

Manca G. Renko

# LEOPOLDINA KOS: Feminism and the Struggle of the Working Woman

**Author:** Leopoldina Kos, under the pseudonym M. Knapova

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## About the author

**Leopoldina Kos** (1889, Idrija–1968, Golnik), also Poldka Kos, was a teacher and political worker particularly politically active during the interwar period. As a teacher with a strong political stance, she was frequently relocated and worked in Idrija and its surrounding areas, in the rural areas around Ljubljana, and in Murska Sobota. Being on the move, especially as a politically suspicious person, meant that she did not retain many of her documents, including her writings, lectures, and letters. Although she published little, in this volume she represents the often-overlooked women political workers in the interwar period, as her efforts were primarily among the rural population, especially women.

To date, there is no comprehensive and accessible biography of Leopoldina Kos. Her life is scarcely documented, with only a brief entry in the Slovenian Biographic Lexicon.<sup>1</sup> This biography aims to fill that gap by piecing together her life trajectory from limited archival sources and her autobiographical writings.<sup>2</sup> The following biography is based on documents preserved in the collection of Erna Muser, a political activist, feminist, and chronicler of Slovenian women's history.<sup>3</sup>

As indicated by her correspondence with Erna Muser, who initiated and edited her writing, Leopoldina Kos spent several years crafting her autobiography. Before publishing parts of her memoir, Kos expressed doubts, insisting she had experienced little and lacked writing skill. "Besides," she wrote in a letter to Muser from 1959, "you're all forgetting that I'm old; this year I'll turn 70."<sup>4</sup> Throughout the writing process, Muser provided feedback, asking for specifics—names, dates, and locations—whenever details were vague.<sup>5</sup> The final manuscript, totaling twenty-four pages, is concise, condensing a lifetime into a narrative shaped by the political transformations of the twentieth century. The autobiography was written in the context when the Historical Archive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1958 issued a call for memoirs about the labor movement and the Communist Party, and Kos's submission won one of the prizes, as reported in the newspaper *Ljudska pravica* in 1959.<sup>6</sup> This context suggests two points: first, the memoir was fact-checked, making it a reliable source; second, it reflects both her ideological alignment with the Party and the political expectations of the time, which may introduce some ideological bias.

It comes as no surprise that her life trajectory according to her autobiography follows a typical ideological development for interwar socialists and communists as often narrated in memoirs written after the Second World War. Her father was a middle-class liberal nationalist. She grew up in Idrija, a town in Habsburg Carniola (today in western Slovenia), renowned for its mercury mine that generated the social, political, and cultural life of the area. Until the end of the First World War, in the time of Kos's intellectual and political formation, Idrija

1 Branko Marušič, "Kos, Leopoldina (1889–1968)," *Slovenska biografija* (Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU, 2013), <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi1015290/>.

2 Some of these writings remain unpublished and are preserved in the collection of her comrade, researcher, and political worker Erna Muser (1912–1991) at the National and University Library in Ljubljana. Others have been published, including her autobiography featured in the newspaper *Idrijski razgledi* in 1959 as an excerpt and posthumously as a whole in 1968; see Poldka Kos, "Nekaj spominov iz mojega življenja," *Idrijski razgledi* 4, no. 1 (1959), 3–7 and *Idrijski razgledi* 13, no. 1 (1968), 11–18, no. 2, 43–52, and no. 3, 70–72.

3 Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina.

4 NUK Ms 1432, IV Korespondenca, Kos, Poldka, M55, Letter from February 2, 1959.

5 NUK Ms 1432, III Pisma, M45.

6 "Izid nagradnega natečaja," *Ljudska pravica* 24, no. 305, January 1, 1959, 16.

