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# ANGELA VODE: The Woman Question

**Author:** Angela Vode
**Title:** The Woman Question
**Originally published:** "Žensko vprašanje," *Književnost* 1, no. 6 (1933): 200–206.
**Language:** Slovenian

## About the author

**Angela Vode** (1892, Ljubljana–1985, Ljubljana) was a teacher, activist, writer, publicist, and a central figure in the Slovenian interwar feminist movement. Despite her prominence, scholarly engagement with her activism and political thought has seen little growth. The 2001 publication focusing on Angela Vode and Boris Furlan as victims of the 1947 Nagode show trial remains the most comprehensive scholarly work on this prolific intellectual.[1] Since then, while there has been an increase in interest—reflected in several short biographies and articles[2]—her writings remain largely unexplored through the lens of the history of political

1 Peter Vodopivec, ed., *Usoda slovenskih demokratičnih izobražencev: Angela Vode in Boris Furlan, žrtvi Nagodetovega procesa* (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2001).

2 Mateja Jeraj, "Angela Vode: pomembna osebnost slovenskega ženskega gibanja," *Splošno žensko društvo 1901–1945. Od dobrih deklet do feministk* (Ljubljana: Arhiv Republike Slovenije, 2003), 166–87. Karmen Klavžar, "Angela Vode," in *A Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements and Feminisms*, ed. Francisca de Haan, Krassimira Daskalova, and Anna Loutfi (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 604–07. Branka Vičar, "Angela Vode med liberalnim in socialističnim feminizmom," *Studia Historica Slovenica* 13, no. 2–3 (2013): 779–96. Sabina Žnidaršič-Žagar, "Angela Vode (1892–1985), Spol in usoda (1938/39)," *Studia Historica Slovenica* 13, no. 2–3 (2013): 797–816.

thought, though with a few notable exceptions.[3] Unusually for the time, Vode was, since March 1920, a member of the illegal Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistična partija Jugoslavije*, KPJ) and a leading figure in the feminist organization Women's Movement (*Ženski pokret*) in Ljubljana.[4] Although her commitment to feminism, social justice, and anti-fascist politics remained consistent, she withdrew from the communist movement in 1939 due to her disagreement with the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact.

She was born in 1892 in Ljubljana to Anton Vode, a railway worker, and Frančiška Vode, probably a housewife. She never married and did not have any children. Her formal education (also in Ljubljana) led her to a teaching job, and as a teacher Vode worked in various schools in villages around Ljubljana from 1911 until early 1917, when she lost her job. After that, she briefly worked as a private governess in Ljubljana and Maribor and in the Jadranska Bank in Kranj, from where she moved to a white-collar job in a factory. From most jobs, she was fired for her political views or activity, until she was employed as a secretary within the JSDS in Ljubljana. In March 1920, she joined the Socialist Workers' Party of Yugoslavia (Communist) (*Socijalistična delavska stranka Jugoslavije (komunista)*), where she worked until December 1920, when the party was made illegal. After that, she dedicated herself to the study of special education. She passed the state exam in this field in May 1921 (with some further specialization in Prague and Berlin) and then obtained a position at the special school for children with intellectual disabilities in Ljubljana, where she worked until January 1944, and then again briefly after the war.[5]

Overall, her ideological worldview can be described as an original intertwining of Marxism and feminism. She initially came into contact with socialist ideas through her father, who was a social democrat, and the socialist newspaper *Arbeiter Zeitung* which he read.[6] Her belief that "injustices must be addressed and one must fight to change the world"[7] was what drew her toward this path. Anti-Austrian sentiment was another core aspect of her identity and ideology from her formative years; "At every step, I realized that children who claimed to be

3 For the analysis of her antifascist thought, see Isidora Grubački, "Political Transformations of Interwar Feminisms: the Case of Yugoslavia," doctoral dissertation, Central European University, 2023, chapter 3. An excerpt from her 1934 publication has been translated and published with a biographic and contextual introduction by Manca G. Renko, "About the Author" and "Context" to "Angela Vode: The Woman in Contemporary Society," in *Texts and Contexts from the History of Feminism and Women's Rights*, 98–102. See also Trencsényi, *Intellectuals and the Crisis of Politics*, 104.

