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Between Hope and Struggle: The Gender Struggle and the Jewish Socialist Parties in Interwar Poland

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ABSTRACT

With the reestablishment of independent Poland in 1918, women were given the right to vote. This progressive step reflected the hopes to create “a new world” within the Polish state. Two Jewish socialist parties, the Bund and Poalei Zion, were well aware of the changing political and social realities and adapted their political programs. The parties adopted a progressive approach toward women’s status both in the private and the public spheres. As socialist Jewish parties, their main focus was Jewish women workers who suffered from “triple suppression” – as workers, as women and as Jews. On the surface, Jewish socialist parties demanded equal rights for all women. However, in this article I will argue that, in practice, the parties’ relation to the question of women equality was ambivalent. Notwithstanding the progressive agenda that was propagated, the traditional “sex role” of women was preserved in the parties’ inner circles.

KEYWORDS

Polish Jewry; Bund; Poalei Zion; interwar Poland; gender

Upon the establishment of independent Poland in 1918, women were afforded the right to vote. This progressive measure reflected hope for the building of a new modern society within the evolving Polish entity, representing the continuation of processes of change in the status of women and the family unit that started to gain momentum toward the end of the nineteenth century. As part of the organization of its state system, Poland’s political realm witnessed the transformation and adaption of party ideologies and practices. This was also true in the case of the Bund and Poalei Zion, two prominent Jewish socialist parties at the time. These parties, which were established under the tsarist empire, were attentive to the changing realities of life. As a result, they began a process of ideological change and adapted their operations within the framework of the Polish nation state.

During this transformation, the Jewish socialist parties adopted a new approach to the status of women both at the private and the public-political sphere. As Jewish socialist parties, most of their leadership’s thinking in this context was devoted to the conditions of female Jewish workers who suffered from “triple oppression”: oppression as Jews, oppression as women, and oppression as workers. On the face of things, the parties

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appeared to demand full equal rights for women and full equality with men. However, despite the progressiveness they displayed on an external level, on an internal level they maintained the traditional sex role of women. In other words, the Jewish socialist parties exhibited a dual approach to the status of women, which I refer to as “ambivalent gender equality.” Tension emerged between the desire to adopt a modern progressive approach to women and to situate women on the same level as male workers in daily life and in the proletarian struggle, on the one hand, and the difficulty of completely disconnecting from the discriminatory and oppressive conceptions regarding women workers, on the other hand. This tension reflected the indecision and search for direction that characterized the Jewish socialist parties in the 1920s and 1930s, ranging from belief in a new future to maintaining the ideas of the old world.

Kate Millett has examined the power relations between the sexes using a theory that rests on the concept of “political sexuality.” Underlying the relations between the sexes, she maintains, is “an ancient and universal scheme” by which men dominate women, resulting in a patriarchal society characterized by attributes of “interior colonization.”¹ Simone de Beauvoir has also addressed these “ancient schemes” of oppression, arguing that although the condition of women was improving, it remained limited from a legal and economic perspective. She also notes that even if women were granted these long-awaited rights on a theoretical level, the oppression ran so deep that it precluded their concrete expression in their way of life. From her perspective, this explained the slow pace of liberation of the working class.²

Millett identifies eight aspects that shape the basis of the power relations between the sexes³—ideological, biological, sociological, educational and economic, the class aspect, and the power aspect. She identifies the institution of the family as a basic and vital tool in patriarchal tradition. As the major agent of socialization in society, the family encourages its members to adapt themselves to the roles that are expected of them and, in doing so, to perpetuate the prevailing power relations between the sexes. It is important to note that in societies that grant women legal civic rights, as independent Poland did, women continue to be dominated through their role in the institution of family.⁴

In traditional patriarchal society, women are characterized by a limited and dependent economic existence, as they are not permitted to own property or to be paid for their work. Regarding women’s entry into the job market in modern society, Millett maintains that their joining of the workers’ class meets the need for an inexpensive workforce to fill non-professional positions. In modern society, although women were granted economic rights, they did not receive them with regard to “woman’s work” – household and care for their children. In contrast to what might have been expected, responsibility for the household and offspring did not become a responsibility that was shared by the sexes. Neither daycare centers, nor social welfare institutions, nor cooperation with their husbands served to relieve women of the responsibility for “woman’s work.”⁵

At the heart of Millett’s class aspect lies a paradox, for although we might expect the importance of sex roles to be reduced in a society in which economic status has a decisive impact on social status, this is not actually the case. Millett notes that it is actually among the lower classes that elements of “blunt patriarchal dominance” are asserted, whereas among the middle and upper classes expressions of patriarchy are manifested in a more implicit manner, as men in any event possess more economic power than women. In general, Millett recognizes that women have less of an interest in the class

system because, as a group, they get less out of the benefits that the workers' class has to offer them. Women workers, she argues, are a "dependent" class that are fed leftovers and live in the margins.⁶

This article will be divided into two parts. The first part will focus on the way Jewish socialist females were addressed and integrated within the general framework of the Bund and Poalei Zion. The second part will focus on key issues in the everyday lives of these girls and women. By doing so, I will present the tension and gaps between the de-jure and de-facto approaches of the political parties toward everyday practices that female activists performed.

Changes in the Status of Women as Reflected in the Electoral Systems of Independent Poland

In November 1918, during the elections for the first Sejm of the new Republic of Poland, some parties already included women on their slates of party representative. This was made possible by a law enacted in the new republic that enabled women to vote and to be elected for office beginning with the first elections for the Sejm in November 1918. Out of 394 seats, eight women served as parliamentary members in the first Sejm of the new republic, which was sworn in in 1919.⁷ This was innovative and revolutionary at the time. But can we conclude that this step reflected an approach of gender equality in Polish society in general or among members of the Jewish workers' movements in particular? The answer to this question is not unequivocal. What is certain is that the Jewish workers' parties understood that women were an important electoral force with distinct needs and attributes and that it was necessary to develop special propaganda and explanatory materials specifically for female workers.

Apparently at the beginning of 1919, the editorial staff of Poalei Zion's mouthpiece *Arbeiter zeitung* began publishing a special supplement titled *Di arbeiter froy* (The Women Worker).⁸ The publication of special supplements for women or women's newspapers was nothing new for the general population of Eastern Europe or for the Jews of the region. Nonetheless, the supplement's distribution as a publication meant specifically for women workers can be viewed as a reflection of the rising status of the woman worker in Jewish society in young Poland. The publication contained a number of articles, all written by women, addressing the situation of Jewish women workers in the world, and specifically in Poland, as well as an article on the importance of International Women's Day⁹ and explanations of the link between the socialist struggle and the gender struggle.¹⁰ In an article that appeared in *Arbeiter zeitung*, the article's author, Deborah, proclaimed that "the revolution" had also reached Poland. The women's revolution that was underway, she argued, would set the new agenda regarding women's problems in the still evolving Polish state. She promised that Poalei Zion representatives on city councils would work for the benefit of women, women workers, and mothers and would put an end to the deprivation from which they suffered. She also promised that the representatives would work on behalf of the children of women workers, in an effort to improve their social welfare, and would help eradicate phenomena such as hunger and disease.¹¹ *Lebens fragen*, the Bund's official journal, also chose the same time period (the beginning of 1919) to devote an article to the movement's position on the improvement of the status of women workers in the cities of independent

