

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document:                            WORDS TO THE WIVES: THE JEWISH  
  PRESS, IMMIGRANT WOMEN, AND  
  IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION, 1895-1925

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This dissertation examines how six publications sought to construct Jewish-American identities for Eastern European Jewish immigrant women between 1895 and 1925, beginning in 1895 with the world's first Jewish women's magazine, *American Jewess* (1895 - 1899), followed by a women's magazine in Yiddish, *Di froyen-velt* (1913 -1914), and ending with an another Yiddish women's magazine, *Der idisher froyen zhurnal* (1922-1923). Between 1914 and 1916, three mass circulation Yiddish daily newspapers, *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, *Forverts*, and *Der tog*, started printing women's pages. This study ends in 1925, after Congress passed legislation restricting immigration in 1924.

These publications present a variety of viewpoints and identities, that were political, religious and class-based. The three magazines, all in the same genre, held different attitudes on everything from religion to suffrage. The three daily newspapers represented fundamentally different ideologies. *Forverts* was socialist.

*Der tog* was nationalist-Zionist, and *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the oldest publication examined, represented a conservative, traditionally religious viewpoint and supported Zionism.

This study examines religious and political ideologies, celebrating religious and civic holidays, attitudes towards women working and learning, Jewish education, women's suffrage and exercising citizenship, as well as women in the public and private spheres of both the Jewish and American worlds.

The central question asked is how those involved with these publications endeavored to create particular Jewish-American identities. Not being a reader-response study, I make no assumptions as to these publications' actual influence. The press represented only one institution involved in acculturation. Issues subsumed under the central question include how producers of these publications perceived Americanization and saw Jews in America; and what changes these journals advocated regarding religious practices, gender roles, and citizenship.

"Acculturation" implies negotiation in the process of identity formation, as a blending of Old and New World customs, lifestyles, mores, economic and social conditions occurred. This dissertation takes a social constructionist view of ethnicity and identity formation.

Based on translations relevant pieces from all issues of the publications under review, this study points to the diversity present on the American "Jewish Street" from 1895 to 1925.

WORDS TO THE WIVES: THE JEWISH PRESS, IMMIGRANT WOMEN,  
AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION, 1895-1925

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## Preface

A word about the use of the word “wives” in the title: throughout the magazines and newspapers, women are addressed as “*froyen*” [singular, “*froy*”], which in Yiddish means a married woman. The words for an unmarried woman are “*meydl*” [plural, “*meydlekh*”], with its connotation of youth (think of the English word “maiden”), or, less charitably, “*alte moyd*” [“old maid”].

All translations from Yiddish to English are mine, except where indicated otherwise. Utilizing dictionaries written by Alexander Harkavy in 1898 and 1928, every attempt was made to not employ today’s definitions for yesterday’s usages.<sup>1</sup>

In transliterating Yiddish words, I have employed the standardized Yiddish orthography developed by the YIVO Institute of Jewish Research.<sup>2</sup> To remain historically accurate, I have not modernized or updated how authors, editors and publishers spelled Yiddish words. For example, the word for girls or unmarried women [“*meydlekh*”] sometimes appeared as “*meydlekh*” and other times as “*meydlakh*.” In such matters I have striven to remain historically accurate by not “correcting” original writers. Although Yiddish has no capital letters, following the conventions of other scholars, I capitalized the first letter of articles, books and other

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Harkavy, *Harkavy’s Complete Dictionary, English-Jewish and Jewish-English* (NY: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1898); Alexander Harkavy, *Yiddish-English-Hebrew Dictionary*, rev. and expanded 2nd ed. (1928; repr., NY: Schocken Books/YIVO, 1988).

<sup>2</sup> Mordkhe Schaechter, *The Standardized Yiddish Orthography with The History of the Standardized Yiddish Spelling* (NY: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research and the Yiddish Language Resource Center of the League for Yiddish, 1999).

publications. The names of individuals also appear as per standardized Yiddish orthography except where better known under other spellings, for example “Sholem Aleichem” rather than “Sholem Aleykhem.” Instead of the orthographically correct “Khanike” for the winter holiday variously rendered as “Channukah,” “Chanukah,” “Hannukah,” and so forth, I chose the compromise spelling of “Chanuka.” Similarly, I use “Shevuus” for the holiday variously called “Shevuat,” “Shevuoth,” “Shevuoth,” or “Shebuoth.” In referring to various holidays, I use the Ashkenazic “-s” instead of the Sephardic “-t” for the end consonant: thus, “Sukkos” instead of “Sukkot,” “Shabos” instead of “Shabat,” “Simchas Torah” instead of “Simchat Torah.”

Where necessary, I use “B.C.E.” (Before Common Era) and “C.E.” (“Common Era”) rather than the Christian “B.C.” (“Before Christ”) and “A.D.” (“*Anno Domini*”).

I distinguish between “columns” and “articles.” Columns appeared regularly, usually under the same title, and usually by the same author. Articles appeared separately. Thus, *Forverts* had a column entitled “*Notitsen fun der froyen-velt*” [“Notes from the Woman’s World”] in addition to editorials and articles not part of a regular series.<sup>3</sup> A number of columns for *Der tog*, carried Adella Kean’s byline, such as “*Fun a froy tsu froyen*” [“From a Woman to Women”]<sup>4</sup> and “*Froyen klobs*”

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<sup>3</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt” appeared in *Forverts* 387 times between March 3, 1918 and December 27, 1925.

<sup>4</sup> “Fun a froy tsu froyen” appeared in *Der tog* 292 times between April 20, 1918 and December 29, 1925.

[“Women’s Clubs”].<sup>5</sup> But she also wrote separate articles not part of any series.

As with the scholar Nancy A. Harrowitz, “I have adopted the newer spelling of ‘antisemitism’ rather than the older form ‘anti-Semitism,’ as the newer one, initiated by the historian James Parks, reflects the fact that antisemitism does not comprise prejudice against all Semites, as the older spelling implies, but instead prejudice specifically against Jews,”<sup>6</sup> except when hyphenated in the original.

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<sup>5</sup> “Froyen klobs” appeared in *Der tog* 31 times from February 4, 1920 to September 19, 1920.

<sup>6</sup> Nancy A. Harrowitz, *Antisemitism, Misogyny, & the Logic of Cultural Difference: Cesare Lombroso & Matilde Serao* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 140n.17.

## Dedication

To all of the strong Jewish women in my life: my late grandmother, Jean Axelrod; my mother, Addy Shapiro; my sister, Gale; but especially to *mayne belibte basherte*, Marti. *Zi iz a getrayer yidishe tokhter un mentsh.*



## Table of Contents

<a href="#">Preface.....</a>	<a href="#">ii</a>
<a href="#">Dedication.....</a>	<a href="#">v</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 1: Introduction.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Relevant Scholarship .....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">The Road Ahead .....</a>	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 2: Journeys and Journals .....</a>	<a href="#">26</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 3: Politics and Piety.....</a>	<a href="#">78</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 4: Learning and Labor.....</a>	<a href="#">137</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 5: Suffrage and Citizenship.....</a>	<a href="#">164</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 6: Holidays and Homemaking Myths .....</a>	<a href="#">200</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 7: Holy Days and Home-making.....</a>	<a href="#">231</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 8: Seeing and Saying.....</a>	<a href="#">283</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 9: Conclusion.....</a>	<a href="#">294</a>
<a href="#">Bibliography .....</a>	<a href="#">316</a>

## Chapter 1: Introduction

When Eastern European Jewish immigrants came to America first as a trickle in the 1870s, then as a stream in the 1880s, and finally as a river in the 1890s and beyond, they flowed into an ocean of print. Historian Gordon S. Wood commented in a book review that “[b]y 1810 Americans were buying twenty-four million copies of newspapers annually, the largest aggregate circulation of any country in the world.”<sup>7</sup> Joseph Pulitzer, Edward Bok, and James Gordon Bennett, all immigrants to the United States, helped create and sustain the modern mass media<sup>8</sup> with their publications, *New York World*, the *Ladies Home Journal*, and the *New York Herald*. These publications became the models for others who followed, including the publishers and editors in the world of Yiddish journalism.<sup>9</sup> The United States led the world in the number of Yiddish papers sold.<sup>10</sup>

This dissertation examines how six publications, three magazines and three newspapers, sought to construct Jewish-American identities for Eastern European Jewish immigrant women between 1895 and 1924. The study’s time period starts with the first magazine for Jewish women in the world, the *American Jewess*,

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<sup>7</sup> Gordon S. Wood, “History and Myth,” review of *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans*, by Joyce Appleby, in *The Purpose of the Past: Reflections on the Uses of History* (NY: The Penguin Press, 2008), 254.