4 Angela Vode, "Spomini," in *Zbrana dela Angele Vode*, vol. 3, *Spomin in pozaba* (Ljubljana: Krtina, 2000), 96.

5 Ervin Dolenc, "Pedagoško delo Angele Vode," in *Usoda slovenskih demokratičnih izobražencev*, 29–30.

6 Renko, "About the Author" and "Context" to "Angela Vode: The Woman in Contemporary Society," 99. Vode, "Spomini," 54.

7 Vode, "Spomini," 50.

Germans held a privileged position," she remembered.[8] Her personal experience as a woman brought her close to the women's movement: "In my case," she wrote, "the drive for equality did not arise from theoretical study of the social question, nor from the founding of the women's movement, but rather from observing life around me, from personal experience—we girls had to realize every day how we were being pushed aside in favor of boys. And then later, in the workplace!"[9] All of this reveals that her involvement in the communist and feminist movements was deeply rooted in her personal pursuit of social justice and equality, values that remained at the heart of her lifelong activism.

Along these ideological lines, during the interwar period she was active in various pedagogical and feminist organizations in Ljubljana and in Yugoslavia. Most importantly, she was, together with Alojzija Štebi and Cirila Pleško-Štebi, co-founder of the organization *Ženski pokret* (Women's Movement) in Ljubljana in 1926, where she was active first as a secretary and then as a (vice-)president until 1937.[10] Through *Ženski pokret*, she was active in the *Dravska* section of the *Jugoslovanska ženska zveza* (Yugoslav National Council of Women, JŽZ, est. 1934), the leading platform for women's progressive activism in the Slovenian lands.[11] Her antifascist activism was arguably crucial for connecting Yugoslav and particularly Slovenian women's organizations with the Women's World Committee against War and Fascism, the leading women's antifascist organization founded in Paris and active from 1934 until the Second World War.[12]

At the heart of her activism was a prolific publishing career. She contributed to many periodicals and newspapers from the second half of the 1920s, among them the central Slovenian women's journal *Ženski svet*; the Yugoslav feminist journal *Ženski pokret*; the periodical of the *Zveza delavskih žen in deklet* (Association of Working Women and Girls), *Ženski list*; as well as in *Žena in dom*, *Gospodinja*, and in various other publications. Between 1931 and 1938, she edited the Monday edition of the daily newspaper *Jutro*, where she also wrote most of the contributions; according to Vode, the cancellation of her column was due to increasingly "pro-Hitlerian" state politics. Her books published in the 1930s were sociological analyses of women's position at the time. While *Žena v sedanji družbi* (Woman in Contemporary Society, 1934) and *Žena i fašizam* (Woman

8 Ibid., 50.

9 Ibid., 56.

10 As a delegate of *Ženski pokret*, she was also active on the international stage, participating in the congresses of the leading women's organizations of the time. She was a delegate at the following congresses: the Little Entente of Women in Prague (1927); the International Woman Suffrage Alliance in Berlin (1929), and the International Council of Women in Dubrovnik (1936).

11 For a recent overview of the work of the ICW and the *Dravska* Section, see Isidora Grubački and Irena Selišnik, "The National Women's Alliance in Interwar Yugoslavia. Between the Feminist Reform and Institutional Social Politics," *Women's History Review* 32, no. 2 (2023): 242–60.