Poland. The movement's promises included recognition of the unique status of Jewish women workers, especially the mothers among them. As part of this recognition, the leadership promised that movement representatives on city councils would take action to establish kindergartens and appropriate educational institutions for the children of women workers.¹²

The relationship between the Jewish workers' parties and their female members also found expression in two pamphlets that were published in Poland during the second half of the 1920s. The pamphlets addressed women and focused on the rights and aspirations of women workers, young and old. One was bilingual, published in Yiddish and Polish by the *Yidisher arbeter froy* (Organization of Female Jewish Workers; YAF),¹³ the Bund's women's organization, and disseminated in Lublin in 1927.¹⁴ The other was a Yiddish election pamphlet for *Poalei Zion Left* that was disseminated in Warsaw in 1928.¹⁵ The pamphlet issued by the Bund indicates that women workers suffered from severe oppression stemming from the oppression as a proletariat, on the one hand, and the oppression as women, on the other.¹⁶ To this equation, we must also add the oppression of Jewish workers stemming from their identity as Jews. That is to say, Jewish workers suffered from double oppression: proletarian exploitation and national oppression.¹⁷ Moshe Mishkinsky relates primarily to the tendency of employers, Jewish employers included, to refrain from hiring Jewish workers. Their reasons had to do with the Jewish way of life, which precluded Jewish workers from working on Jewish days of rest and Jewish holidays, and antisemitism. As a result, on the basis of the class aspect of Millett's theory, we can argue that female Jewish workers suffered from "triple oppression": as women, as workers, and as Jews. The effort to fight the oppression included the decision to establish the YAF as the Bund's women's organization. According to Daniel Blatman, the YAF had significant difficulty recruiting activists and opening branches.¹⁸ Blatman cites Dina Blond, one of the founders of the YAF, as maintaining, already in 1935, that the Bund's women's organization unfortunately had not succeeded in achieving its goals, largely due to its small number of activists.¹⁹

Returning to the pamphlets discussed earlier, one can see that despite the triple oppression they faced, women's hopes and desires were reflected in these publications. Jewish women wished to speak out against the so-called traditional economic trait – to begin working, to take responsibility for their economic situation, and to achieve economic independence. Naturally, the position of the workers' movement was to support workers who were interested in going to work and earning a livelihood. However, the manner in which it related to men and women together, under the single category of workers, was much more interesting. Henryk Erlich regarded working women as an integral part of the socialist struggle and resolutely opposed the establishment of a separate organization to address the unique needs of women. Erlich also maintained that no division between women and men could be created in the proletarian struggle.²⁰ This approach characterized female Bundist activists' positions in tsarist Russia and can be found in the words of Blond, who later helped to establish the YAF: "Jewish women were fighters for others," she recounted. "There was no difference between them and the men."²¹

Indeed, the workers' movements appear to have viewed women as possessing the legitimate right to go to work and to stand on their own. Furthermore, the proletariat parties called on women to play an active role in improving their situation. If thus far

women had sat by idly and taken no action to change their condition or the condition of society, they were now called upon to join “the population’s joint struggle on behalf of humanity.”²²

Despite the egalitarian approach that ostensibly placed women and men together under the same roof, the women’s exclusive responsibility for the children remained. As reflected in the pamphlets, women were considered to be exclusively responsible for building the Jewish population in Poland.²³ In addition, they could not join the workforce without making arrangements for their children. This ambivalent approach, which empowered women, on the one hand, but oppressed them, in correlation with Millett’s sociological, ideological, and educational aspects, on the other hand, screamed from the Bund’s pamphlets:

Women do not want to be responsible only for children and the young generation from a dark basement apartment ... Women do not want to quietly watch how the men workers work. They want to shape the children and the home, and also to say out aloud “bread and labor.” They also want to be protected and their children to be protected. They want daycare facilities, kindergartens, and schools in which the language of instruction will be their children’s native language.²⁴

As we can see, on the one hand, women did not want to be responsible only for the children; on the other hand, they were in need of educational institutions to enable them to begin working outside the home. Whereas Poalei Zion’s election pamphlet provided no details about what this protection entailed, the Bund’s pamphlet specified that it would take action to establish educational institutions based on the values of Jewish socialism and Yiddishism.

Mention of the popular educational institutions in which the language of instruction would be Yiddish clearly stemmed from the issue’s centrality to the ideology of the workers’ parties in Poland. However, it still raises the question of the status of Jewish women and their ability to be liberated from the traditional roles they played in the social and family structure in Poland. Whereas men went to work with no responsibility except that of earning money, women needed to tend to the home, to having children, and to their children’s education. Only once all of this was handled could they allow themselves to work outside the home, to achieve economic independence, to influence society and to “work toward a better future.”²⁵

As the discourse on the status of women spread, articles on important and influential women in history, both in the workers’ movement in Poland and around the world, also began to appear in the youth movement press.²⁶ In addition, leading up to International Women’s Day at the beginning of every March, articles were published regarding women’s role in the socialist struggle and in proletarian society. The message conveyed by these articles were relatively uniform and expressed a desire for change in the status of women and women workers, particularly after the First World War.²⁷ The articles glorified the achievements of the struggle for gender equality and repeatedly noted that women’s suffrage had been the major accomplishment of this struggle. This right, they emphasized, allowed women to actively participate in political life, engendering a significant rise in their status.²⁸ Still, all the authors noted that the struggle for the status of women was not yet complete and that women workers needed to assume their positions beside the workers’ parties in order to take part in the proletarian struggle and to change

the injustices of capitalism. This, they explained, would serve to further improve the status of women.²⁹

The political parties' approach to the advancement of women was not limited to articles, supplements, newspapers, and election propaganda. As part of the awakening of women's activism, the socialist parties sought to lend the rising status of women a practical dimension. According to an election pamphlet of Poalei Zion, two of the candidates on the list of movement representatives for the Warsaw City Council were women. As noted above, various parties had already started incorporating women into their electoral slates in 1918. Although this was certainly a measure that reflected progress, equality, and an openness toward women in the political system,³⁰ the names of the women appearing on the list of candidates reveals that in some cases they were none other than the relatives of prominent male leaders in the movement. For example, the list of candidates for the Warsaw City Council in 1919 included names such as Sabina Rafalkes (wife of Nahum Nir-Rafalkes), on the Poalei Zion list, and Esther Iwaniska (sister of Viktor Alter), among the top ten Bund candidates.³¹ Additional women such as Dina Blond and Sophie Dubnova-Erich, who were known in the Bund leadership, were also related to major movement leaders. It is not my intention here to minimize the importance of the work or the skills of these women. However, it appears clear that climbing the hierarchies of the movements and the political parties was easier for women with family connections. This observation offers support for the view that membership in the movement leadership was sometimes a "family business."