<sup>8</sup> John Higham, “The Immigrant in American History,” in *Send These to Me: Immigrants in Urban America*, rev. ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1975, 1984), 26.

<sup>9</sup> J. Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike* (NY: Self-published, 1946), 43.

<sup>10</sup> Isidore David Passow, “The Role of the Yiddish Press in the Acculturation

published from April 1895 until August 1899. From April 1913 until October 15, 1914, a Yiddish women's magazine, *Di froyen-velt/The Jewish Ladies Home Journal* appeared. In May 1922 another Yiddish women's magazine came out. *Der idisher froyen zhurnal/Jewish Women's Home Companion* lasted until October 1923. Between 1914 and 1916, the three mass circulation Yiddish daily newspapers examined in this study, *Dos yidishes tageblatt/Jewish Daily News*, *Forverts/Jewish Daily Forward*, and *Der tog/The Day*, began targeting Jewish women by printing women's pages. This study ends with the year the New Immigration virtually stopped, when the United States Congress erecting a near-leakproof dam of restrictive legislation in 1924.

The publications chosen for this study represent a variety of viewpoints and identities, political, religious and class-based. *American Jewess* presented the viewpoint of middle-class Jewish-American women, primarily of Central European background, the so-called "German Jews." Already here when the "New Immigration" began in the 1880s, they tended to believe in Reform Judaism's definition of Jewishness as a creed. Rose Sonneschein, its editor and first publisher, also supported the political Zionism of Theodor Herzl. While, as is obvious from its content, *American Jewess* did not conceive of Eastern European Jewish women as an intended audience, it nevertheless provides another view of Jewish womanhood, one with which to compare and contrast views and viewpoints presented in the other publications. To the editor and writers for the magazine, Eastern European Jews represented both a problem and a project. The magazine encouraged its readers to

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Process," *Gratz College Annual of Jewish Studies* 5 (1976): 70.

become active through their philanthropic organizations to work with Eastern European Jews, and for this very reason, inclusion of *American Jewess* provides a valuable tool to compare and contrast the attitudes and messages of an Anglo-Jewish women's magazine with Yiddish publications.<sup>11</sup>

Although *Di froyen-velt* and *Froyen zhurnal* both represented examples of the American middle-class women's magazine genre, between them lay not only a decade, but massive socioeconomic changes in the Jewish immigrant population.

*Forverts*, oriented towards a mass working-class readership, stood for socialism, whereas *Der tog* had a more intellectual cast with nationalist-Zionist sympathies. *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the oldest publication examined, represented a conservative, traditionally religious viewpoint now identified with Orthodox Judaism and also supported Zionism.

The central, overarching question of this study is how the producers of print

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<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., "Chicago Home for Jewish Orphans," *American Jewess* 1, 3 (June 1895): 127-128; "In the World of Charity," *American Jewess* 1, 4 (July 1895): 204-212; "In the World of Charity," *American Jewess* 1, 5 (August 1895): 262-269; "In the World of Charity," *American Jewess* 1, 6 (September 1895): 316-320; "In the World of Charity," *American Jewess* 2, 2 (November 1895): 119; "Mrs. Emanuel Mandel, Chicago," *American Jewess* 2, 4 (January 1896): 196-197; Fannie R. Adler, "The Young Ladies' Aid Society, Chicago," *American Jewess* 2, 4 (January 1896): 210-211; "Mrs. Henry Adler," *American Jewess* 2, 4 (January 1896): 212; Ruth, "The Anglo-Jewiss [sic] Association," *American Jewess* 2, 7 (April 1896): 357-359; Rose Sonneschein, "Montefiore Home for Chronic Invalids, New York City," *American Jewess* 2, 9 (June 1896): 469-474; Carrie Obendorfer, "Philanthropy," *American Jewess* 2, 10 (July 1896): 545-548; Nora Oettlinger, "A Plea for Working-Girls' Clubs," *American Jewess* 2, 11 (August 1896): 589-593; Carrie Shevelson Benjamin, "A Paper on Philanthropy," *American Jewess* 4, 4 (January 1897): 179-181; A Charter Member, Charity Organization Society, *American Jewess* 6, 4 (January 1898): 179-181; "The Cleveland Orphan Asylum," *American Jewess* 7, 4 (July-August 1898): 46-47; "The Clara de Hirsch Home for Working Girls," *American Jewess* 7, 5 (September 1898): 41-43; "The Need of a Jewish Working Girl's Home in Philadelphia," *American Jewess* 9, 5 (August 1899): 12; in addition

culture, that is, the publishers, editors and writers of the publications under review, endeavored to create particular American identities for Jewish immigrant women. Issues subsumed under the central question include how these publishers, editors and writers perceived Americanization; what, if any changes these journals advocated either explicitly or implicitly, regarding matters of religious practices, gender roles, and citizenship. Finally, this study seeks to demonstrate how these journals sought to internalize senses of identity through insisting that certain beliefs or roles represented the “natural” order of things. In brief, I will show both similarities and differences among the various publications, leading to a deeper understanding of the complexities of the Jewish immigrant experience.

The self-identity of men and women necessarily had different characteristics as a result of the gender-specific bases of Jewish and the host American society.<sup>12</sup> Female citizenship, for example, represented something different from male citizenship due to legal disabilities which ran the gamut from sex-specific legislation to the ability to vote.

Although a tempting prospect, I chose not to reinvent the wheel so well-crafted by Andrew R. Heinze in his brilliant *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption, and the Search for American Identity*.<sup>13</sup> He examined two of the publications scrutinized in this study, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and

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to reports on the activities of the National Council of Jewish Women.

<sup>12</sup> Paula E. Hyman, “Gender and the Shaping of Modern Jewish Identities,” *Jewish Social Studies* (n.s.) 8, 2-3 (Winter/Spring 2002): 153-161.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew R. Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption, and the Search for American Identity* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1990).

*Forverts*, demonstrating the role of consumption in identity-building. While this study extends beyond the time period covered in *Adapting to Abundance*, the only changes occurring thereafter in the arena of consumerism and consumption would concern the number of advertisers and the types of advertisements presented.<sup>14</sup> Nor does this dissertation discuss fiction or poetry; instead, it concentrates on the more explicitly prescriptive aspects of each publication, such as articles, columns, editorials and advice features.

I did not focus on all columns, editorials or advice features. The myriad of articles and columns on prize-fighting, for example, did not seem a particularly lucrative mine to quarry. Inclusion required that there be something particularly connected to the American experience beyond just having occurred in the United States. Thus, I do not deal with the “Gallery of Vanished Husbands” feature of the *Forverts*. “*A galerie fun farshvundene mener*” [“A Gallery of Missing Husbands”] contained photographs of men who had deserted their families, together with short descriptions: name, age, hair color, weight, number of children, occupation and the place last seen.<sup>15</sup> Submitted by wives to the newspaper, neither the wives nor the paper speculated as to why the husbands had left their families. Certainly the problem of vanished husbands existed long before 1776, as evidenced in religious writings by Maimonides, the Jewish philosopher (1135-1204). Among the problems

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<sup>14</sup> For a history of changes in advertising approaches, see Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., sample page in Allan Nadler, “Welcome to the Lower East Side,” in *A Living Lens: Photographs of Jewish Life from the Pages of the Forwards*, edited by Alana Newhouse (NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), 50.

he wrote about were those concerning an *agunah*, a woman unable to obtain a divorce because her husband disappeared.<sup>16</sup>

In my research, I decided to forgo a random sample approach and instead read every extant microfilmed copy of each publication. This method, while tedious and time-consuming, put issues, writers, features, editorials, and attitudes into context, preventing me from accidentally misrepresenting the exceptional for the representative. Further, this method also allowed for serendipitous revelations, for example, noticing the differences in physical features in cartoon images of immigrant mothers and their “American” daughters in the humor pages of the *Forverts*, a phenomenon addressed later in this study. Last but not least, of course, was that it enabled me to engage in obsessive-compulsive behavior under academic imprimatur .