belonged to Carniola (*Kranjska*), a region of the Habsburg Empire, which Kos often described as a “clerical” land resistant to “progressive” ideas.<sup>7</sup> As a student at a teacher-training school (*učiteljsište*) in Gorizia, with its mixed Italian-Slovenian population, she identified as a Slovenian nationalist herself, later developing sympathies for the Sokol movement. She thrived in the cultural and intellectual milieu of progressive Slovenian circles in Gorizia, where she encountered the ideas of South Slavic unification and Yugoslavism. She warmly embraced these concepts, viewing them as an appealing alternative to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which she, as a Slovenian nationalist, opposed. She finished her studies in 1909 and was excited to experience financial independence and to “work amongst the people.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1909/10 she first worked as a substitute teacher in the rural area of Notranjska in Carniola (Stari trg pri Ložu and Cerknica). She found her circumstances difficult, because the position of teachers in rural areas was, as she recalled, “between the chaplain and the sexton.”<sup>9</sup> She also realized that the female teachers were worse off than male teachers, as they had no political rights and were constantly restricted in their private lives. The headmaster even warned her that it was inappropriate for a “young girl” to be alone “eating at a restaurant,” as he once saw her having lunch outside.<sup>10</sup> In the Slovenian region of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as across early twentieth-century Europe, female teachers were central to education and women’s rights. Teachers like Leopoldina Kos experienced workplace gender disparities and became key figures in the feminist movement, advocating for national and gender equality. In the multiethnic northern Adriatic, where Kos began her career, teaching often intertwined with national activism, as women were expected to instill pride in their mother tongue and national identity.<sup>11</sup>

Such was the case in Idrija, where she was transferred a year later, in 1910. The school there was funded by the German owners of the mine, promoting strong German language and cultural influences within a predominantly Slovenian community. Her Slovenian national activism clashed with the school leadership’s values, and by the end of her first school year, she was dismissed. From that point on, she was assigned only to the most remote villages to limit her potential political influence. As the First World War broke out, being politically outspoken was a higher risk, but one that she was willing to take. In 1915 she was

7 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1947/8, unpaginated.

8 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1958, f. 3.

9 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1958, f. 4.

10 Ibid.

11 Marta Verginella, “Female Teachers—The Ferrywomen of Transitional Education,” in *Women and Work in the North-Eastern Adriatic*, ed. Marta Verginella and Urška Strle (Budapest–Vienna–New York: Central European University Press, 2025), 33–61.

arrested and sent to prison in Ljubljana, because she cheered “*Živijo*” (Long live!) when the Russians took Przemyśl.<sup>12</sup> At the time, she believed that the existence of Yugoslavia would solve all the social and political problems of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.<sup>13</sup>

After the war, she was assigned to the village Ledine above Idrija. Following the Treaty of Rapallo (1920), Idrija became part of the Kingdom of Italy. This marked an amplification of the struggle against Italian fascism in the Littoral, in which Kos participated as a teacher. By 1923, she started to consider herself a communist.<sup>14</sup> This ideological switch can be attributed to the Gentile school reform that came to power in the same year. One of the attempts of this reform was to limit the number of women teachers in schools and to forbid non-Italian (Slovenian and Croatian) schools in the Julian March that managed to maintain classes in the mother tongue. The Italian language became the obligatory language of instruction.<sup>15</sup> She was transferred to the village Vojsko, above Idrija, and was prohibited from teaching in the Slovenian language. Nevertheless, she continued to do so, which frequently led to conflicts with the authorities. In 1926, she was dismissed from her position, as she wrote in her memoir, for “hating Italy and fascism and leading a campaign against the enrollment of teachers into the fascist union.”<sup>16</sup> Like many other Slovenian and Croatian teachers (and also other intellectuals), she moved to Yugoslavia.

Her first post in Yugoslavia was in the village of Šmartno near Ljubljana, where she was not only a teacher, but also organized a society for young women and girls (the “*dekliški krožek*”). As she remembered, it was attended by approximately 30 participants, some of whom came directly from Ljubljana where they worked. She lectured to them on personal hygiene, first aid, home organization, laundry, and cooking, as well as on “the origins and development of society, the historical evolution of women, and their equality.”<sup>17</sup> The following year, she was transferred to the village of Suhor in Bela Krajina after being denounced as a communist. A year later, she was able to return to her position. However, she was not permitted to continue her involvement in the girls’ club. She was the subject of two disciplinary investigations. The first was because she criticized the principal

12 “Zasledovanje učiteljice Leopoldine Kos,” *Slovenski narod* 51, no. 53, March 5, 1918, 1.

13 Ibid.

14 She mentioned the year 1923 as crucial in her memoir (p. 7) and in a letter to Muser (NUK Ms 1432 M, IV Korespondenca, Kos, Poldka, M55, Letter from March 22, 1956).