Politically Active Womens' and Girls' Everyday Life

Family and Couple Relationships

The image of the traditional spousal relationship that was desired by East European Jewry was usually connected to arranged marriage (*shidduch*) on which neither spouse had much, if any, influence. The age of matrimony was usually young, but Jewish child marriages – of boys younger than 16 and girls younger than 13 – were extremely rare.³² In the course of the nineteenth century, the average age of marriage increased rapidly. Indeed, if during the first half of the century the average age of brides was 16 and the average age of grooms was 18, by the end of the century the average ages had increased to 23.2 and 26.3, respectively.³³ Bringing children was considered to be a religious commandment, in line with the biblical directive "be fruitful and multiply," and pregnancies were spontaneous and unplanned.³⁴

The gender hierarchy within the Jewish family had changed over the years. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the "desired" family structure in Jewish society consisted of a man engaged in Torah study and a dominant woman who earned an income – who engaged in commerce and was in contact with the authorities – and was also responsible for the household and the children's education.³⁵ During the second half of the nineteenth century, however, the situation reversed itself. The Jewish *Haskala* movement aspired to create a family structure in which women were responsible only for the home and the private realm. Her other roles, including contact with the surrounding community, came under the full responsibility of the husband.³⁶ During the 1930s, approximately one half of all Jewish young adults between the ages

of 25 and 29 were unmarried. This state of affairs stemmed primarily from the difficult economic situation, which deterred many couples from marrying and assuming economic independence.³⁷

Concurrent with the gender changes in the family framework, the practice of arranged marriages also began to lose traction, and the ideology of “marriages of friendship” or “marriages of love” became increasingly common.³⁸ This dynamic is described by Esther Biron-Brandsdofer, a Zionist activist from the city of Gorlice in Galicia:

With all the experiences, pursuits, and activities, life in the city was desolate, with no aim and no way out. It was accepted that teenage girls had only one role: to mature and to wait for her spouse, whom she would receive through a good match. It was extremely rare during the period in question for families to provide an adolescent girl with a profession so that she could support herself. This was something that few enjoyed.³⁹

One of the ways to evade an undesired arranged marriage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was to run away from home and join a movement or a revolutionary party such as the Bund.⁴⁰ The political parties gradually turned into frameworks in which relationships with members of the opposite sex were legitimate.⁴¹ In such contexts, adolescent girls and women worked side by side with adolescent boys and men, and both shared common ideology, goals, struggles, and experiences. Trust, loyalty, and particularly strong relationships evolved among these friends and sometimes developed into love and marriage, as depicted in Kalman Wexler’s following account of how his parents first met:

When the Germans entered Łódź during World War I after the Russians’ defeat, there was immense hunger there [in Łódź] ... There were clubhouses of the Bund ... That is where Dad and Mum met. It was a Bund clubhouse, and there was obviously political activity there. I remember that my father told me that he was arrested, and that my mother was also arrested. They were in custody for a time during the period of the Germans.⁴²

Hence, in addition to becoming acquainted in the meeting place that the Bund clubhouse provided, Wexler’s father and mother had formative experiences during their political activity, which helped bring about a close connection that reached the point of a romantic relationship and, later, the creation of a family.

Many activists found that marrying fellow party members allowed both husband and wife to continue being active in the political and social framework in which they had been active before they got married. This situation clearly benefited primarily the female in the relationship, in contrast to the defined power relations in the traditional Jewish world. Recognition and understanding, by both spouses, of the important place of political activity in their shared life was essential to the continuation of this activity. Moreover, when both husband and wife shared the same ideology and worldview, it was easier for them to establish their relationship and their family values on the principles of the party’s ideology and therefore to give practical actualization to the vision of the new man. In this way, party ideology succeeded in penetrating the intimate framework of the family within a wide variety of realms, from the language spoken at home, to the educational institutions to which they sent their children, to the practicing and preservation of ceremonies and rituals from Jewish tradition, and to recreational activity.

Vladka Meed (Peltel) recounts that her family's belonging to the community of Bund members in Warsaw found expression in more than her being sent to a TSYSHO (Central Yiddish School Organization) school and to the Tsukunft youth movement. Meed also recounts ideological conversations with her father, reading socialist literature together, and attending demonstrations and May 1 rallies together. She also recounts having felt a consistency between the messages she received during her childhood from her teachers at school and at home, particularly with regard to the cultivation of a social consciousness. She was educated "to be above the average child, to aspire to help relatives, those she knew, and the world in general."⁴³ Masha Futermilch-Gleitman describes the education she received at home as a "socialist education" in the atmosphere of the party.⁴⁴ Futermilch-Gleitman recounts how she and her sister volunteered for the welfare and charity activity that her mother had led as part of her activity in the YAF.⁴⁵

The descriptions of adolescent boys and girls who grew up in homes in which the parents were politically active reflected an egalitarian and enlightened spousal relationship in which the mother was also educated (even if she had not had a formal education). In some cases, they note that their mothers spoke numerous languages, possessed a developed social consciousness, and took part in the decisions regarding the children's education and management of the household and the family. In addition, the accounts provided by youth from politically involved families also contain descriptions of love and expressions of affection both between parents and between parents and children. The family unit is described as a unified framework with shared traditions and daily ceremonial rituals. There were communal readings; family discussions regarding ideology and current events; joint vacations; participation in demonstrations, lectures, and party conferences; and involvement in party institutions, such as choirs or welfare organizations. In such families, children report having experienced a happy and fulfilling family life.⁴⁶

Sex and Sexuality

When considering the improving status of women in society we must also consider sex and sexuality, especially in a society that practiced and promoted everyday interaction between adolescent boys and girls within the framework of the youth movements and the party's educational institutions. Although the activity of the Jewish socialist parties allowed for the mixing of males and females, which often resulted in romantic relationships, it is nonetheless difficult to identify party support for expressions of sexual freedom. The Bund and Poalei Zion continued to implement the traditional conservative approach of suppressing sexual desires, which was characteristic of traditional Jewish society.⁴⁷ In Tsukunft and Yugnt, joint discussions regarding sex were not conducted for boys and girls, as was customary in the Zionist youth movements, and particularly Hashomer hatza'ir.⁴⁸ "The new man," according to Tsukunft and Yugnt, needed to completely control his sexual urges,⁴⁹ similar to the sexuality-suppressing approach of Agudas Yisroel.⁵⁰ In general, sex was treated as a natural urge, with a clear understanding of sexual awakening among male and female adolescents;⁵¹ however, at the same time, the aim was to curb the sexual drive ("sublimation of the sexual instinct"),⁵² or at least to keep the teenagers' sexual activity as discrete and decent as possible.⁵³

Although the issue of male-female relationships was not explicitly part of party practice, the interwar period appears to have been characterized by a sense of openness, among adolescent boys and girls, to feelings of romantic love, erotica, and experimentation with a sexual dimension outside of wedlock. The teens wrote down their experiences during encounters with members of the opposite sex and the awakening of sexual desires. At the same time, in boys we can also find a number of expressions of falling in love, attraction, and same-sex sexual experimentation or unconventional relationships with adult partners – typically adolescent boys with adult women who were non-Jews or from a different social class.⁵⁴ In addition, both adolescent boys and girls addressed emotional and romantic aspects of sexual relations while writing about their sexual desires and their fulfillment.⁵⁵

Toward the mid-1930s, with the intensification of the discourse among the youth regarding the status of women and sex, we observe a change in the secular parties' traditional approach to sex and sexuality.⁵⁶ In her memoirs, Sophie Dubnova-Erich describes how, as a movement leader and an opinion journalist, she attempted to promote this change. According to her account, she tried to make use of her status in order to influence the worldview of young men and women regarding personal issues pertaining to intimacy between the sexes, sexual relations, equality in relationships, and free choice. She also tried to change attitudes toward divorce and abortion when necessary and, in so doing, neutralize the element of power highlighted in Millett's theory, by which men's control of women is maintained through the prohibition of abortion and divorce. Dubnova-Erich explains that her target audience consisted of the young population, which was enthusiastic about the attempt to breach the traditional norms in the realm of marital relations.⁵⁷ She attests to having felt the need to teach these young men and women practices regarding these issues and to imbue them with the understanding that part of the struggle to create a just human society must also include change in the personal realm and intimate relations.⁵⁸ To this end, she decided to undertake a lecture tour in cities and towns throughout Poland during which she would meet face-to-face with members of local chapters. She delivered lectures in Polish and also allowed questions in Yiddish, as well as anonymous questions written on pieces of paper. During these lectures, some of which were delivered under the title "Love, Prostitution, and Family,"⁵⁹ she provided her audience with advice, among other things, on intimate matters that until then been considered taboo.⁶⁰