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As I went through microfilms of the various publications, the first level of selectivity took place with photocopying items of possible relevance. Examining these photocopies in the process of building a keyword database was the second level of selection. I used the Nisus MailKeeper application for the database; as long as a note contains any of the keywords established by the user, the note automatically can be accessed. Thus, if I wished to retrieve all items having to do with “Zionism,” “Education,” and “Crime,” clicking on those three keywords would produce a list of all items in which those three words appeared in the Notes. This database grew to contain 8,243 discrete items, a number of them being cumulative in nature, for

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<sup>16</sup> On Maimonides, see, Arthur Hyman, “Maimonides, Moses,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 11 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 754-777; see, also, Ben-Zion (Benno) Schereschewsky, “Agunah,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 2

example, listing all dates on which the 511 columns of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*'s "The English-Yiddish Guide" appeared on the newspaper's English page.<sup>17</sup>

Although my primary interest concerned the women's sections of the newspapers, I chose to look at all pages of each paper, being interested in whether and how women's issues received attention in articles, reportage and editorials. The women's pages can not be considered in isolation from the general content and orientation of the newspapers in which they appeared. To do so would implicitly assume that female readers looked only at those pages, something both unprovable and unlikely. The content of articles, features, columns and pages intended for women indicate what the publishers, writers and editors defined as being of interest to women readers. For example, advertisements for women's clothing appeared throughout the publications.

Since this is not a reader-response study, I make no assumptions as to the actual influence of these publications upon their reading audiences. The press represents but one of a number of institutions involved in acculturating immigrants to American society. A list of other institutions involved in the acculturation project would certainly include educational systems; forums for popular culture such as theater and movies, and later radio; political parties; mutual aid societies; philanthropic organizations, and so forth.<sup>18</sup> No matter what the actual effects a

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(Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 429-433.

<sup>17</sup> "The English Yiddish Guide /Der english-idisher lehrer" appeared in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* from November 1, 1914 until July 23, 1916.

<sup>18</sup> See, e.g., Higham, "The Immigrant in American History," 24-26; Stephen F. Brumberg, *Going to America, Going to School: The Jewish Immigrant Public School Encounter in Turn-of-the-Century New York City* (NY: Praeger Publishers, 1986);



publication had upon its readers, the vision of that publication, through its advice columns, advertisements, features and editorials, presented readers with alternative views of what it meant or could mean to be Jewish or Jewish-American. In short, the wide spectrum of the Jewish press offered a broad selection of possible identities, different conceptions of an ideal self.

I use the term “acculturation” to describe the process of integration and identity-building engaged in by those involved in the publications under examination (and the immigrants), rather than “assimilation.” “Assimilation” carries a heavy load of pejorative associations; using the word in a non-pejorative sense would require constant qualification. Not only does “acculturation” lack the value-judgmental associations of “assimilation,” but “acculturation” implies a greater sense of negotiation in the process of identity formation.<sup>19</sup> Negotiation plays an intrinsic role in developing ethnic identities, or, to use a more awkward word, the process of “ethnicization.” At least one scholar defines “ethnicization” as the assignment of an ethnic identity by forces outside the ethnic group.<sup>20</sup> His view, however, makes immigrants powerless, without agency, people acted upon, rather than people acting on behalf their own interests, making choices enabled or constrained by a variety of

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Elizabeth Ewen, “City Lights: Immigrant Women and the Rise of the Movies,” *Signs* 5, 3 Suppl. (Spring 1980): S45-S65; Daniel Soyer, *Jewish Immigrant Associations and American Identity in New York, 1880-1939* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997); for an account of street life as an agency of acculturation, see David Nasaw, *Children of the City: At Work and at Play* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1985).

<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., Marion A. Kaplan, “Tradition and Transition-The Acculturation, Assimilation and Integration of Jews in Imperial Germany: A Gender Analysis,” *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 27 (1982): 4-7.

<sup>20</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, “From Immigrants to Ethnics: Toward a New Theory of

factors including their own belief-systems and the socioeconomic conditions of the host society. Other scholars define “ethnicization” as the combination or blending of Old and New World customs, lifestyles, mores, and so forth.<sup>21</sup> Concepts associated with ethnicization include the “invention of tradition”<sup>22</sup> and the “invention of ethnicity.”<sup>23</sup> Those concepts and this dissertation take a social constructionist view of ethnicity and identity formation,<sup>24</sup> rejecting theories of ethnicity as inborn, innate, or primordial.<sup>25</sup>

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‘Ethnicization,’” *Ethnicity* 5, 4 (December 1978): 370-378.

<sup>21</sup> Ewa Morawska, *Insecure Prosperity: Small-Town Jews in Industrial America, 1890-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), xviii; Rudolph J. Vecoli, “An Inter-Ethnic Perspective on American Immigration History,” *Mid-America* 75, 2 (April-July 1993): 227.

<sup>22</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 1-14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>23</sup> Kathleen Neils Conzen, David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, “Forum - The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U. S. A.,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12, 1 (Fall 1992): 3-41; see, also, Shelby Shapiro, “Making a Connection: A Bibliographic Essay on the Invention of Ethnicity” (seminar paper, University of Maryland-College Park, 1998).

<sup>24</sup> See, e.g., Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (NY: Anchor Books, 1966); R. Gordon Kelly, “*The Social Construction of Reality: Implications for Future Directions in American Studies*,” *Prospects* 8 (1983): 49-58.

<sup>25</sup> For statements of ethnicity as primordial, see, Harold R. Isaacs, “Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe,” in *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, edited by Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 32-35; Clifford Geertz, “Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States,” in *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, edited by Clifford Geertz (NY: The Free Press, 1963), 109, reprinted in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (NY: BasicBooks, 1973), 259; for critiques of primordial ethnicity, see, James McKay, “An Exploratory Synthesis of Primordial and Mobilizationist Approaches to Ethnic Phenomena,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 5, 4 (October 1982): 399; Richard H. Thompson, *Theories of Ethnicity: A Critical Appraisal* (NY: Greenwood Press, 1989), 52-64.

Scholars have begun looking at the ethnic press through a social constructionist lens as they examine the process of developing senses of identity for immigrants.<sup>26</sup> The role of print culture in the formation of what Benedict Anderson termed “imagined communities” has direct relevance to this study.<sup>27</sup> Anderson writes of the importance of what he termed “print capitalism” in the formation of “imagined communities.” He particularly emphasized the role of the newspaper in the formation of a community whose members remained personally unknown to each other, separated by distance and time. Seeing others read the same newspaper and knowing that others not directly observed are likewise reading the same paper leads to what Anderson calls “visible invisibility”:

Speakers of the huge variety of Frenches, Englishes, or Spanishes, who might find it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation, became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper. In the process, they gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their particular language-field, and at the same time that *only those* hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged. These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community.<sup>28</sup>

Scholars have long associated the Yiddish press with the Americanization process, a

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<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Rudolph J. Vecoli, “The Italian Immigrant Press and the Construction of Social Reality, 1850-1920” in *Print Culture in a Diverse America*, edited by James P. Danky and Wayne A. Wiegand, 17-33 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Yumei Sun, “San Francisco’s *Chung Sai Yat Po* and the Transformation of Chinese Consciousness, 1900-1920,” in *Print Culture in a Diverse America*, edited by Danky and Wiegand, 85-97 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998).