15 For recent contributions about Gentile’s school reform, see for instance the conference *Ob 100. obletnici Gentilejeve šolske reforme: posledice za primorski prostor*, organized in Trieste by the Študijski center za narodno spravo (Study Center for National Reconciliation) and the Društvo slovenskih izobražencev (Association of Slovenian Educators) in 2023, <https://www.scnr.si/znanstveni-posvet-ob-100-obletnici-gentilejeve-olske-reforme-posledice-za-primorski-prostor.html>.

16 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9, Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1947/8, unpaginated.

17 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9, Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1947/8, unpaginated.

for imposing his lessons on female teachers and not working as hard as they did. The second investigation arose because she collected signatures for women's suffrage. Again, she was transferred "for political and anti-state reasons"<sup>18</sup> to Murska Sobota in Prekmurje, a location as distant from Ljubljana as possible. There, she attempted to organize a strike in a local textile factory, albeit unsuccessfully, maintained close ties with the local communists, and gave lectures to teachers on topics such as fascism, women's equality, and imperialism.

In September 1937, the principal in Murska Sobota submitted material for the initiation of a disciplinary investigation against her. In a decree she was accused of "seriously damaging the reputation of her profession" through "propaganda statements that contradicted her position as a teacher and state official."<sup>19</sup> The allegations included promoting antimilitarism, discussing government corruption, advocating for women's equality, and maintaining close ties with known communists.<sup>20</sup> After that, she was relocated once again, this time to the village of Veliki Trn above Krško, where she fell ill and retired in 1941. Following her retirement, she moved to Ljubljana and joined the antifascist resistance movement. In September 1944, she was arrested and deported to Auschwitz, which she survived with the solidarity and support of her comrades.<sup>21</sup>

After 1945, she worked in the education department of the Municipal People's Committee in Ljubljana. However, in 1947, due to her declining health, she requested a transfer to Idrija. There, she lived with her sister and finally "found a home after many years of wandering."<sup>22</sup> She died in 1968 at the age of 79.

**MOST IMPORTANT WORKS:** "Feminizem in borba delovne žene," *Književnost* 2, no. 1–2 (1934): 24–33; "Redukcija žen v javnih službah," *Književnost* 2, no. 5 (1934): 182–185.

## Context

Kos's political journey was deeply intertwined with the turbulent history of her era and shaped by the cultural and political landscape of her intellectual and political formation. Her first influence was Idrija, a town marked by the working-class culture of its mining community and intense nationalistic tensions among its Slovenian, German, and Italian communities. It is no coincidence that Idrija

18 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1958, f. 14.

19 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina, Odločba, Kraljevska banska uprava Dravske banovine Ljubljana, November 22, 1937.

20 Ibid.

21 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1958, 15–20.

22 Ibid, 20.

was the site of the first Slovenian translation of the Communist Manifesto in 1908, during the formative years of Kos's political consciousness. Her ideological evolution—from anti-clericalism and Slovenian nationalism to Yugoslavism, liberalism, and ultimately social democracy and Marxist communism—paralleled the dramatic political shifts she witnessed throughout her life, encompassing the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Italian fascism, the authoritarian Kingdom of Yugoslavia, socialist Yugoslavia, and the upheavals of two World Wars. As a public employee and teacher, she directly confronted the ideological, political, and gender-based pressures imposed by each regime.

Kos occasionally contributed as a writer. Her articles, characterized by their simple yet precise language, articulated sharp political messages. They often addressed the injustices of capitalist society and authoritarian regimes, with a particular focus on the exploitation of women. The article “Feminism and the Struggle of Working Women” was published in *Književnost* (Literature), the first Slovenian Marxist magazine, which ran from 1932 to 1935 and was edited by writer, theatre director, and academic Bratko Kreft.<sup>23</sup> This was a significant achievement, given that the Communist Party had been operating illegally since 1921 and faced intensified persecution following King Alexander's dictatorship in 1929. *Književnost* primarily featured literary works, including both translations and original Slovenian texts. Ideological articles were often disguised under pseudonyms, as in our case: “M. Knapova” (*knap* means ‘miner’, with the suffix *-ova* suggesting a woman who sympathizes with miners or is a miner's wife, a nod to Idrija's economic heritage). Kos recalled that she wrote the text in order to “open the eyes of those women who saw the solution to their oppression in feminism.”<sup>24</sup>