12 Grubački, "Political Transformations of Interwar Feminisms," chapter 3.

and Fascism, 1935) focus predominantly on women's rights in the context of the rise of fascism, in her later book *Spol in usoda* (Sex and Destiny, 1938–39), Vode offered an analysis of the coming-of-age paths of women and men, arguing that the destiny of both is deeply conditioned by their sex.[13]

In 1939, Angela Vode was expelled from the Communist Party because of her disagreement over the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact between Germany and the Soviet Union; however, this information at the time remained largely within the circles of the Party.[14] Despite this, after the Second World War started in Yugoslavia in April 1941, Vode joined the Slovenian antifascist organization *Osvobodilna fronta* (Liberation Front, OF) as a representative of JŽZ. According to the historian Bojan Godeša, she remained active in the OF until the spring of 1942, when she was discreetly sidelined—not only because of her differing views from the Party leadership on key issues, but also because her growing influence among organized women made Party leaders increasingly uneasy. Vode was again invited to become active in the OF in the autumn of 1942 and in the *Protifašistička ženska zveza* (Antifascist Women's Alliance) in early 1943, which she rejected. Yet, her antifascist activism led to her arrest by the German authorities in February 1944, when she was taken to Ravensbrück. After several months in detention, she was eventually released, and upon her return wrote a memoir about her experiences in this concentration camp.[15]

After returning to Ljubljana, she continued working in the special school for children after the war until her arrest.[16] She was arrested by the new authorities on May 25, 1947, and soon after was given a twenty-year prison sentence. She remained imprisoned until January 1953. After her release, she was sidelined in public life and largely forgotten, yet not completely. Erna Muser, a Marxist activist, writer, and the first historian of women's movement in Slovenia, who had cooperated with Vode in the 1930s feminist movement, renewed contact with her in the 1960s and kept in touch for decades. Later on, Vode gave her first public interview to Frančiška Buttolo in 1984.[17]

13 *Spol in usoda*, Part I, was published in 1938; Part II was published in late 1938, although the official year of the publication is 1939. Upon the publication of the second part of *Spol in usoda* in late 1938, some conservative intellectuals attacked her in Catholic periodicals *Slovenec* and *Slovenski delavec*. The best contextualization for this event can be found in: Jelka Melik, "Angela Vode prvič pred sodiščem," in *Usoda slovenskih demokratičnih izobražencev*, 52–60.

14 Bojan Godeša, "Angela Vode in medvojne dileme," in *Usoda slovenskih demokratičnih izobražencev*, 65.

15 Ibid., 73. Angela Vode, "Spomini na suženjske dni," in *Zbrana dela Angele Vode*, vol. 3, *Spomini in pozaba*, ed. Mirjam Milharčič-Hladnik (Ljubljana: Krtina, 2000), 204–344. For an analysis of her memoirs about Ravensbrück, see "Angela Vode – Mara Čepič: dva različna pogleda na žensko koncentracijsko taborišče Ravensbrück," *Acta Histriae* 15, no. 2 (2007): 739–46.

16 Dolenc, "Pedagoško delo Angele Vode," 29–30.

17 Frančiška Buttolo, "O inteligenci in intelektualcih. Pogovor z Angelo Vodetovo," *Nova revija* 3, no. 24–25 (1984): 2788–91.

Angela Vode died in 1985. After her death, the sociologist Mirjam Milharčič Hladnik rediscovered her work in the 1990s and subsequently published and republished some of Vode's work in late 1990s. In 2006, the journalist and publicist Alenka Puhar published Angela Vode's "hidden memoir," *Skriti spomin*.[18]

MOST IMPORTANT WORKS**:** *Zbrana dela Angele Vode*, 3 vols., ed. Mirjam Milharčič-Hladnik, (Ljubljana: Krtina, 1998–2000); *Skriti spomin*, ed. Alenka Puhar (Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2006).