<sup>27</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1983, 2006).

process of identity-formation.<sup>29</sup> In the early years of Eastern European Jewish immigration, immigrants separated themselves by place of origin, only later unifying in ethnic terms. The Yiddish press played an important role in this process.<sup>30</sup>

### Relevant Scholarship

Reveiwng relevant scholarship, the best general history of the Yiddish press in America remains the as-yet untranslated *Yidishe bleter in amerike* by J. Chaikin, a former columnist and editor for *Der tog*.<sup>31</sup> Moshe Starkman wrote a number of monographs on various aspects of the Yiddish press in America.<sup>32</sup> Charles A.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>29</sup> Robert E. Park, *The Immigrant Press and Its Control* (NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922); Robert E. Park, "Foreign Language Press and Social Progress," *American Journal of Sociology* 29 (November 1923): 273-289; Mordecai Soltes, *The Yiddish Press: An Americanizing Agency* (NY: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1925); S. Margoshes, "Di role fun der yidishe prese," in *Pinkes far der forshung fun der yidisher literatur un prese*, edited by Shlomo Bickel (NY: Congress for Yiddish Culture, Inc., 1965), 199-100; Passow, "The Yiddish Press in the Acculturative Process," 78-80.

<sup>30</sup> Sarna, "From Immigrants to Ethnics," 371, 375

<sup>31</sup> Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*; see, also, Robert Singerman, "The American Jewish Press, 1823-1983: A Bibliographic Survey of Research and Studies," *American Jewish History* 73, 4 (June 1984): 422-444; Sol Liptzin, "The Yiddish Press: A Century's Survey," *Jewish Book Annual* 19 (1961-1962): 60-66.

<sup>32</sup> Moshe Starkman, "Di antshteyung fun der yidisher prese in amerike," in *Zaml-bukh tsu der geshikhte ufun der yidisher prese in amerike*, edited by Jacob Shatzky, 13-21 (NY: Yidisher Kultur Gezelshaft, 1934); Moshe Starkman, "Oyf der shvel fun 100 yor yidishe prese in amerike," *Korot* 9 (November 1965): 20-25; Moshe Starkman, "Tsu der geshikhte fun yidish in amerike," *Yorbukh fun amopteyl* 2 (NY: American Division of YIVO, 1939): 181-189; Moshe Starkman, "Viktige momentn in der geshikhte fun der yidishe prese in amerike," in *Finf un zibestsik yor yidishe prese in amerike (1870-1945)*, edited by J. Glatstein, Sh. Niger, and H. Rogoff (NY: Y. L. Peretz Shrayber Farayn, 1945), 9-54; Moshe Starkman, "Di yidishe prese in amerike, 1875-1885," in *Zamelbukh lekoved dem tsvey hundert un fuftsikstn yoyvl fun der yidisher prese, 1686-1936* (NY: American Section of YIVO,

Madison, in his *Jewish Publishing in America: The Impact of Jewish Writing on American Culture*, devotes three sentences to the *American Jewess*, and wrote short descriptive histories of the three newspapers examined in this study.<sup>33</sup> Neither Madison, Chaikin nor Starkman made any mention whatever of either *Froyen-velt* or *Froyen zhurnal*. For a contemporary view of the Yiddish press, Hutchins Hapgood's *The Spirit of the Ghetto* remains valuable.<sup>34</sup>

Of all the women's publications and pages examined in this study, the *American Jewess* and its editor-founder, Rosa Sonneschein, have received the most attention. Sociologist Jack Nusan Porter wrote two articles, the second correcting the first, and David Loth, Rosa Sonneschein's grandson, in "The *American Jewess*" provided general descriptions of the magazine and its history, its editor and initial publisher.<sup>35</sup> Jane Rothstein's study, "Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women's Activism in the 1890s" remains by far the most exhaustive treatment of Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and the type of identity it fostered for Jewish American women.<sup>36</sup> Rothstein also wrote a valuable entry

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1937), 115-135.

<sup>33</sup> Charles A. Madison, *Jewish Publishing in America: The Impact of Jewish Writing on American Culture* (NY: Sanhedrin Press, 1976).

<sup>34</sup> Hutchins Hapgood, *The Spirit of the Ghetto: Studies of the Jewish Quarter of New York* (NY: Schocken Books, 1965, repr. of 1902 edition).

<sup>35</sup> Jack Nusan Porter, "Rosa Sonnenschein [sic] and *The American Jewess*: The First Independent English Language Jewish Women's Journal in the United States," *American Jewish History* 68, 1 (September 1978): 57-63; Jack Nusan Porter, "Rosa Sonneschein and *The American Jewess* Revisited: New Historical Information on an Early American Zionist and Jewish Feminist," *American Jewish Archives* 32, 2 (November 1980): 125-131; David Loth, "The *American Jewess*," *Midstream* 31, 2 (February 1985): 43-46.

<sup>36</sup> Jane Heather Rothstein, "Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women's Activism in the 1890s" (master's thesis, Case Western Reserve

on Sonneschein in the *Jewish Women in America*, a two-volume encyclopedia.<sup>37</sup>

In her study of Sephardic and German Jewish women writers in Nineteenth-century America, Diane Lichtenstein discusses the *American Jewess*, its history and general orientation.<sup>38</sup> In two articles, historian Eric L. Goldstein addresses the somewhat ambivalent racial discourse employed in the magazine, sometimes using “race” as a substitute word for “nation,” other times as a quasi-biological category.<sup>39</sup>

In “Class or Ethnicity: The Americanized German Jewish Woman and Her Middle Class Sisters in 1895,”<sup>40</sup> historian Selma Berrol asks whether the attitudes, values and interests of late nineteenth century “German Jewish” women were similar to Christian middle class women. In holding that an essential commonality of interests and values existed between “German Jewish” and Christian middle class women, Berrol turns to *American Jewess* and compares it with a number of non-Jewish women’s magazines. Berrol gives a basic history and summary of the contents of *American Jewess*, and its general stances on various issues of the day,

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University, 1996). Jane Rothstein was kind enough to furnish me with a copy of her thesis.

<sup>37</sup> Jane H. Rothstein, “Sonneschein, Rosa (1847-1932),” in *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore, 1289-1291 (NY: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>38</sup> Diane Lichtenstein, *Writing Their Nations: The Tradition of Nineteenth-Century American Jewish Women Writers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

<sup>39</sup> Eric L. Goldstein, “‘Different Blood Flows in Our Veins’: Race and Jewish Self-Definition in Late Nineteenth Century America,” *American Jewish History* 85, 1 (March 1997): 29-55; Eric L. Goldstein, “Between Race and Religion: Jewish Women and Self-Definition in Late Nineteenth Century America,” in *Women and American Judaism: Historical Perspectives*, edited by Pamela S. Nadell and Jonathan D. Sarna, 182-200 (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2001).

<sup>40</sup> Selma Berrol, “Class or Ethnicity: The Americanized German Jewish Woman and

comparing them with the non-Jewish magazines. Berrol thus ascribes the views of the editor and writers of *American Jewess* to the magazine's intended audience, an intended audience which failed to support the magazine, leading to its demise, as will be discussed in the next chapter. While the magazine's intended audience may well have held the views described in *American Jewess*, absent a reader-response study of some sort, Berrol's conclusion cannot stand; indeed, an argument, equally tenuous, could be made that the failure of *American Jewess* meant that the magazine's intended audience in fact rejected the magazine's messages.

In *Woman's Cause*, a study of Jewish woman's movements in England and the United States, historian Linda Gordon Kuzmack asserted that ". . . *American Jewess* campaigned for national, Jewish communal and religious suffrage."<sup>41</sup> While the magazine consistently campaigned for "religious suffrage," the same cannot be said for "national suffrage." While she correctly identified *American Jewess* writer Sara Drukker as a fighter for women's suffrage,<sup>42</sup> the journal itself did not "crusade" for the right of women to vote. Indeed, as will be shown in Chapter 5, *American Jewess* took an ambivalent attitude towards women's suffrage. Kuzmack portrayed the magazine's editor, Rosa Sonneschein, as a feminist and *American Jewess* "as a feminist platform."<sup>43</sup> Whether Sonneschein would have so defined herself and her publication remains open to question. Kuzmack wrote that "Sonneschein's monthly

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Her Middle Class Sisters in 1895," *Jewish Social Studies* 47 (Winter 1985): 21-32.