Lectures concerning interpersonal relations were not only delivered by Dubnova-Erich and as part of the activity of the Bund. In the city of Kielce, for example, in 1933, Yugnt members organized a series of lectures on "sexual problems." One of the lectures, "Love and Women," tried to answer questions such as: "What is love? What is free love? How are problems of impotence dealt with?"⁶¹ Another lecture, by Rachel Feinberg of Warsaw, discussed such issues as "the girls of today, the changes in the Jewish family structure, and men's treatment of women."⁶²

In the course of 1934 and 1935, Dubnova-Erich published a series of articles on sex and interpersonal relations that was meant for the young readers of *Yugnt veker*. The articles reflected the fact that the goal guiding Dubnova-Erich at the time was to strengthen the status of women and adolescent girls in relationships. First, she asserted that love should be the basis of relationships between men and women.⁶³ She then explained that sexual

desires in women are natural and that sexual relations should occur only consensually and in an intimate, sensitive, and respectful manner. Violence has no place in a relationship between a man and a woman, she explained, as such behavior is not normal.⁶⁴ She also stressed her belief that women must be economically independent, as this was a requirement of the proletarian worldview and the basis of a just society and an egalitarian relationship.⁶⁵

Here, it is important to note that visiting prostitutes was also a practice among young Jewish men in Poland. In response to a letter from a male reader, Dubnova-Erich stated that some two percent of male students used the services of prostitutes, but emphasized that the desired behavior was that of those who did not: "The truly intelligent men are the 98%."⁶⁶ In addition, Dubnova-Erich wrote that young workers needed to learn to ask for a woman's consent, and that Tsukunft members should be expected to refrain from prostitutes.⁶⁷ A similar approach was articulated by Dr. Goldschmidt, who mobilized socialist ideology in the struggle against the use of prostitutes: women who engage in prostitution suffer from oppression and contempt, he maintained, and no man who believes in the principles of socialism can go along with this situation.⁶⁸

There are fewer testimonies regarding sexual tension between members of the same movement chapter. The young members of a local movement chapter often knew one another for many years, in some cases since they joined the movement as children. They spent many hours together each week and were exposed to many different sides of one another's behavior and personality. The lack of separation between the sexes found expression not only in the mixed-sex schools and classes they attended during the day and the mixed-sex youth movement activities in the afternoon, but also in joint showers (in summer camps, for example) and the exposure of their intimate body parts (Figure 1),⁶⁹ and living together in field conditions during summer camps.⁷⁰ That being the case, it can be assumed that the boys and girls of the same local movement chapters developed intimate relations that resembled the close relationships typical among siblings.

Unlike the prospect of falling in love with a member of the same local branch, falling in love with an adolescent from another city or branch while participating in movement activities on the national level was extremely common. In practice, these activities resulted in the creation of a young movement community that was not based only on local space. During these activities, which included summer camps, sports activities, and visiting sanatoria such as the Medem Sanatorium, the youth's circle of friends expanded. Meeting other youth with similar areas of interest and similar worldviews, in conjunction with the sense of liberation and freedom that resulted from traveling far from home, resulted in relationships that were romantic and sometimes also sexual in nature.

Thus, whether consciously or subconsciously, the secular political parties' policy of mixed education yielded two contradictory models of relationships between their members: one that suppressed its young members' hormones and passions for one another due to their close proximity and intimacy, which resembled sibling relations, and another characterized by proximity and intimacy that resulted in romantic relationships and, in some cases, marriage.



Figure 1. Joint showers for boys and girls at the Medem Sanatorium.

Note: AAN, kart 37-48, 30/II-5.

Fashion, Makeup, and Cosmetics

In traditional Orthodox society, clear boundaries were demarcated in the realm of dress and clothing. The rules of modesty prevailed, and whoever wanted to remain part of the community was compelled to accept them. The same was true of these boundaries' adaptation to specific religious streams and sects. A distinction was also made between weekday clothing and apparel for Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. In mixed communities, the distinguishing between Jews and non-Jews was based on external markings, which included not only specific apparel but also a beard and a skullcap or hat for men and a wig, or sheitel, for women. However, secularization resulted in a breaching of this fashion ethos, and with the passage of time and intensified secularization, the possibilities for personal choice in the realm of fashion expanded and grew stronger.

The socialist parties did not shy away from interfering in the private lives of its members in an effort to influence their attitudes toward external appearance. The prevalent view within the proletarian movements was that fancy dress and close attention to external appearance represented a contemptible phenomenon and low culture. This approach viewed the cult of the body and beauty as a corrupting element that prevented individuals from focusing on their belief in socialism. In the ideology of the proletarian movements, and as an extension of the ambivalent equality that women had received, "cultivating a feminine body" was considered to be improper and forbidden. However, the proletarian movements did encourage the cultivation of a strong and healthy body as part of the ethos of "the new man" that party ideology sought to create. As part of

this approach, adolescent girls and young women were expected to take part in activities that were subject to standard masculine criteria – such as sports activities, camping, and hikes – without gender separation.

The masculine style of dress that became popular and stylish in the 1920s began as a manifestation of the struggle for women's liberation and was welcomed within proletarian circles. One of the major expressions of this new style was women wearing pants, which started to become more acceptable during the First World War. Nonetheless, we have almost no photos of teenage Jewish girls in Poland wearing pants. Rather, Jewish girls, secular activists in the socialist movements and Orthodox alike, typically wore dark colored skirts that covered their knees. They even wore skirts during summer camp or when spending time in nature, in contrast to the fashion that was prevalent among the socialist Zionist youth movements, in which adolescent girls and women wore pants and shorts. In the case of the Bund's summer camp, the party leadership even recommended that girls taking part in Tsukunft's summer activity pack a dark-colored wide skirt.⁷¹ Uniformity in the appearance of girls and boys did occur in the framework of sports activities, which required wearing a team uniform. In such cases, girls wore uniforms that were identical to the boys', even when this required wearing shorts (Figure 2).⁷²

In contrast to the traditional approach that was maintained in military dress, the situation was different in terms of the exposure of females' arms. Secular adolescent girls did not cover their arms and even wore tank-tops on hot summer days. Photos that were taken at summer camps and sent to local branches and to the journals of Jewish youth movements indicate that most girls wore short-sleeved or sleeveless shirts and skirts, which were typically long (Figure 3).