## Context

The translated text below is Angela Vode's article "Žensko vprašanje" (The Woman Question), originally published in 1933 in the Marxist periodical *Književnost* (Literature, 1932–1935), edited by the prominent playwright, novelist, and literary and theater historian Bratko Kreft (1905–1996). In addition to literary works and translations—including excerpts from the writings of Maxim Gorky, Miroslav Krleža, Ernst Toller, as well as Kreft himself and the Slovenian writer Milena Mohorič—*Književnost* featured numerous translations of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It also published a wide range of articles, discussions, and critiques by Slovenian communists, including contributions by one of the movement's leading figures, Edvard Kardelj (1910–1979), writing under the pseudonym Tone Brodar. Among these contributions were three texts on the "woman question" and feminism: one by Angela Vode, published in 1933, and two by Leopoldina Kos (see the following contribution in this reader) in 1934. The periodical also featured a positive review of Vode's 1934 book *Žena v sadašnji družbi* (Woman in Contemporary Society), describing it as "a great gain for Slovenian social-publicist literature." The review emphasized the book's value in shedding light on how one should approach what it called "one of our most difficult problems"—the "woman question."[19]

In this text, Angela Vode presents her own interpretation of the "woman question" within the framework of what she, following the socialist tradition, refers to as the "proletarian women's movement" and the "so-called bourgeois women's movement." Writing from a Marxist perspective, she contends that the concept remains insufficiently defined in the Slovenian context, as it is usually associated either with the *narodne dame* ("national ladies") active in Slovenian humanitarian and cultural women's associations, or with women's efforts to imitate men.

18 *Zbrana dela Angele Vode*, vol. 1, *Spol in upor* (Ljubljana: Krtina, 1998); vol. 2, *Značaj in usoda* (Ljubljana: Krtina, 1999); vol. 3, *Spomini in pozaba* (Ljubljana: Krtina, 2000), all edited by Mirjam Milharčič-Hladnik. Angela Vode, *Skriti spomin*, ed. Alenka Puhar (Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2006).

19 VL. Šk., "A. Vode: Žena v današnji družbi," in *Književnost*, no. 5–6 (1935): 221–26.

Calling for a rethinking of the "woman question," Vode challenges both prevailing associations. To support her argument, she draws not only on foundational Marxist texts such as *Das Kapital* (1867, published in Slovenian in 1933) and August Bebel's *Die Frau und der Sozialismus* (1879, published in Serbo-Croatian in 1909), but also on contemporary literature available at the time of her writing. These include Lisbeth Franzen-Hellersberg's *Die jugendliche Arbeiterin, ihre Arbeitsweise und Lebensform* (1932), Fannina Halle's *Die Frau in Sowjetrussland* (1932), and Alice Rühle-Gerstel's *Das Frauenproblem der Gegenwart* (1932). Drawing on these sources, Vode first examines the woman question from the perspective of working-class women—emphasizing the importance of autonomous women's organizing within the proletarian struggle—and then, in the excerpt translated below, from the perspective of bourgeois women's organizations. Thus, Vode approaches what she calls the "so-called bourgeois women's movement" with a tone of scientific objectivity, acknowledging the positive contributions of these organizations overall.

When viewed in light of Vode's biography, her 1933 article "The Woman Question" offers valuable insight into how she, as both a Marxist and a member of the Communist Party, came to see feminist organizing as not only necessary but politically meaningful, as reflected in her engagement within the organization Women's Movement in Ljubljana. As part of the state-wide alliance *Alijansa ženskih pokreta* (Alliance of Women's Movements, AŽP, 1923–1940), *Ženski pokret* promoted a broad feminist agenda that included demands for political rights, as well as legal, economic, and social reforms for women. Her relatively sympathetic view of the bourgeois women's movement and feminism becomes especially clear when her text is read alongside that of fellow Slovenian communist activist **Leopoldina Kos**, whose article "Feminism and the Struggle of the Working Woman" (*Feminizem in borba delovne žene*) was published in the same journal a year later. As Manca G. Renko notes in her contextualization of Kos's article,[20] Kos adopts a far more polemical tone—one reportedly encouraged by other members of the Communist Party—and delivers a harsh critique of the bourgeois women's movement. Seen in this light, Vode's article can be read as a subtle but deliberate intervention against the dominant stance among Slovenian communists in the early 1930s which disapproved of noncommunist women's organizing. It also becomes apparent that Kos's text simplifies the women's movement in precisely the way Vode warns against: by drawing a sharp and reductive line between bourgeois "ladies" and working-class women. In the memoirs she wrote many years later, Angela Vode noted that she still could not understand