<sup>41</sup> Linda Gordon Kuzmack, *Woman's Cause: The Jewish Woman's Movement in England and the United States, 1881-1933* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990), 1.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

journal simultaneously became an advocate for Jewish concerns and a defender of all socially or politically disenfranchised groups, including East European immigrants, the working classes, Blacks and Catholics.”<sup>44</sup> Suffice it to say that in condemning Southern lynching of African-Americans, *American Jewess* qualified its condemnation by noting that lynching occurred as a reaction to the “brutal passion” enacted upon “the defenceless white woman of the South,” and that “[t]he disease can be cured by blotting out the cause. The black man must aid in this.”<sup>45</sup> Several months later another Editorial would state “[w]e can simply repeat what we said some time ago; that is when the negro [sic] stops the cause, the lynching will cease.”<sup>46</sup> An article entitled “The Russian Jews” presented a picture somewhat at odds with a journal “defending” Eastern European immigrants.<sup>47</sup>

Historian Rudolf Glanz, in his *The Jewish Woman in America: Two Female Immigrant Generations, 1820-1929, Vol. One: The Eastern European Jewish Woman*, described the content of *Froyen zhurnal*, noting it in his discussion of the middle-class status attained by immigrants.<sup>48</sup>

Norma Fain Pratt’s 1978 paper, “Transitions in Judaism: The Jewish American Woman through the 1930s,” \_ describes *Froyen zhurnal* as “[o]ne woman’s

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>45</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (August 1897): 238.

<sup>46</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (October 1897): 49.

<sup>47</sup> Selig E. Bendno, “The Russian Jews,” *American Jewess* (January 1897): 170-173.

<sup>48</sup> Rudolph Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America: Two Female Immigrant Generations, 1820-1929, Vol. 1V, The Eastern European Jewish Women*, 88 (NY: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., in cooperation with the National Council of Jewish Women, 1976).



vehicle for the ideas of Jewish women.”<sup>49</sup> Nowhere does she identify that “one woman”; the magazine had a male publisher and editor. She cited two female authors and noted the sorts of material contained in the magazine, a list which clearly placed it within the middle-class woman’s magazine genre, with a Jewish dimension. In “Culture and Radical Politics: Yiddish Women Writers, 1890-1940,” Professor Pratt discusses a number of women writers for *Forverts* and *Der tog*.<sup>50</sup>

Jenna Weissman Joselit utilizes articles and advertisements from both Yiddish magazines in *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950*,<sup>51</sup> a book tracing the movement by Eastern European immigrant Jews from practicing Judaism to practicing “Jewishness,” going from community-centeredness to family-centeredness. Joselit emphasizes the role of consumerism and the invention of new Jewish commodities in her account of these transformations. She also examines advice columns contained in both publications. In her use of material from *Froyen zhurnal*, she does not make explicit whether the articles cited as evidence came from the Yiddish section, which represented the bulk of the magazine, or from the four-to-eight page English section. The latter did not necessarily mirror the former. The publishers intended the English-language section for those born or raised in America, the daughters of those reading the Yiddish pages.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Norma Fain Pratt, “Transitions in Judaism: The Jewish American Woman through the 1930s,” *American Quarterly* 30, 5 (Winter 1978): 691-692.

<sup>50</sup> Norma Fain Pratt, “Culture and Radical Politics: Yiddish Women Writers, 1890-1940,” *American Jewish History* 70, 1 (September 1980): 68-90.

<sup>51</sup> Jenna Weissman Joselit, *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950* (NY: Hill and Wang, 1994).

<sup>52</sup> “Our English Department,” *Froyen zhurnal* (July 1922): 63.

Historian Sarah A. Leavitt, in her history of domestic advice, mentions *Di froyen-velt*, describing it as a newspaper in April 1913, when it in fact was still in magazine format.<sup>53</sup>

Historian Paula E. Hyman, in “America, Freedom, and Assimilation,”\_ utilizes five lead editorials in *Di froyen-velt* dealing with issues concerning immigrant Jewish women in America.<sup>54</sup> She also furnishes a general description of the kinds of articles found in *Froyen zhurnal* and notes its emphasis on the domestic sphere.\_ In this paper and others, Professor Hyman did pioneering work on the history of Jewish women in America, especially concerning changes in gender roles for Jewish immigrants after crossing the Atlantic to the New World.

As a graduate student, I wrote one seminar paper on the kind of Yiddish used in *Dos yidishes ageblatt*, as well as a number of papers dealing with both *Di froyen-velt* and *Froyen zhurnal*. My Master’s thesis concerned a group of serialized novels in *Froyen zhurnal*.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Sarah A. Leavitt, *From Catharine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 90-91.

<sup>54</sup> Paula E. Hyman, “America, Freedom, and Assimilation,” in *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History: The Roles and Representation of Women*, 93-133 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995).

<sup>55</sup> Shelby Shapiro, “From *Shtrassen* to *Gasn*: Clearing a Way to the ‘Jewish Street’” (seminar paper, University of Maryland-College Park, 1995); Shelby Shapiro, “Association by Gilt: Advertising & Americanization in Two Yiddish Women’s Magazines” (seminar paper, University of Maryland-College Park, 1996); Shelby A. Shapiro, “Another Guest at the Wedding, or Continuing Dilemmas: Problems of Acculturation in Three Serialized Yiddish Novels” (master’s thesis, University of Maryland-College Park, 1997); Shelby Shapiro, “For Lena and *Libe*: Readers and Americanization in a Yiddish Women’s Magazine, 1913-1914” (seminar paper, The American University, 1997); Shelby Shapiro, “No Dust, No Microbes: Health, Hygiene and Sanitation in Two Yiddish Women’s Magazines, 1913-1923” (seminar

Historian Maxine S. Seller wrote two papers on the women's pages of the Yiddish *Forverts*, limiting her examination to only one year, 1919.<sup>56</sup> She and I come to different conclusions concerning the women's page of the *Forverts*, in part due to a difference in time spans involved in our respective studies. Unlike her two papers, this study utilizes a comparative approach with the women's pages of two other mass circulation Yiddish daily newspapers. Rachel Rojanski examines *Forverts* and the short-lived Labor Zionist *Di tsayt* in her paper, "Socialist Ideology, Traditional Rhetoric: Images of Women in American Yiddish Socialist Dailies, 1918-1922."<sup>57</sup> She likewise comes to different conclusions than Seller; while noting that *Der tog* had a twice-weekly "women's page of sorts,"<sup>58</sup> she also incorrectly states that *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and another Orthodox daily ". . . did not publish women's pages."<sup>59</sup>

Historian Mary McCune wrote about the relationship between the Socialist Party and women's suffrage in "*The Whole Wide World Without Limits*": *International Relief, Gender Politics, and American Jewish Women, 1893-1930*.<sup>60</sup>

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paper, The American University, 1998); Shelby Shapiro, "For the Jewish Daughters of *Yidishe Mames*: Middle-Class Jewish Womanhood in the English Pages of a Yiddish Magazine" (seminar paper, University of Maryland-College Park, 2000).

<sup>56</sup> Maxine S. Seller, "Defining Socialist Womanhood: the Women's Page of the *Jewish Daily Forward* in 1919," *American Jewish History* 76, 4 (June 1987): 416-438; Maxine S. Seller, "World of Our Mothers: The Women's Page of the *Jewish Daily Forward*," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 16, 2 (Summer 1988): 95-118.

<sup>57</sup> Rachel Rojanski, "Socialist Ideology, Traditional Rhetoric: Images of Women in American Yiddish Socialist Dailies, 1918-1922," *American Jewish History* 93, 3 (September 2007): 329-348.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 341.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 332.

<sup>60</sup> Mary McCune, "*The Whole Wide World Without Limits*": *International Relief*,

Although her book concerned the National Council of Jewish Women, McCune made no mention of Rosa Sonneschein. McCune did provide much valuable information about Adella Kean Zametkin, a longtime writer for *Der tog*.

While scholars have written about particular writers, they have not written about the women's pages in either *Der tog* or *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. Historian Tony Michels has presented the best account of the *Forverts* in his *A Fire in Their Hearts: Yiddish Socialists in New York*.<sup>61</sup> Irving Howe's *World of Our Fathers* placed the *Forverts* and its editor, Abraham (Ab.) Cahan at center stage in his account of the East Side.<sup>62</sup>

Andrew R. Heinze uses material from *Forverts* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt* in *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption, and the Search for American Identity*, wherein he discusses Yiddish journalism in general and the innovations of Abraham Cahan in particular.<sup>63</sup> His study provides valuable background information on both newspapers. Moshe Starkman wrote a monograph on the memoirs of the *Dos yidishes tageblatt's* founder.<sup>64</sup> Former editor and writer

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*Gender Politics, and American Jewish Women, 1893-1930* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005).