The repudiation of feminine personal beautification applied not only to clothing and fashion but also to makeup. In the years that followed the First World War, makeup and cosmetic products became increasingly accessible to the general population – to bourgeois urban women in particular, but to others as well. Adolescent girls in small towns purchased makeup products and invested in the beautification of their bodies. Initially, makeup products were sold in pharmacies, as recounted in an autobiography titled *Farges mikh nit*:

I started working at a pharmacy ... I increasingly found my place in the business. I did not like the shop's clientele, which consisted of the ill, who came in to buy medicines, and wealthy sirs and madams who came to buy cosmetics. It was hard for me to sell to the latter. When I would convince them, like a machine, that the container of powder or the makeup was helpful for everyone, [because] a woman needed to be pretty and to be attractive for the man, and a few other such well memorized banal sentences, I would think to myself that it would be much more helpful if she [the woman] were to give the money to the hungry for bread and not use it for powder and makeup in order to mislead others. For my boss to be pleased with me, I needed to sell counter to my beliefs and to convince some uneducated or Christian girl from the village that it would be worth her while to buy as much cosmetics as possible. The wealthy girls had no need for my information.⁷³

The writer of the above excerpt depicts a conception according to which women and adolescent girls needed to beautify themselves in order to be attractive to the opposite sex. This approach suggests that the essence of a young woman, her primary aim, was to find a suitable match. To some extent, success in life was measured by the status, occupation, level of education, and income of a young woman's designated husband. Society

פאראיינען. ער איז געווען גאר באזונדערס אקטיוו אין דער שול-ארגאניזאציע צושיאן אין דער שטאט, און האט זיך מוטק קעגנשטעלט די רעפערענצן פון די רעאקציאנעריע פוילישע מאכט-ארגאניזאציע קעגן די דארטענדיקע יודיש-וועלטלעכע שולן.

מיר, די ראונער יודישע יוגנט, פלעגן, ווי פריינט פון "מאָרגנשטערן", מיטלעבן מיט די ספארטלער אויף אלע "מענטשן" פון דעם קלוב, און אנדערע פרוידי איז געווען גאר גרויס ווען דער "מאָרגנשטערן" האָט באזיגט דעם אוקראינישן פוטבאָלקלוב "האַרין" און איז אַריין אין דער ערשטער ליגע פון וואָלין. דאָס איז געווען אַ יאָר פאַרן אויסברוך פון דער היטלער-מלחמה.

מיר האָבן ליב געהאַט צו באַזוכן דעם לאַקאַל פון "מאָרגנשטערן", וועלכער האָט זיך געפונען אויף דער וואָלע (א קוואַרטאַל פון דער שטאָט ראָונע), וווּ מילעטן שפּילן פינגפאַנג און מאַכן גימנאַסטיק. ווינטער האָט דער קלוב געהאַט אַן אייגענעם "גליטש" פאַר ווינטער-ספּאָרט. זייער פּאַפּולער זענען געווען די ראָונער יודישע פינגפאַנגיסטן, און קורץ פאַר דער צווייטער וועלט-מלחמה איז ביים ראָונער "מאָרגנשטערן" געשאַפן געוואָרן אויך אַ באַקסער-מאַשאַפּט.

עס דאַרף אָפּגעמערקט ווערן, אַז אַדאַנק די באַמאָאונגען פון איסאַק גאַרנשטיין פלעגט דער באַרימטער ראָונער יודישער ספּאָרט-קלוב "חשמונאי" אויסבאַרן זיין סטאַדיאָן. צו דערמערלעכן די יונגע ספּאָרטלער פון "מאָרגנשטערן" זיך צו איבן אין די פאַרשידענע ספּאָרט-געביטן. איך געדענק, ווען אויף אַ פאַרזאַמלונג פונעם ראָונער "מאָרגנשטערן" איז אויפגעטראָטן איינער פון דער צענטראַלער אָנפירונג אין וואָרשע, דיר חיים פּושיץ, וועלכער איז זייער וואַרעם אויפגענומען געוואָרן דורך דעם עולם. ער האָט זיין לעבן אויסגעהויבט אין אַ סאָוועטישער תּפּיסה בעת דער היטלער-מלחמה.

די יודישע פרעסע דערמאָנט זייער ווייניק אַט די פּרעכטיקע יודישע ספּאָרט-אָרגאַניזאַציע, וועלכע איז געווען זייער פּאַפּולער אין פאַרמלחמהדיקן פּוילן. די געוועזענע "מאָרגנשטערן" פּאַר פּוילישער דערציִונג איז געשאַפן געוואָרן אין יאָר 1926 און אין משך פון אַ קורצער צייט האָט זיך איר ערטיקייט אויסגעשפּרייט איבער אַ סך שטעט און שטעטלעך פון פּוילן, וווּ עס זענען געפּענט געוואָרן אָפּטיילונגען און קלובן פון "מאָרגנשטערן". די יערלעכע טורן-פעסטן, וואָס זענען דורכגעפירט געוואָרן אין וואַרשע און אין לאָדזש, האָבן זיך קנדהיים געווען מיט זייער אַפּאַקטיווער רעפּרעזענטירונג. מיט דער צייט האָט דער "מאָרגנשטערן" זיך אַרויסגערוקט אין פּוילן אויפן ערשטן אָרט וווּ אַן אָרגאַניזאַציע פון מאַסן-ספּאָרט. אויך אין ראָונע פלעגן פאַרקומען טורן-פעסטן פון וואָלינער "מאָרגנשטערן". דער "מאָרגנשטערן" האָט זוכה געווען צו אָנערקענענע נישט נאַר צווישן ייִדן און אין פּוילן, נאָר אויך אויף דער אינטערנאַציאָנאַלער ספּאָרט-אַרענע. דעם 26טן און 27טן אַפּריל 1929 איז פאַרקומען דער ערשטער לאַנד-צוזאַמענפאַר פון "מאָרגנשטערן". אין פעברואַר 1934 איז אָפּגעהאַלטן געוואָרן דער צווייטער לאַנד-צוזאַמענפאַר, אין וועלכן עס זענען געווען פאַרטראָטן 112 אַרטיקע אָפּטיילונגען און איבער 5.000 מיטגלידער. דער דריטער לאַנד-צוזאַמענפאַר איז פאַרקומען אין מאַי 1939, ערב דער צווייטער וועלט-מלחמה.

דער "מאָרגנשטערן" האָט מיט זיין פּרובטיקער אַקטיוויטעט זיך דערבאַרט אַ שם אויך אין דער אינטערנאַציאָנאַלער באַוועגונג פון אַרבעטער-ספּאָרט, איז געווען אַ מיטגליד אין דעם סאָציאַליסטישן ספּאָרט-אינטערנאַציאָנאַל און האָט זיך באַטייליקט אין די אַלימפּיאַדעס פון די אַרבעטער-ספּאָרט-קלובן – אין פּראַג און אין ווין. אין יאָר 1937 האָט די פּוילישע מאַכט פאַרווערט דעם אַרויספאַר פון 300 "מאָרגנשטערנאַנער" צו דער אַרבעטער-אַלימפּיאַדע, וואָס איז פאַרקומען אין אַנטווערפן. דער "מאָרגנשטערן" האָט אַלע זיינע יאָרן געהאַט אויסצושטיין רעפּערענצן פון דער פּוילישער מאַכט, וועלכע האָט אין די יאָרן 1929 – 1934 געשלאָסן די קלובן פון "מאָרגנשטערן" אין 32 שטעט. דאָך איז די אָרגאַניזאַציע נישט אָפּגעשטאַנען פון איר באַשטימונג: אַנטוויקלען און פלעגן די פּוילישע קולטור – צוזאַמען מיט דער גייסטיקער קולטור – צווישן דער אַרבעטערדיקער יוגנט.