Leopoldina Kos believed that the true solution to women's issues lay in the collective struggle of all the oppressed against class exploitation. This perspective was a common socialist position in the interwar period. As early as 1920, among others, the communist activist and later Partisan Tončka Čec (1896–1943) wrote in the newspaper *Rdeči prapor* (The Red Banner) that only a unified struggle of women and men could liberate people from capitalist oppression.<sup>25</sup> The same year, the political activist, teacher, and writer Angela Vode (1892–1985) argued in the social democratic paper *Naprej* that the “woman question” was fundamentally

23 The text “Feminizem in borba delovne žene” was republished in a 1983 special issue of the Yugoslav Marxist magazine *Teorija in Praksa* (Theory and Practice): 1883–1983: *Marx A Hundred Years Later*, edited by Neda Brlgez (later Pagon). However, the article was wrongly attributed to Milena Mohorič (1905–1972), and it was the only wrongly attributed text of the 30 published in the issue. It was also the only text written by a woman.

24 NUK Ms 1432, VIII.1.9. Kos Leopoldina, Manuscript from 1958, f. 11.

25 Tončka Čec, “Ženam proletarkam!,” *Rdeči prapor*, no. 55, December 7, 1920, 1.

a social issue.<sup>26</sup> Leopoldina Kos claimed that the so-called “woman question” was actually a broader “bread question” (*krušno vprašanje*), emphasizing that issues traditionally seen as specific to women were, at their core, about fundamental economic survival and class struggle.<sup>27</sup> These and similar ideas were famously appropriated and synthesized by Vida Tomšič in her prominent lecture at the Fifth Conference of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Zagreb in 1940. Tomšič asserted that “feminism as a movement of the liberal bourgeoisie is disintegrating” and that the only way to resolve the “woman question” was through class struggle.<sup>28</sup>

While editing the draft of her memoirs in 1956, Erna Muser asked Kos if she knew Alojzija Štebi, a prominent feminist of the era.<sup>29</sup> Kos replied that she had never been in contact with Štebi and was unfamiliar with her work.<sup>30</sup> This suggests that Kos knew little about feminism and opposed feminist positions primarily because she believed it was expected by the Communist Party. In 1958, Muser questioned Kos about a 1941 letter in which Kos had criticized a poem Muser wrote, calling it “feminist” and advising changes (she used the word “*preorientacija*”).<sup>31</sup> Kos also wrote: “This order comes from the avant-garde but is also a response to contemporary needs. Feminism must be eliminated.”<sup>32</sup>

Kos, therefore, wrote against feminism despite limited knowledge of it. This is a reminder that intellectual and/or political positions have often been shaped by limited information. The source itself makes it quite evident: while it addresses many topics, it lacks coherence and depth. Though the source is “messy”—broad, conflicted, and sometimes written merely to fulfill the implicit reader’s expectations—analyzing imperfect sources is essential for understanding intellectual and political history. Coherent ideas often emerged from a range of conflicting stances and perspectives. This is one of such cases. Kos wasn’t a skilled writer (and she was aware of it herself), but she was a tireless political worker and educator amongst people. However, in a 1958 letter to Muser, she hesitated to elaborate further on this article, believing it was not a particularly good one. She suggested summarizing it simply as: “I wanted to say that all working women belong to the

26 Angela Vode, “Socializem in žena,” *Naprej* 4, no. 80, April 9, 1920, 1.

27 M. Knapova (Leopoldina Kos), “Feminizem in borba delovne žene,” *Književnost* 2, no. 1–2 (1934): 24.

28 Vida Tomšič, “Referat na V. državni konferenci KPJ,” in *Slovenke v narodnoosvobodilnem boju: zbornik dokumentov, člankov in spominov*, ed. Stana Gerk et al. (Ljubljana: Borec, 1970), 18–22.