<sup>61</sup> Tony Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts: Yiddish Socialists in New York* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); see, also, Tony Michels, "Socialism with a Jewish Face: The Origins of the Yiddish-Speaking Communist Movement in the United States, 1907-1923," in *Yiddish and the Left: Papers of the Third Mendel Friedman International Conference on Yiddish*, edited by Gennady Estraikh and Mikhail Krutikov, 24-55 (Oxford: Legenda, 2001).

<sup>62</sup> Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (NY: Harcourt Crace Jovanovich, 1976).

<sup>63</sup> Andrew R. Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption, and the Search for American Identity* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1990).

<sup>64</sup> Moshe Starkman, "Di sarazohn-zikhroynes vegn der yidisher prese in amerike," in *Yohrbukh fun amopteyl 2* (NY: American Division of YIVO, 1939): 273-295.

for *Dos yidishes tageblat*, Gedaliah Bublick, recalled the paper's mission vis-à-vis traditional or Orthodox Judaism in his article "The Tageblatt and Orthodox Jewry in America."<sup>65</sup>

Ethnic scholar Victor R. Greene, in *American Immigrant Leaders, 1800-1910: Marginality and Identity*, focuses in particular upon *Dos yidishes tageblat* founder Kasriel Sarasohn and the *Forverts'* Abraham Cahan.<sup>66</sup> He also brings the issue of ethnic leadership to the fore in that book. Historian Eric L. Goldstein discusses racism and the Yiddish press in his very nuanced history, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity*.<sup>67</sup>

## **The Road Ahead**

This dissertation is of relevance to the following fields: American Studies, American History, Jewish History, Ethnicity and Immigration Studies, Journalism History, Print Culture Studies, and Women's Studies.

The dissertation breaks new ground by providing the first in-depth investigation of the two Yiddish women's magazines, neither of them connected with, or advocates of, any political tendency or party. Neither magazine has received even a mention in standard histories of the Yiddish press; this dissertation will fill that particular gap. With the exception of Maxine Sellers' and Rachel Rojanski's papers

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<sup>65</sup> Gedaliah Bublick, "Dos 'tageblat' un ortodoksishes yudentum in amerike," in *Finf un zibetsk yor yidishe prese in amerike, 1870-1945*, edited by J. Glatstein, Sh. Nigier and H. Rogoff, 79-81 (NY: Y. L. Peretz Shrayber Farayn, 1945).

<sup>66</sup> Victor R. Greene, *American Immigrant Leaders, 1900-1910: Marginality and Identity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

<sup>67</sup> Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity*

on the *Forverts* women's page, this dissertation will provide the first in-depth examination of the women's pages in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, *Forverts* and *Der tog*.

While the publications in this study presented different sorts of Jewish-American identity, this study also demonstrates deep commonalities concerning the role of women. Whether of Central European or Eastern European background, whether espousing Reform or Orthodox Judaism, secularism or traditionalism, Socialism or Zionism, one constant remained: women should, above everything else, concern themselves with the welfare of their families. While differing in degree in valuing education and employment, all saw and emphasized women's role within the family as central. A commitment to Americanization, however that might be defined represented another commonality. Remarkably little change over time occurred within each publication. *Forverts* began to alter its negative view of the Zionist enterprise following editor Abraham (Ab.) Cahan's 1925 visit. When Dovid Hermalin, the mainstay of *Der tog's* women's page, died, his replacement J. Chaikin differed from Hermalin in that he (Chaikin) did not put women on a pedestal. *Der tog's* main writer on the women's page, Adella Kean likewise did not advocate a sanctified view of women.

Chapter 2 places Eastern European Jewish immigration into its historical context, examining the "pushes" for migration in the Old World and the "pulls" for migration within the New World. The "pulls" of the expanding American economy for a massive workforce set the stage for migration not only by Eastern European Jewish immigrants, but of peoples from all over the globe. The New Immigration

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(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

lasted from 1870 to 1924. The next chapter also introduces the six publications involved in this study, grouped by genre: first, the three women's magazines, followed by the three daily newspapers.

Chapter 3 discusses the secular and religious ideologies of each publication. Since those espousing ideologies wish to see them perpetuated, the chapter ends with an examination of the different types of Jewish education favored by each journal.

Chapter 4 focuses on how each publication viewed the new job opportunities available to women in America, particularly with the vast expansion of occupations in which women worked during the Great War. In tandem with how each journal felt about these opportunities, the chapter discusses how these publications made predictions about obtaining women's suffrage because of expanded employment of women and the attitude of the various journals towards secular education beyond that mandated by law. The ideology of a magazine or journal determined attitudes towards what was considered proper. Additionally, this chapter looks at how these publications expressed triumph and the anxiety over women moving beyond traditional roles as they fashioned new American identities.

Chapter 5 examines the attitudes of all the journals on the struggle for women's suffrage, except for *Froyen zhurnal* which was founded after suffrage was attained. The English-language *American Jewess* for the most part opposed women's suffrage; the Yiddish publications supported women in obtaining the right to vote. This chapter probes the depth of support as well as the arguments urged in the pages of these publications. Even though all of the Yiddish publications supported suffrage, their respective ideologies fashioned different approaches towards the issue.

Additionally, this chapter examines other aspects of the journals dealing with citizenship, for example, forming women's clubs, printing lessons in civics, and so forth.

Whereas voting, a prerogative of citizenship, represents one kind of Americanization, another kind of Americanization could occur even without obtaining citizenship or the right to vote, namely the celebration of American civic holidays, which is the subject of Chapter 6. Special attention is paid to the manner in which these publications approached American holidays, for very often writers sought to employ the holidays as a method for establishing Jewish bona fides. The journals also employed Jewish religious or cultural terminology to explain the significance of the holidays to their readers.

Chapter 7 moves from American civic holidays, in which women took a passive role, to Jewish religious or national holidays, in which women took an active role. Here, too, the ideology of a publication played an important part, both in defining the holiday and in delineating a woman's place in its commemoration or celebration.

Chapter 8 examines a number of continuities and discontinuities between the Old and New Worlds evident in various journals. In particular, it examines the kind of language used to explain or translate American culture or phenomena to immigrant readers, language related to Jewish religion and culture. The chapter also looks at graphic images.

While the second chapter gives a general view of each publication, chapters three through eight go into greater depth and compare each journal in a thematic



manner: ideology, Jewish education, secular education, job opportunities, suffrage, citizenship, the celebration of American civic and Jewish religious/national holidays. Chapter 9, the conclusion, moves back to the general, as it weaves together the thematic strands from the prior chapters.

## Chapter 2: Journeys and Journals

Between 1881 and 1914, out of the approximately 23 million European immigrants to America, Jews comprised an estimated 2,017,215.<sup>68</sup> Between 1915 and 1922, an estimated 251,212 entered the country.<sup>69</sup> The year that mass immigration closed, 1924, found 49,306 Jews coming to American shores.<sup>70</sup>

The immigrants did not represent a cross-section of the societies they left behind. Two scholars have noted that although Jewish immigration was massive, the mass of Eastern European Jewry stayed in Europe.<sup>71</sup> Those remaining included the very poor and unskilled, the wealthy, the elderly, and the very religious who, unlike the immigrants, had heeded warnings from rabbinical authorities to avoid the *treyfe medine*, the “unkosher [and thus “unclean”] land.”<sup>72</sup> Already loosened from the

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<sup>68</sup> For general European immigration, see, Lloyd P. Gartner, “Jewish Migrants en Route from Europe to North America: Traditions and Realities,” *Jewish History* 1, 2 (Fall 1986): 55; see, also, Higham, “The Immigrant in American History,” 20-23; Jewish immigration figures derived from Table 3 in Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920*, Vol. 3 of *The Jewish People in America*, edited by Henry L. Feingold (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, in cooperation with the American Jewish Historical Society), 58.

<sup>69</sup> Figures derived from Table 3 in Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 58; Henry S. Linfield, “Statistics of Jews,” *The American Jewish Year Book* 5683, Vol. 24 (1922), 317; Henry S. Linfield, “Statistics of Jews,” *The American Jewish Year Book* 5684, Vol. 25 (1923), 345.