ד"ר כאַריטאַן בערמאַן / ביעלאַצערקאָוו

דער אומפאַרגעסלעכער "מאָרגנשטערן"

אין מינע קינדער-און שול-יאָרן אין ראָונע בין איך שוין געווען אַ ליבהאַבער פון ספּאָרט, און האָב שטענדיק מיט גרויס אינטערעס געליינט די "ספּאָרט-צייטונג" (ארויסגעגעבן דורך דעם פּאַרלאַג פון וואַרשעווער "מאַמענט"). איך געדענק ווט די אַנקעטע, וואָס די "ספּאָרט-צייטונג" האָט אַדורכגעפירט צווישן אירע ליינער, און אויפן סמך פונעם "אורטייל" פון דער גרעסטער מערהייט ליינערס, די ליבהאַבערס פון ספּאָרט, האָט דער "מאָרגנשטערן" דאָן באַקומען פון דער צייטונג אַן אויסצייכענונג אַלס די גרעסטע און פּאַפּולערסטע יודישע ספּאָרט-אָרגאַניזאַציע אין פּוילן.

די יודישע ספּאָרט-וועלט אין פּוילן האָט דעמאָלט געדערט מיט אָנערקענונג וועגן די דערגרייכונגען פון "מאָרגנשטערן", וועלכער האָט זיך אַרויסגערוקט אויפן ערשטן אָרט אין פּוילן – דער עיקר ווי אַן אָרגאַניזאַציע פון מאַסן-ספּאָרט.

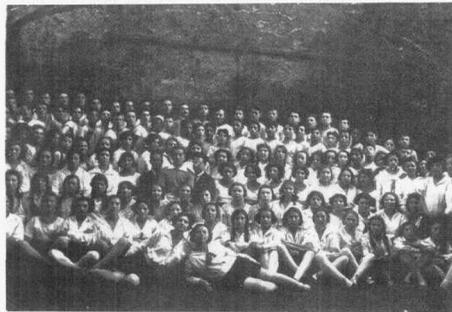
דער "מאָרגנשטערן" האָט זיך אַנטערגעשיידט פון די אַנדערע ספּאָרט-קלובן טאַקע דערמיט, וואָס ער האָט געלייגט דעם טראָפּ אויף מאַסן-ספּאָרט, אַנטער דעם דעווז: "אין אַ געזונטן קערפּער – אַ געזונטער צייט". די קלובן פון "מאָרגנשטערן", וועלכע זענען געווען צעשפּרייט איבערן גאַנצן לאַנד, האָבן זיך פאַרנומען לרוב מיט גימנאַסטיק, לייכט-אַטלעטיק, ריטמיק, שווימען, מיט ווינטער-שפּיל א.ד.ג.

אויך אין מיין היימטשטאַט ראָונע איז אין די דרייסיקער יאָרן, אויף דער אינציאָטיוו פון יודישע אַרבעטער-ספּאָרטלער, טורעס פון "בונד" און פונעם יוגנטבונד "צוקונפט", געשאַפן געוואָרן אַ יודישער ספּאָרט-קלוב מיטן נאָמען "מאָרגנשטערן" – יוטשנאָיאַ.

דער ראָונער "מאָרגנשטערן" האָט זיך פאַרנומען מיט מאַסן-ספּאָרט, אָבער אין קעגנזאַץ צו די קלובן פון "מאָרגנשטערן" אין דעם רוב אַנדערע ערטער, האָט דער ראָונער קלוב גראַד יאָ געהאַט אַ פּוטבאָל-מאַשאַפּט, וועלכע איז געווען פּאַפּולער ביי דער אַרטיקער און ביי דער וואָלינער יודישער יוגנט – אין דער צייט ווען די מיטלעריקע פלעגן זיך איבן אין גימנאַסטיק, שווימען, פינגפאַנג א.א.נ.

די יודישע יוגנט האָט ליב געהאַט דעם "מאָרגנשטערן" פאַר זיין מאַסנאַהאַפּטיקייט און רייניקייט פון דער ספּאָרט-אַרבעט, און דער עיקר פאַר זיין פּאַלקסטימלעכקייט: אין דער צייט ווען אין די אַנדערע ספּאָרט-קלובן, ווי "חשמונאי" און "הבוח" איז די קאַמאַנדי-שפּראַך געווען פּויליש אָדער – האָם ווייניקער – העברעיִש, זענען אין "מאָרגנשטערן" די קאַמאַנדיס, אינטערקאָציעס און באַפעלן געגעבן געוואָרן אויף יודיש.

מיטן ראָונער "מאָרגנשטערן" האָט אָנגעפירט איסאַק (יצחק) גאַרנשטיין, וועלכער איז געווען אַ באַגייסטערטער אינטערקאָראַ, אַן איבערגעגעבענער און אַקטיווער בונדיסט אין ראָונע, פּאַרשטייער פון "בונד" אין שטאַט-ראַט, אין דער קהילה און אין די פּאַרעפּטיאָנעלע



אַ גרופע ספּאָרטלער פון "מאָרגנשטערן" אין וואַרשע

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Figure 2. Girls of the Morgnshtern Sports Movement.

Note: *Lebens fragen*, "Der umfangeslecher morgenshtern," 1 January 1996.

in general, and parents in particular, conveyed to adolescent girls that the way to extricate themselves from the cycle of poverty and break the glass ceiling was through finding a successful spouse. We can go even further by saying that an adolescent girl's future way of life

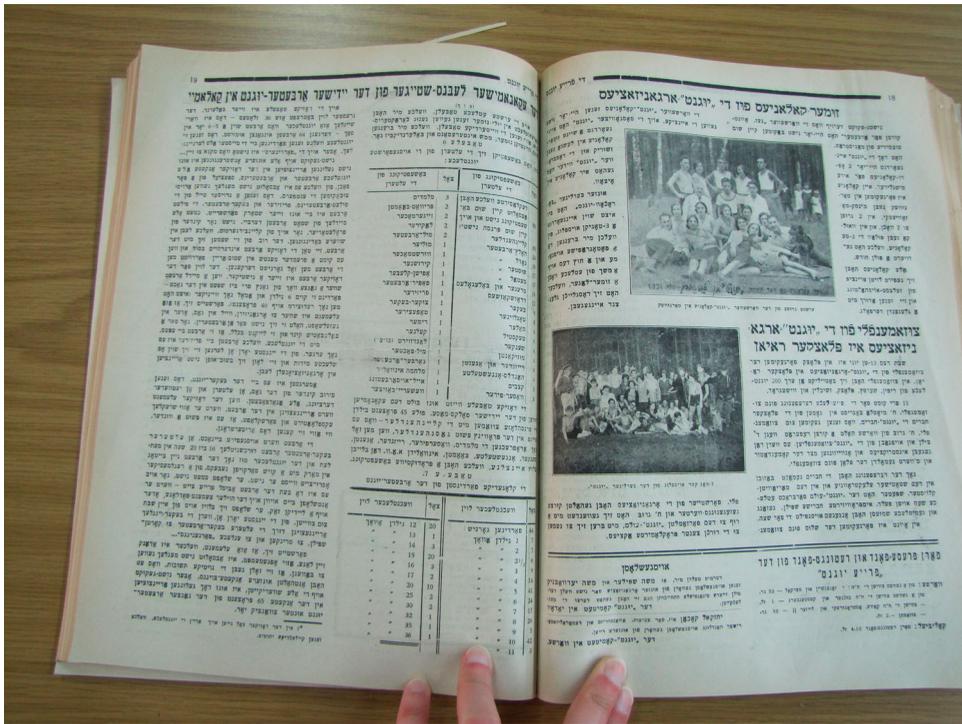


Figure 3. Female Yugnt members wearing skirts at a movement summer camp. *Di fraye yugnt*, September 1931.

depended on the match with which she spent her life. To succeed in the task of finding a husband, adolescent girls and young women needed to “mislead” men by making themselves look prettier, more attractive, and more desirable. The above author clearly opposed this conception and supported the approach of her socialist worker. She also expresses her loathing for her actions – convincing such girls to purchase more and more products, which was a distinctly capitalist act. In her view, instead of investing in themselves, these women should instead be donating their money to the needy and helping others.