20 See the entry on Leopoldina Kos in this volume.

Kos's article. As she elaborated: "In my opinion, this statement testifies to a complete ignorance of the situation, even among the working class, a lack of logical thinking, and much more. If, on the one hand, it is acknowledged that feminism gained moral legitimacy with the rise of fascism, why then would it be unnecessary in our Slovenian context?"[21]

At the same time, Angela Vode's text engages with the broader transnational debate on the "crisis of feminism" in the early 1930s. One of the intellectuals who helped shape this discourse was Alice Rühle-Gerstel, whose aforementioned 1932 study *Das Frauenproblem der Gegenwart* critically examined both the socialist and Weimar women's movements. A Marxist psychologist who combined Alfred Adler's individual psychology with Marxist theory, Rühle-Gerstel argued that the women's movement had reached a dead end.[22] In her view, the Weimar feminist movement had lost its relevance after achieving its primary goal: women's suffrage.[23] Read in this context, Vode's article reveals a strong alignment with Rühle-Gerstel's critique. However, writing after Hitler's rise to power in January 1933, Vode expanded Rühle-Gerstel's critique, emphasizing the weakness of political democracy in Germany *even with* women's suffrage. This position reflects her broader conviction that political rights are insufficient without corresponding economic rights; as she argued, "to expect women to achieve complete equality with men on the basis of political rights is to fall prey to these false hopes."[24] Building on Rühle-Gerstel's critique, Vode argues that the fatal error of the women's movement was its isolation of feminist goals from broader social and economic struggles.

Finally, Vode's article can also be read in the context of the Yugoslav discussion about the feminist "crisis," which entered the Yugoslav public sphere through a series of articles by the Prague-based, Serbian-born feminist Julka Chlapcová-Đorđević.[25] Drawing also on Rühle-Gerstel's work, Chlapcová-Đorđević argued that the feminist movement—both in Europe and particularly in Yugoslavia—had lost its direction due to its entanglement with national projects and its failure

21 Vode, "Spomini," 153.

22 The Adlerian approach, which considered individuals in connection with their environment, put an emphasis on the connections of individuals in community and their cooperation. Katherine E. Calvert, *Modeling Motherhood in Weimar Germany: Political and Psychological Discourses in Women's Writing* (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2023), 42–48.

23 Alice Rühle-Gerstel, *Das Frauenproblem der Gegenwart* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1932), 140.

24 Renko, "About the Author" and "Context" to "Angela Vode: The Woman in Contemporary Society," 101. Vode, "Spomini," 105.

25 She also published a study in Czech developing similar arguments: *Osudná chvíle feministického hnutí: Sexuální reformy a rovnoprávnost muže a ženy* (Prague: Prace Intelektu, 1933). In a way, Chlapcová-Đorđević introduced the discourse of the "crisis of feminism," which was later appropriated in historiography as well. See: Isidora Grubački, "Čija kriza? Feminizam i demokratija u Jugoslaviji 20-tih godina XX veka," *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 62, no. 2 (2022): 29–49, especially 31–32.

to focus on what she considered specifically feminist concerns such as reproductive rights, gender relations, and the division of labor.[26] This important Prague-based thinker specifically criticized the leader of the Alijansa ženskih pokreta, the civic feminist Alojzija Štebi, whose organization had since the introduction of the royal dictatorship in 1929 removed the demand for women's suffrage rights from the organization. In the article below, while not explicitly referring to the debate between these two feminists, Vode evidently sided with Štebi, as she cited her argument that the women's movement must become a broader social movement. She concluded that the only viable future for feminism was to align itself with the wider struggle of working people. She also advanced a similar argument in a review of Chlapcová-Đorđević's book published also in the summer of 1933.[27] Overall, this position mirrors Vode's own praxis, which consistently sought to bridge the women's and working-class movements—one example being her decision to write positively about the bourgeois women's movement in a Marxist communist periodical.