<sup>70</sup> H. S. Linfield, “Statistics of Jews,” *The American Jewish Year Book* 5687, Vol. 28 (1926), 416.

<sup>71</sup> Calvin Goldscheider and Alan S. Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 163-164.

<sup>72</sup> Charles S. Leibman, “Orthodoxy in American Jewish Life,” *American Jewish Year Book* 66 (1965), 29-30; Charles S. Leibman, “Religion, Class, and Culture in American Jewish History,” *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 9, 2 (December 1967): 230; Hasia R. Diner, “From Covenant to Constitution: The Americanization of Judaism,” in *Transforming Faith: The Sacred and the Secular in Modern American History*, edited by M. L. Bradbury and James B. Gilbert (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1989), 17; David Singer, “David Levinsky’s Fall: A Note on the Leibman Thesis,” *American*

ties of traditional authority, those emigrating fit into a demographic profile particularly amenable to change and acculturation. Among the developments which had already occurred in Eastern Europe were the appearance of new secular ideologies. These ideologies were outgrowths of the *Haskalah* ["Enlightenment," *Haskole* in Yiddish], which took a dramatically different form than in Western Europe. In Western Europe, the *Haskalah* sought integration with host societies, a possibility not present in the East. In Eastern Europe, the *Haskalah* furnished the soil for movements of social change, including Socialism, Zionism, and, to a lesser extent, Anarchism, to sprout.<sup>73</sup>

The new arrivals had skills transferable to their new environment, especially within America's growing garment trades.<sup>74</sup> Arriving in family units, Jews came to stay, a distinguishing feature of their immigration.<sup>75</sup> Demographer Simon Kuznets

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*Quarterly* 19, 4 (Winter 1967): 697-698.

<sup>73</sup> Paula E. Hyman, "Gender and the Immigrant Jewish Experience in the United States," in *Jewish Women in Historical Perspective*, edited by Judith R. Baskin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 224; Paula E. Hyman, "Culture and Gender: Women in the Immigrant Jewish Community," in *The Legacy of Jewish Immigration: 1881 and Its Impact*, 159; Kuznets, "Immigration of Russian Jews," 121-123; Herbert Parzen, "When Secularism Came to Russian Jewry: Even in the Old Country the Process Had Gone Far," *Commentary* 13, 4 (April 1952): 355-362.

<sup>74</sup> Arcadius Kahan, "Jewish Life in the United States: Perspectives from Economics," in *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History*, edited by Roger Weiss (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 129; Goldscheider and Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews*, 164; Selma Berrol, "Education and Social Mobility: the Jewish Experience in New York City, 1880-1920," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 65, 3 (March 1976): 265-266; Henry Abramson, "Two Jews, Three Opinions: Politics in the Shtetl at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," in *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, edited by Steven T. Katz (NY: New York University Press, 2007), 87.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas Kessner, *The Golden Door: Italian and Jewish Immigrant Mobility in New York City, 1880-1915* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1977), 31-32; Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America, Vol. 1*, 1-2; Simon Kuznets, "Immigration of Russian Jews to the

estimated that between 1.49 million and 1.59 million immigrants, that is, seventy-two percent, arrived between the years 1899 and 1914.<sup>76</sup> From 1895 to 1924, approximately 0.9 million immigrants were female; Kuznets had no data for the war years of 1915 to 1919. The data for those arriving between 1899 and 1914 showed that 5.8 percent were over the age of 45, and 69.8 percent between the ages of 14 and 44. Adult women constituted 44 percent, the remaining 24.4 percent boys and girls under the age of 14.<sup>77</sup> Using 16 years instead of 14 as a criterion, the United Hebrew Charities classified one-third of Jewish immigrants as children.<sup>78</sup>

The large number of children had far-reaching implications for the acculturative process. The younger the child upon arrival in the United States, the longer that child would spend in public school, one of the primary agencies of Americanization.<sup>79</sup> Jewish children filled the public school system, at least at the

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United States: Background and Structure,” *Perspectives in American History* 9 (1975): 94, 98-100, 112-113; Samuel Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States from 1881 to 1910* (NY: Columbia University, 1914), 127-130; Arcadius Kahan, “The Impact of Industrialization in Tsarist Russia on the Socioeconomic Conditions of the Jewish Population,” in *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History*, 32; Abramson, “Two Jews, Three Opinions,” 89.

<sup>76</sup> Kuznets, “Immigration of Russian Jews to the United States,” 39, Table I, lines 3-6.

<sup>77</sup> Kuznets, “Immigration of Russian Jews,” 42, 96; see, also, Ruth Gay, *Unfinished People: Eastern European Jews Encounter America* (NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1996), 38-39; see, also, Abramson, “Two Jews, Three Opinions,” 89-90.

<sup>78</sup> Kessner, *The Golden Door*, 32.

<sup>79</sup> Kuznets, “Immigration of Russian Jews,” 100; Brumberg, *Going to America, Going to School*, 199; Selma Berrol, *East Side/East End: Eastern European Jews in London and New York, 1870-1920* (Westport: Praeger, 1994), 60; Ruth Jacknow Markowitz, *My Daughter, the Teacher: Jewish Teachers in the New York City Schools* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 12993), 8-10; Sidney Stahl Weinberg, “Longing to Learn: The Education of Jewish Immigrant Women in New

elementary level.<sup>80</sup> Educational requirements changed over time, and most Jewish children stayed in school for the minimum period necessary to obtain working papers.<sup>81</sup> Older children contributed to the family income.<sup>82</sup> The older the child, the more that child's socialization process occurred under Eastern European conditions.<sup>83</sup> From the viewpoint of "becoming Americans," older children had to change more than their younger siblings. Movement into the middle class preceded entry of Jewish students into high schools.<sup>84</sup>

In the society the immigrants had left, authority in communal and religious life in the public sphere reposed in men. Furthermore, the religious pluralism characterizing the American Jewish religious landscape did not exist in the Old Country, or at least not to the same degree. After the American Revolution, pluralism became the norm, even with the small numbers of Jews residing in the United States. No longer did a community have but one synagogue. To use

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York City, 18900-1934," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 8, 2 (Spring 1989): 118-119.

<sup>80</sup> Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America*, Vol. 1, 66-68.

<sup>81</sup> Berrol, "Education and Social Mobility," 266; Selma Berrol, "Turning Little Aliens into Little Citizens: Italians and Jews in New York City Public Schools, 1900-1914," in *The Interaction of Italians and Jews in America*, edited by Jean A. Scarpaci (NY: The American Italian Historical Association, 1975), 35.

<sup>82</sup> Susan A. Glenn, *Daughters of the Shtetl: Life and Labor in the Immigrant Generation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 67-68.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Ruth Gay, *Unfinished People*, 5, 7, 286.

<sup>84</sup> Berrol, "Education and Social Mobility," 261-262; Deborah Dash Moore, *At Home in America: Second Generation New York Jews* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1981), 102-103; Henry L. Feingold, *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream, 1920-1945*, Vol. 4 of *The Jewish People in America*, edited by Henry L. Feingold (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, in association with the American Jewish Historical Society, 1992), 143.

historian Jonathan Sarna's phrase, Jewish religious life went ". . . from synagogue-community to community of synagogues."<sup>85</sup> In the Old World, while women could go to a synagogue, their presence did not count towards the quorum necessary to hold services [the *minyan*].<sup>86</sup> Men had the duty of transmitting religious beliefs to their sons, not their daughters. The two institutions of religious education, the *kheder*, providing religious instructions to boys under thirteen years old, and the *yeshiva*, for more advanced religious study, remained exclusively male domains.<sup>87</sup> To fulfill religious obligations required men to recite prayers in Hebrew. Consequently as a result of gender-based views on education, Jewish males from Eastern Europe had an official literacy rate approximately double that of females.<sup>88</sup>

Women instructed their daughters with regard to their religious duties in the domestic sphere, such as how to keep a kosher home and fulfill "ritual purity" laws.<sup>89</sup> These laws, *niddah* and *tahart hamispakhah*, maintained that a menstruating woman

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<sup>85</sup> Jonathan Sarna, "The Evolution of the American Synagogue," in *The Americanization of the Jews*, edited by Robert M. Seltzer and Norman J. Cohen (NY: New York University Press, 1995), 219.