In a letter by Miril Opshtein, a young member of Tsukunft, that was published in *Yugnt veker* in 1927, the author notes that when she would meet an adolescent girl or a friend whose face was covered with powder or lipstick, she felt as if her words also came from her “made-up” mouth as opposed to her heart. Opshtein qualified her words by stating that there was nothing wrong with a woman trying to look pretty or more attractive, but that this was a goal that could be achieved in ways other than painting her face white or pink. She then addressed the beautification practices of socialist women and young female workers, expressing disappointment with the fact that many of them chose to wear makeup in order to make themselves prettier. Opshtein maintained that being pretty was a simple undertaking that could be achieved through routine physical activity, muscle development, spending time in nature, and practices of good hygiene.⁷⁴

In contrast to the aversion of *Farges mich nit* and Miril Opshtein to makeup and beautification, the autobiography of Sarah Kapito from Płock reflects how makeup and

engaging in self-beautification had the capacity to change her life. Kapito depicts herself as a proponent of the ideology of Poalei Zion Left who was not active in her local Yugnt branch but certainly followed movement events through the reports of friends. And despite her support for the Socialist-Zionist approach, she completely opposed the movement's repudiation of beautification and embellishment. Kapito's life had been significantly impacted by a tragic event that occurred when she was an infant. It was during this period that she fell down and injured her back, leaving a hump. In addition, her parents did not place particular emphasis on personal hygiene, and she spent her childhood dirty and wallowing in filth. Kapito explains that she had not even turned six years old when she understood that "being dirty is not pretty."⁷⁵ From her perspective, the social significance of beauty at the time meant that "today, everyone wants only to satisfy their eyes – only beautiful things have influence."⁷⁶

Based on this view, Kapito explains her efforts to conceal her physical inadequacies to the best of her ability. She put a great deal of effort into her fashion choices, which included primarily different types of dresses – dresses with a belt, patchwork dresses, and woolen dresses – a close-fitting shawl, and the like. She describes herself as someone who regularly uses cosmetic products, makeup, and perfume; keeps her hair arranged; and radiates to her surroundings a sense of happiness and satisfaction with her life. This, she holds, causes others to want to be in her company and allows her beauty to emerge. Indeed, despite her physical shortcoming and the hump on her back, Kapito succeeded in establishing a romantic relationship with a man from a neighboring town. The autobiography focuses on the man's external appearance, as well as on their relationship's impact on her own external appearance. In her view, she had grown prettier as a result of her romantic relationship; her cheeks were redder, her hair was lighter, and her eyes sparkled.⁷⁷ Sarah Kapito's autobiography also provides an insight on the sources that influenced the rhetoric and image of desirable love or sexual relationships. According to Ido Basok, Kapito's description of her relationship with her love seems like a collage of canonic literature.⁷⁸

Conclusion

Embarking on a struggle is predicated on the hope for change and the rectification of evils, ills, and injustices. This was true in the class struggle, in which workers sought to put an end to proletarian oppression; in the Jewish national struggle (Zionist and anti-Zionist alike), in which Jews sought to put an end to their national oppression; and in the gender struggle, in which women sought, and continue to seek, to put an end to discrimination and inequality between the sexes. As we have seen, the Jewish workers' parties in interwar Poland argued the necessity of creating a reality in which there was no barrier between working men and working women. They also maintained that women working in a variety of realms should be treated equally and that in the framework of the socialist struggle there was no difference between men and women. In practice, however, the reality was different. Although the Jewish workers' parties issued statements calling for equal treatment, in reality the parties also treated women differently in both the public and the private spheres. In the public sphere, and particularly in politics, few women managed to integrate into the party leaderships, and women served as local branch heads or city council members in only a small number of locations. In the private sphere, as noted above, the parties still stressed women's exclusive responsibility

for the education of children and for maintaining the family. Unlike men, until women found suitable arrangements for their children during working hours, they could not join the workforce and achieve financial independence and professional advancement.

Nonetheless, a number of initiatives helped improve the status of Jewish women in general and female Jewish workers in particular, if only on a declarative level. These initiatives, which ultimately enabled many women to join the workforce, included the establishment of the YAF, the Bund's women's organization; the inclusion of women on party slates for city councils and the Polish Sejm; and the workers' parties' struggle to establish educational institutions that taught in the spirit of movement ideology. Also relevant is Dubnova-Erlich's determined work, particularly in the realm of educating the youth toward equal relationships and an open and modern sex life. Moreover, regarding personal esthetics such as fashion and make-up, the crystallization process of the parties' ideology during the interwar years had substantial influence on female activists' lives. However, with the sources available to us, it is hard to determine how the differences between the Bund's and Poalei Zion's approaches were reflected in the activists' everyday practices.

This state of affairs is consistent with Millet's and de Beauvoir's analyses of the condition of women in spaces in which, theoretically, they have been awarded rights. In most instances, these rights have encountered walls of "ancient patterns" (Millet) or "ancient schemes" (de Beauvoir) of discriminatory treatment that preclude the provision of rights in practice. This gendered approach, which I refer to as "ambivalent gender equality," allowed hope to flourish and an intensification of the struggle, which, at the end of the day, ended in a weak and quiet voice.

Notes

1. Millet, *Sexual Politics*, 23–25.
2. De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 9.
3. The term "gender" was coined in 1955 by psychologist John Money and became popular only during the 1970s. As Millet's groundbreaking book was published in 1970, before the term gender was firmly established, she instead makes use of the term "sex."
4. Millet, *Sexual Politics*, 33–36.
5. *Ibid.*, 39–43.
6. *Ibid.*, 36–39.
7. See Mickute, "Modern, Jewish, and Female," 31–32.
8. Although this supplement does not bear a date of publication, based on the information it contains we can assume that it was published in early 1919.
9. *Di arbeiter froy*, "Di arbeiter froy."
10. *Di arbeiter froy*, "Der socialism un di arbeiter froy."
11. *Arbeiter zeitung*, "Zu der arbeiter froy!" 23.2.1919.
12. *Lebens fragen*, "Di arbeiter froy un di shtadt-raten," 19.2.1919.
13. The Bund's women's organization, YAF, was founded during the second half of the 1920s. On the eve of the Second World War, around 2,000 women participated in the organization's activities. See: Pickhan, *Gegen den Strom*, 131; Blatman, "Women in the Jewish Labor Bund," 68–84.
14. AAN, 19/30/II-6/13, "Hevretes froien-birgerins!"
15. AAN, 59/29/3, "Zu di yiddisher froien in poilen"
16. AAN, 19/30/II-6/13, "Hevretes froien-birgernis!"
17. Mishkinsky, *The Emergence of the Jewish Labor Movement*, 22.
18. Blatman, "Women in the Jewish Labor Bund," 77–78.
19. *Ibid.*, 79.