### Acknowledgement

This contribution is a result of the research program Political History (P6-0281) and the bilateral project *Gender and Intellectual History in Serbian and Slovenian Periodical Press in the 20th Century* (BI-RS/23-25-012), both funded by the Public Agency for Research and Innovation of the Republic of Slovenia (ARIS).

## ANGELA VODE
## "The Woman Question"

All serious sociologists have considered the women's question as one of the crucial foundations for tackling the organization of human society. Given this fact, especially as, in recent decades, the women's question has come to the fore due to the changed economic situation, we could expect a little more clarity in this respect in our society. However, for our average person, the term "women's question" is almost always associated with the idea of a group

26 Kristina Andělová and Isidora Grubački, "Crises of Feminism and Democracy in the Interwar Period. Yugoslav and Czechoslovak Entanglements," in *East Central European Crisis Discourses in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Trencsényi et al., 159–82, especially 164, 172–73.

27 Angela Vode, "Dr. Julka Gjorgjević-Chlapcová," *Ženski svet* 11, no. 7–8, 1933, 179–81.

of women who, under the immortal name of "the ladies of the nation," work in various humanitarian and cultural women's societies. Those who consider themselves informed think that the women's question has been "created" by women who want to imitate men at all costs, especially in terms of morals and outward appearances, and who are trying to force them from their position of power. We have to admit that women themselves are guilty in this respect as well because they are also among those who completely misunderstand and misinterpret the women's question. Terms such as emancipation, equality, or independence are still only clear to a very small circle of women, yet clarity in this respect is urgently needed today.

…

In this respect, the proletarian women's movement fundamentally differs from the bourgeois women's movement, which unites women of all opinions and classes in an independent organization. The bourgeois women's movement was also given its initial impetus by the economic transformation of society. Its historical justification is based on this fact. It was born mainly out of the material hardship of middle-class (petty bourgeois) women and only partly out of the spiritual need of women who desired meaning and independence in their lives, although they were well off – especially in the previous decades when the middle classes were not yet as proletarianized as they are today. This is unsurprising because women's spirituality became shallow as their household duties diminished and their homes became cramped and empty. Thus, they also came to the realization that the only thing that could save them from economic and spiritual misery was professional work, which gave many of them a new meaning to their lives.

However, their husbands resisted them at this point, mainly because they felt threatened. Thus, women's physical and mental fitness to exercise the so-called higher professions has been debated for generations. Men also saw the danger to the "natural vocation" of women, who would no longer want to be mothers capable of love. The same men, however, considered it perfectly reasonable that workers' wives should perform the hardest work in the factories and saw no danger to the "natural vocation" of the female workers who poisoned their bodies working in chemical factories under the most unfavorable conditions. Women have also always performed the most demanding jobs as farmers, housewives, and cottage industry workers – yet no one has ever questioned their ability there. However, when women started to advance towards the so-called higher professions, men worried about their physical and spiritual "femininity".