29 NUK Ms 1432, III Pisma, M45, Letter from Erna Muser to Leopoldina Kos, March 5, 1956.

30 NUK Ms 1432, IV Korespondenca, Kos, Poldka, M55, Letter from Leopoldina Kos to Erna Muser, March 22, 1956.

31 NUK Ms 1432, III Pisma, M45, Letter from Erna Muser to Leopoldina Kos, July 27, 1958.

32 Ibid.



unified front, led by the working class.”<sup>33</sup> She expressed little regard for the article itself, noting that her polemical tone was adopted at the Party’s suggestion.<sup>34</sup>

While opposing feminism and reframing the “woman question” as central to class struggle are core themes in “Feminism and the Struggle of Working Women,” she also addressed a range of other issues. These include women’s right to work, the policies of the League of Nations, economic questions, fascism, prostitution, and family dynamics. The reader may get the impression that, with so few opportunities to write, she tried to say everything at once when given the chance. However, work emerges as the central topic in the chosen excerpt. This focus is evident not only in her life trajectory but also in her writings, which frequently return to this subject. The prominence of work in her discourse reflects its pertinence in the early 1930s, a period when the economic crisis and fascist ideology reignited debates about women’s employment and their role in society. This topic is also pertinent in Angela Vode’s canonical work *Žena v današnji družbi* (The Woman in Contemporary Society),<sup>35</sup> which was published in the same year as the two articles that Kos wrote for *Književnost*. In addition to the article in focus, Kos also published an article titled “Redukcija žen v javnih službah” (The Reduction of Women in the Public Sector). In both pieces, like Angela Vode, Kos strongly argued that economic independence is a fundamental right for women and that they should not be excluded from any professional roles. She advocated that instead of pushing women out of the workforce, employers should create conditions where more people can work fewer hours for the same salaries.<sup>36</sup>

“Feminism and the Struggle of Working Women” critiques the disconnect between what she calls “bourgeois” and “working-class women,” arguing that feminism, as shaped by the bourgeoisie, cannot address the real needs of working women. Kos opens the article with an anecdote about a strike in Jesenice,<sup>37</sup> where working women protested alongside men for higher wages. Their efforts, however, were ignored by non-socialist women’s publications, which focused on “bourgeois concerns” rather than the urgent “wage struggle” of the proletariat. Kos contrasts the bourgeois woman’s interest in kitchen gadgets with the working-class woman’s need for better working conditions, emphasizing that the bourgeois

33 NUK Ms 1432, IV Korespondenca, Kos, Poldka, M55, Letter from Leopoldina Kos to Erna Muser, December 17, 1958.

34 Ibid.

35 Manca G. Renko, “Angela Vode: The Woman in Contemporary Society,” in *Texts and Contexts from the History of Feminism and Women’s Rights*, 98–108.

36 Knapova, “Redukcija žen v javnih službah,” *Književnost* 2, no. 5 (1934): 183.

37 She refers to the 1932 ironworks strike in the industrial town of Jesenice. While the 1932 strike was unsuccessful, subsequent strikes in the following years became highly politicized. See Janko Prunk, “Prvo ljudskofrontno povezovanje na Jesenicah 1935–1937,” *Zgodovinski časopis* 31, no. 1–2 (1977): 87–95.



perspective trivializes the daily struggles of laboring women. Kos contends that bourgeois women lack an understanding of true economic hardship and suggests that bourgeois women's activism only seeks to improve their position within the existing class structure, while working-class women are compelled to labor out of economic necessity. For working-class women, she claims, work has never been a right but an unavoidable duty. Though feminism has secured workplace entry for middle-class women, Kos argues this was tolerated by capitalism because women provided cheap, exploitable labor. Under fascism, however, women's rights faced new threats, giving feminism renewed moral urgency.<sup>38</sup> At the same time, as she argued in another text, capitalism also often shifted its burdens onto the working classes, for instance by dismissing of married civil servants.<sup>39</sup>

When it comes to her writing style, it is evident from the excerpt that Kos frequently employs irony to highlight the disconnect between feminist rhetoric and the struggles of the working class. Her text is accessible and easy to read, reflecting her background in fieldwork and her experience giving lectures to working-class women. Based on her writing style, it is easy to believe that she was a passionate speaker who could engage her audience with humor while also articulating their frustrations.

Above all, it could be argued that Leopoldina Kos was a practical woman; she understood ideals while maintaining clear goals. This can be illustrated, rather anecdotally, in her discussions with Erna Muser about where to publish her memoir. In a letter, written on the International Women's Day in 1959, she was straightforward: "Publish it where the fee is highest."<sup>40</sup>

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38 M. Knapova, "Feminizem in borba delovne žene," *Književnost*, 2, no. 1–2 (1934): 25–30.