20. Blatman, "Patterns of Activity of a National Minority," 220.
21. Jacobs, *Bundist*, 87.
22. AAN, 19/30-II-6/13, "Hevretes froien-birgerins!"; *Lebens fragen*, "Di arbeter froy un di raten."
23. AAN, 59/29/3, "Zu di yiddishe froien in poilen."
24. AAN, 19/30-II-6/13, "Hevretes froien-birgerins!"
25. AAN, 59/29/3, "Zu di yiddishe froien in poilen."
26. *Yugnt veker*, "Der tag fun der arbeter-froy," 1.3.1930; "Rahel Zack," "Anna Rosenthal" 15.11.1937; "Motel Britan (Tshudnawer)," 1.12.1937; "Sonia Klicksman-Faisahzen," 1.2.1938.
27. *Yugnt veker*, "Der tag fun der arbeter-froy," 1.3.1930.
28. *Yugnt veker*, "Di froy muz zayn a sotsialistisher kemferin," 1.3.1929.
29. *Yugnt veker*, "Froy un socialism," 15.3.1927.
30. It is noteworthy that women were not granted the right to vote in the elections for Jewish community representation. This state of affairs was opposed primarily by the Zionist women's organization. See: Guterman, *The Warsaw Jewish Community*, 194.
31. *Arbeiter zeitung*, "Candidaten liste zum warszawer shtadt-rat," 23.2.1919; *Lebens fragen*, "Candidaten liste fun Bund zum warszawer shtadt-rat," 14.2.1919. On the relationship between Viktor Alter and Esther Iwaniska, see the biography of the latter's son, Viktor Iwanaski Hertz, *Doyres Bundistn*. On the family and romantic relationships among leaders of the Russian Bund, see Jacobs, *Bundist*, 85–86.
32. Freeze, *Jewish Marriage*, 82.
33. These figures relate to the registered ages of marriage of Jews in Vilna between 1837 and 1895, as presented in Freeze, *Jewish Marriage*, 83.
34. See Stampfer, "The Social Implications of Very Early Marriage," 65–77; Adar-Bunis, "Childhood among Middle Class Jews," 351–379.
35. Despite the female dominance in household affairs and some aspects of public space, male hegemony was maintained with regard to the Jewish religious establishments. As a result, the strength of women was limited. See Freeze, *Jewish Marriage*, 108.
36. *Ibid.*, 109.
37. Zeltzer, "Growing up in a Jewish Family," 104.
38. Freeze, *Jewish Marriage*, 110.
39. Biron-Brandsdofer, "The Landscape of Adolescence," 139.
40. Davis-Kram, "Sisters of the Bund," 32.
41. Bacon, "Women? Youth? Jew?," 22–23.
42. YVA, O.3/6788695, Kalman Karol Wexler.
43. USC, Vladka Meed (Peltel), <https://www.ushmm.org/exhibition/personal-history/media-oi.php?MediaId=2900&th=individuals> (accessed May 2020).
44. YVA, O.3/7635, Masha Futermilch (Gleitman).
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*; USC, Vladka Meed (Peltel).
47. Freeze, *Jewish Marriage*, 44.
48. In Hashomer hatza'ir, it was customary to conduct open discussions on issues related to sexual desires and romantic relations. These discussions took place in the presence of movement youth counselors and were supported by academic informational material. They were not conducted in gender-segregated frameworks but rather were attended by members of the group as a whole – boys and girls alike. For more on sexual openness among the Zionist socialist youth movements, see "Nur, Sex, Eros, and Physical Labor," 64–73.
49. Youth counselors of the Tsukunft summer camps contended with educational "problems" by conducting discussions with the boys who were interfering with the "proper course of activity." Kozłowska, "Wandering Jews," 249–250.
50. For an example of the suppression of desire and emotion among young activists of Agudat Israel, see : YIVO, RG 4, #3559; YIVO, RG 4, #3680.
51. *Yugnt veker*, "Dos seksuele leben fun der Yugnt," 15.8.1932; "Dos Seksuele leben fun der Yugnt- Sof," 1.9.1932. Jack Jacob notes that in the early 1930s, "most of the advice to the Tsukunftistn was very traditional." See: Jacobs, *Bundist*, 21.

52. *Yugnt veker*, "Die naye sexuelle etik," 15.1.1934.
53. *Yugnt veker*, "Das sexuelle leben fun der yugnt- sof," 1.9.1932.
54. An extreme example appears in the autobiography of HBD, a yeshiva student who experimented with regular sexual relations with members of his own sex. See: YIVO, RG 4, #3680.
55. According to Zeltzer, 14 percent of the adolescent girls whose autobiographies mention that they had been sent to a YIVO competition also mentioned sexuality and sexual relations, compared with 41 percent among adolescent boys. Zeltzer, "Growing up in a Jewish Family," 97.
56. Jacobs, *Bundist*, 21–26.
57. Dubnova-Erlich, *Bread and Matzoth*, 221.
58. *Ibid.*, 223.
59. Dubnova-Erlich explains that she had initially titled her lectures "The New Way of Life in the Soviet Literature" but that she ultimately discovered that publicizing the lectures under the title "Love, Prostitution, and Family" would draw a larger audience. *Ibid.*, 231.
60. Dubnova-Erlich notes that at one of her lectures she was approached by an adolescent girl who told her that she had gotten pregnant out of wedlock. Dubnova-Erlich helped the girl find a doctor and provided her with support following the illegal abortion. *Ibid.*, 224, 231.
61. YIVO, RG 28, Box 4, Folder 1120, "Libe un froy."
62. "Saturday January 14, 1933," YIVO, RG 28, Box 4, Folder 1120.
63. *Yugnt veker*, "Di naye sexuelle etik," 15.1.1935.
64. *Yugnt veker*, "Di sexuelle oislanzung fun der froy," 15.1.1935.
65. *Ibid.*; *Yugnt veker*, "Egoisem un altruisem in seksualen leben," 1.4.1934. Dubnova-Erlich wrote explicitly that the women's place was no longer only "in the bedroom and kitchen."
66. *Yugnt veker*, "Yugnt un prostitutsie [an antfer oif a briv]," 1.10.1934.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Yugnt veker*, "Das sexuelle leben fun der yugnt," 15.8.1932.
69. AAN 30/II-5/4; *Naye Folksdaytung*, "Fun frimorgan biz avent," 28.11.1936
70. Kozłowska, "Wandering Jews," 249–250.
71. Kozłowska, "Wandering Jews," 242.
72. For photo of sports frameworks in which women wore shorts, *Haintige naves*, "Sport- meidalach," 1.1932. Female members of the Morgnshtern gymnastics team in Lublin in 1929, and in Warsaw, wore the team uniform, including shorts. *Lebens fragen*, "Der umfargeslecher morgenshtern," 1.1.1996.
73. YIVO, RG 4, #3539.
74. Kozłowska, "Brider un Shvester," 117.
75. YIVO, RG 4, #3801.
76. *Ibid.*
77. *Ibid.*
78. Basok, *Youthful Plots*, 631. The influence of literature on Jews perspective regarding love in not an invention of the 20's century. Naomi Seidmen articulate this early influence in her book *The Marriage Plot*.

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