Therefore, the bourgeois women had yet to gain access to vocational education and a profession. This fact inevitably gave rise to the need for women to unite and fight together for the same rights as men. This aspiration provided the basis for the so-called bourgeois women's movement, which assumed the task of achieving civil and social equality (to men), which would serve as a foundation for the common efforts aimed at humanity's cultural and social progress. This is the fundamental difference between the two movements. The proletarian women's movement sees the possibility of women's equality only in a society where social equality applies to everyone. Within a class state, proletarian women cannot profit much from political rights, although, at certain times, they are not insignificant to them. That is why we have seen many examples of working-class women struggling for civic equality in parallel with bourgeois women in the era of parliamentary democracy. If we take into account the bourgeois women's social position and especially their mentality, determined by their upbringing as well as by their feminine nature whose essence consists of an absolutely concrete view of life and its phenomena, it is understandable that professionally employed bourgeois women would not join the working-class women in their class aspirations. For these reasons, for example, public and private female employees very rarely consciously recognize that they belong to the proletarian class, even though they are just as exploited as working-class women, perhaps only in a different form. Even if all their conditions of existence do, in fact, classify these women as the proletariat, this conclusion means nothing to them because all their aspirations go in the opposite direction: to be, at least outwardly, bourgeois. Most of these women have not yet realized any need for solidarity with their comrades. In most of them, the aspiration has not yet been awakened to elevate their personality to that of a full-fledged human being. These women only feel that they are disregarded as women, both at work and within the family. Therefore, they are much more open to the aspirations of the women's movement with its concrete goal of achieving equality between men and women rather than to the class movement, as most women lack all the preconditions to understand the latter. In this respect, class-conscious women within the women's movement have an important educational task.

The educational significance of the bourgeois women's movement lies in the fact that it has demonstrated the importance of women's economic and spiritual independence. Rühle-Gerstel says the following about it: "Even if the women's movement would have achieved nothing else, the very fact that it has taught women to see their destiny collectively makes it one of the great historical phenomena."

Since women have by now penetrated all professions and enjoy political rights in almost all countries, the bourgeois women's movement has actually completed its task or at least achieved its formal external aim. This was demonstrated years ago at the congress of the IAW – International Woman Suffrage Alliance, which changed its name accordingly: the "Women's Alliance for the Political Education of Women." Today, the women's movement is at a standstill: partly for the reason mentioned above – because it has already reached its goal – but certainly, to a large extent, because it has not brought women the satisfaction and successes that they had hoped to gain in view of their social position as a result of equality. A classic example of the value of political rights is Germany, where political democracy was just recently at its height, but overnight, men and women have been deprived of their rights. Even the simple truth that the men who have the right to vote are nowadays starving just as much as women who do not should reveal the problematic value of the struggle for mere political equality.

The women's movement made the fatal mistake of setting its purpose in isolation from the other necessities of life, which it could not foresee in an era of economic boom – because it did not consider the dynamics of historical development. Consequently, it is now faced with a new realization and thus a new task: women's equality can only have real value in a society based on social equality, which depends on the precondition of the economic reorganization of society. This is what we need to focus our efforts on.

Individual members of the women's movement are fully aware of this fact. Thus, Lojzka Štebi states the following in one of the recent issues of the *Ženski pokret* magazine: "The crucial mistake of the women's movement was to overestimate the power of women and underestimate the power of the system."

She then lists the problems that the women's movement has tried to address – the protection of mothers and children, the regulation of marriage and family – and concludes: "The same is true for these crucial problems of our movement as for the others: the asocial and amoral system of life as a whole should be fundamentally changed. – Can the women's movement of our time overcome the critical situation in which it has found itself? It can, but only on one condition: that it realizes it must be the first social movement and accepts all the consequences of such a movement."

This means that the women's movement must become a part of the working people's movement, in which all the oppressed struggle for a more equitable society in which women will also have their rights. The prerequisite for such a system is economic security, which alone can bring women personal freedom and the possibility of participating in the regulation of their own

relations to society, the working community, and the family because they will thus consciously take part in public life as full-fledged citizens.

The women's question has not even remotely been resolved, but the path to a solution is clearer than ever. Today, women have only just begun to realize the urgency of changing their situation. However, the solution to the women's question will only reach its acute stage once the preconditions have been met.