39 M. Knapova, "Redukcija žen v javnih službah," 183.

40 NUK Ms 1432, IV Korespondenca, Kos, Poldka, M55, Letter from Leopoldina Kos to Erna Muser, March 8, 1959.

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## LEOPOLDINA KOS

### “Feminism and the Struggle of Working Women”

The women’s question involves the various interests that women have as human beings and members of society. Therefore, despite ignoring events, mixing up concepts, and avoiding facts, there is only one truth: that in contemporary class society, the women’s question cannot be the same for all women because the personal and social position of wives depends, just as in the case of their husbands, on the economic position dictated by their social class. This can be best explained by comparing two distinct class representatives: the wife of a magnate and the woman working in his factory. The former is a “distinguished lady” who lives in idleness or dedicates herself to her own “culture,” enjoying all the luxuries and comforts of the privileged. On the other hand, the factory worker can barely earn enough to survive with her hard work, while the factory owner appropriates her surplus labor and his wife lives off this exploitation as well. Due to the former’s parasitism and the exploitation of the latter, these two women share no common interest.

Different women’s movements also stem from different class positions. The bourgeois women’s movement emerged earlier. When the worsening economic situation pushed petty-bourgeois women to seek independent income, they felt it shameful to take up just any job—like proletarian women had been forced to do decades earlier—and sought employment suited to their condition. However, since they were not qualified for vocational work, they demanded “the right to education and work,” which represented the beginning of the bourgeois women’s movement.

Meanwhile, proletarian women did not have to fight for the “right to work” because work was not a right but rather a duty for them, stemming from their class position, the need to earn (and co-earn) money, and the production process itself, which had immediately incorporated women’s and children’s labor with the emergence of industry.

Thus, the aim of both women’s movements is completely different, despite the same impulse: the economic one. The bourgeois women’s movement fights for the independent existence of bourgeois women and their assertion in the bourgeois society. Meanwhile, the proletarian movement struggles against class exploitation and for the liberation of women in the socialist society in general.

...

It is clear that feminism cannot liberate working women. With the advent of fascism, which denies women their political and economic freedom, feminism has regained moral legitimacy, respectability, and scope—although only subjectively, as the fascists' struggle is not aimed only against women but against working people in general. Fascism represents capitalism's ultimate effort to secure its own existence, and the greater the capitalist crisis, the more it must exert downward pressure, especially against the most rightless part of society: the working women. Feminism has indeed ensured the right to work for bourgeois women, but it has succeeded only because this has not undermined the capitalist economy. On the contrary, capitalism has based the dirtiest exploitation system on the right to work. Consequently, working women are generally happy if they can give up their vocational work and their economic, political, and personal "freedom" as they return to their "natural occupation"—housework and motherhood. This is probably the main reason for the success of fascism and other reactionary movements (for example, clericalist movements in Spain, etc.) among women. Now that capitalist interests demand a reduction of the workforce, fascism has successfully broken the power of the best-organized feminist movement in Germany with a single stroke and is successfully dismissing working women from vocational jobs and production. Feminism's framework is too narrow for working women because only the struggle of the class-conscious proletariat against exploitation and for a society of new free people represents the fight for true independence and freedom.

This is what feminism is: the equality of women and men, social reforms, and cultural advancement in the bourgeois social order. The issues are raised and addressed in the spirit of liberal democracy, with the women's question as central and autonomous. This is perfectly in line with the needs of bourgeois women, who strive for legally recognized emancipation in comparison with men of their own class. In practice, these women are equal to their husbands anyway, while they are actually privileged in every respect in comparison with the petty-bourgeois or proletarian men, even if they seem disadvantaged on paper. It is in the interest of the bourgeoisie to preserve the existing social order, which is why these ladies fight for a united women's front, emphasizing common sexual, social, etc., injustices while using phrases about humanity and respect for freedom and personality to cover up class differences and exploitation and conceal the true source of oppression: private property and class society.

...

Differences in women's participation reveal their class differentiation in our country as well. While proletarian and working women struggle for a piece of bread, the right to work, human and social equality, and a new society, bourgeois women pursue "charity, physical culture, aesthetics, and splendor." The development of the society in which we all must live also pushes the women's movement towards a distinct separation of fronts and a clear definition of the struggle.

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