correct some misconceptions regarding my early years. I am a native of Saloniki, and became “converted” to socialism in Bulgaria, joining the “narrow” wing into the “liberals” (or democrats), I became one of the liberal leftists. I retained great respect for the Bulgarians, my original mentors. After my work in Saloniki, particularly the bitter animosity among the co-operative group among their local compatriots, as well as from being a “conservative,” I thought, and by my understanding of Bulgarians, such as Giannios, who moved from Saloniki and Stefanos Papadopoulos, who never forgave me for my independence, I was taking ethnic differences into account.

The effectiveness of the protest resolution was exemplified in the Federation (1911), which met at Saloniki. It represented the Greek Jews at the important recognition of local delegate’s support of socialist activity in the Federation. Some delegates supported this principle as being the principle of Bulgarian-born Turks, and the decision was taken.

In 1907-1908 I was teaching, and the revolution of 1908 I became a printer, later to abandon the study of law and become a labor organizer. I also studied law at Istanbul, but later to abandon it. After some years as a printer, I was able to broaden my understanding of the sectorialism of certain Bulgarian socialists that I encountered in Saloniki. Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroubi (nephew of the secretary), Haim Benroub
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Bulgaria, joining the "narrow" wing. In 1907, when this group split
into the "liberals" (or democrats) and the "conservatives" (or centrists),
I became one of the liberal militants. I must, nevertheless, admit that
I retained great respect for the "conservative" socialist leaders of Bul-
garia, my original mentors. At the same time the independent spirit of
my work in Saloniki, particularly among the Jewish workers, aroused
bitter animosity among the conservative socialists of Bulgaria, as well as
among their local compatriots and the Greek socialists in Istanbul. Far
from being a "conservative," I was guided only by my socialist conscience
and by my understanding of local conditions. The "conservatives," such
as Giannios, who moved from the Turkish capital to Athens in 1910,
and Stefanos Papadopoulos, who came to the former city from Bulgaria,
ever forgave me for my independent attitude nor for my insistence on
taking ethnic differences into consideration.

The effectiveness of the principle embodied in the Socialist Federa-
tion was exemplified in the Socialist Conference of European Turkey
(1911), which met at Saloniki. Papadopoulos, if I remember correctly,
represented the Greek Jews of Istanbul, and the discussion indirectly
endorsed the recognition of local circumstances and ethnic groups as the
basis of socialist activity in Turkey. The Serb, Turkish and Jewish
delegates supported this principle, which was also accepted by the Bul-
garians born in Turkey, and the Greeks were not absolutely opposed.

In 1907-1908 I was teaching in a Jewish school. Following the revo-
lution of 1908 I became a printer with a view to preparing myself for
service as a labor organizer. It was the same motive which impelled me
later to abandon the study of law. Years later I observed the similarity
between my course and that of Isaac Ben-Zvi and David Ben-Gurion,
who also studied law at Istanbul, and were guest speakers at the Federation.
After some years as a printer, I was a tobacco worker for two years, thereby
gaining the experience I needed as first and last secretary-general of the
Federation (1909-11 and 1917 and thereafter). I consider myself for-
tunate in having gained for the socialist cause such valuable collabora-
tors as David Haguel (died at Auschwitz), A. Dassa, David Menache
(escaped from Auschwitz), D. Recanate, A. Arditti, J. Hazan, Haim
Haguel (immigrated to France), Jacques Amariglio (succeeded Hazan as
secretary), Haim Benroubi (now at Athens), and others. In the socialist
youth organization and in other branches contributions were made by
The way was prepared for the founding of the Federation not only by the Bulgarian socialist group but by a “Circle of Social Studies,” which I organized among the Jews. The latter made its political debut just before the counter revolution of Hamid and dissolved at the time I left as a volunteer in the army. In 1909, following my return to Saloniki, I founded the Labor League, which later became the Socialist Federation. As stated by Stefanos Papadopoulos, I joined the army of Mahmud Shevket Pasha not for political but for purely personal reasons, and I was elaborately criticized by Bulgarian and Greek socialists, and even by a Serb, for my decision. These critics overlooked the necessity for legalizing my status in Turkey in order to play the role for which I was preparing myself. There was, moreover, as yet no socialist organization in European Turkey with which to associate myself, and I had perforce to be guided by my personal feelings and plans. It would have been impossible to conduct any type of socialist or democratic activity if the absolute monarchy had been restored. Even if there had been a socialist party of European Turkey, every democrat would have had to support the Young Turks against the Sultan’s abrogation of the constitution. This, of course, does not mean that I labored under any illusions as to the political regime of the Young Turks.

Cyrus Adler, an organizer pointed out in his presidential address already established the “whats come, he said, to attempt the ‘‘whats’ of American Jewry’ presented at the forty-second, forty-first, and forty-second of the Society, in 1940, 1941, and 1942, the late Dr. Adler’s admonition the ‘‘whats’ of American Jews’ are mainly in unraveling the Jewish society in order to describe the

This is not intended to de- question arises, when does the question—the study of “why”—become engrossed in ferreting out more of history.

An example of the comp— to George Washington” (p. H. the scholar. The only apparent reason was that one of the three mes to transport $250,000 from Massachusetts happened to be inconsequential from the view— is told. The journey itself is