<sup>86</sup> Samuel Kassow, "Introduction," in *The Shtetl: New Evaluations*, edited by Steven T. Katz (NY: New York University Press, 2007), 13.

<sup>87</sup> Paula E. Hyman, "The Other Half: Women in the Jewish Tradition," in *The Jewish Woman: New Perspectives*, edited by Elizabeth Koltun (NY: Schocken Books, 1976), 107, 109, 112n.3; Paula E. Hyman, "Seductive Secularization," in *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History: The Roles and Representation of Women* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 50, 54.

<sup>88</sup> Kuznets, "Immigration of Russian Jews," 80-82; recent scholarship has cast into doubt the vaunted literacy of Jewish males, see, e.g., Iris Parush, *Reading Jewish Women-Marginality and Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Eastern European Jewish Society* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2004); Iris Parush, "Another Look at 'The Life of 'Dead' Hebrew,'" *Book History* 7 (2004): 171-214; Shaul Stampfer, "Gender Differentiation and Education of the Jewish Woman in Nineteenth-Century Eastern Europe," *Polin* 7 (1992).

was “*tameh*” [“impure”] until immersion in a ritual bath, or *mikve*, following the end of her menstrual period. Only after immersion in the *mikve* could a married couple resume sexual relations.<sup>90</sup> Historian Beth S. Wenger describes these laws as wound around “. . . primitive blood taboos and profound anxiety toward female reproductive capacity,” although rationalized in terms of alleged health benefits.<sup>91</sup>

While gender-based expectations called for married women to remain at home, economic reality dictated otherwise.<sup>92</sup> Gender roles in the economic world had a highly elastic nature, with some wives functioning as breadwinners, others as wage workers, and still others laboring alongside their husbands. Women worked in trade, commerce, doing needle work, and in factories.<sup>93</sup>

Factory work took place in an urban setting. Jews had lived in urban environments prior to their arrival in America more than any other immigrant group to America during the same time period.<sup>94</sup> The trip across the Atlantic represented

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<sup>89</sup> Hyman, “The Other Half,” 106-107; Pratt, “Transitions in Judaism,” 684-686.

<sup>90</sup> “Taharat (Toshorat) Ha-Mishpakhah,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 15, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 703.

<sup>91</sup> Beth S. Wenger, “Mitzvah and Medicine: Gender, Assimilation and the Scientific Discourse of ‘Family Purity,’” in *Women and American Judaism: Historical Perspectives*, edited by Pamela S. Nadell and Jonathan D. Sarna (Hanover, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 2001), 203.

<sup>92</sup> Paula E. Hyman, “The Modern Jewish Family: Image and Reality,” in *The Jewish Family: Metaphor and Memory*, edited by David Kraemer (NY: Oxford University Press, 1989), 181.

<sup>93</sup> Hyman, “Gender and the Immigrant Jewish Experience,” 223-224; Glenn, *Daughters of the Shtetl*, 8, 9, 14-16; Irene D. Neu, “The Jewish Businesswoman in America,” *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 66, 1 (September 1976): 145-146.

<sup>94</sup> Ewa Morawska, *Insecure Prosperity: Small-Town Jews in Industrial America, 1890-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 5-6; Kuznets, “Immigration of Russian Jews,” 71-72, 80-81, 112; Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United*

the last of many journeys, for Jews moved steadily within Eastern Europe, a “gradual migration from small town to a small-size city and from the small-size city to a larger city, lessening the costs of acculturation by spreading them out over a time span of perhaps two generations.”<sup>95</sup> Thus, a constellation of elements made the immigrants amenable to change, enabling acculturation: youth, literacy, transferable economic skills, and prior urban experience.

In America, the immigrants began their new lives in densely packed Jewish quarters, such as New York City’s East Side, entering urban workshops in a myriad of industries. While some peddled or sold from pushcarts, most entered the garment industry, working in factories, small shops or at home doing piecework.<sup>96</sup> An 1890 New York City survey, for example, showed 57 percent of the immigrants in the needle trades; 15 percent doing manual labor in other industries; with the remaining 28 percent involved in petty commerce.<sup>97</sup>

Through on-the-job training, attending industrial schools and building on prior

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*States*, 46-47, 49-50, 52, 54; Kahan, “The Impact of Industrialization,” 48-49, 51-53; Berrol, “Education and Social Mobility,” 266.

<sup>95</sup> Kahan, “The Impact of Industrialization,” 33; Steve J. Zipperstein, “Russian Maskilim and the City,” in *The Legacy of Jewish Migration: 1881 and Its Impact*, edited by David Berger (NY: Brooklyn College Press, 1983), 34-35; see, also, Brumberg, *Going to America*, 45-47.

<sup>96</sup> Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America*, Vol. 1, 21; Kuznets, “Immigration of Russian Jews,” 101-103, 107-111; Sorin, *A Time for Building*, 74-78; Arcadius Kahan, “Economic Opportunities and Some Pilgrims’ Progress: Jewish Immigrants from Eastern Europe in the United States, 1890-1914,” in *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History*, 101-117; N. Goldberg, “Profesionale gliderung un groysstotische konsentratsie fun di rusish-yidishe imigrantn in 1890 un 1900,” in *Geshikhte fun der yidisher arbeter-bavegung in di faraynikhte shtatn*, Vol. 1, edited by Elias Tcherikower (NY: YIVO, 1943), 342-350.

<sup>97</sup> Glenn, *Daughters of the Shtetl*, 64.



experience, Jewish women in the garment industry began obtaining supervisory jobs and more lucrative positions.<sup>98</sup> With increased language proficiency, some women started working in department stores, while others entered the status-filled ranks of schoolteachers.<sup>99</sup> By 1910, the increased income of Jewish males led to a decline in the number of women working outside the home, more so than in other ethnic groups.<sup>100</sup> Many took in boarders, thus augmenting family incomes.<sup>101</sup> The continuous nature of Jewish immigration meant that newer arrivals constantly filled the spaces, both working and residential, vacated by earlier immigrants. In New York, many of the earlier immigrants moved to Harlem, the Bronx, Williamsburg and Brownsville.<sup>102</sup> By 1927, the East Side contained less than fifteen percent of New York's Jewish population.<sup>103</sup>

Jewish immigration occurred at a fortuitous time. Vast structural changes in the economy of Eastern Europe causing widespread Jewish impoverishment created

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<sup>98</sup> Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America*, Vol. 1, 38.

<sup>99</sup> Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America*, Vol. 1, 59, 171n.39; Susan Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 209; Moore, *At Home in America*, 99.

<sup>100</sup> Hyman, "Gender and the Immigrant Experience," 225-226; Barbara Klaczynska, "Why Women Work: A Comparison of Various Groups-Philadelphia, 1910-1930," *Labor History* 17, 1 (Winter 1976): 83-84; Hyman, "Culture and Gender," 160, 162.

<sup>101</sup> Elizabeth H. Pleck, "A Mother's Wages: Income Earning among Married Italian and Black Women, 1896-1911," in *A Heritage of Her Own: Toward a New Social History of American Women*, edited by Nancy F. Cott and Elizabeth H. Pleck (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1979), 372.

<sup>102</sup> Moore, *At Home in America*, 8; see, also, Abraham Cahan, *In di mitele yohren*, vol. 4 of *Bleter fun mayn leben* (NY: Forwards Association, 1928), 592.

<sup>103</sup> Beth S. Wenger, "Memory as Identity: The Invention of the Lower East Side," *American Jewish History* 85, 1 (March 1997): 3.

the “push” for immigration.<sup>104</sup> In America, vast structural changes of a different nature which began around the time of the Civil War came to fruition with the emergence of a full-blown consumer economy. These changes created opportunities which acted as a powerful “pull” for the immigrants and enabled rapid social mobility. Finally, Jewish immigration coincided with the formation of a “new middle class” serving the new economy.<sup>105</sup> This new middle class “. . . composed of salaried professionals, managers, salespeople, and office workers employed in bureaucratic organizations. . .”<sup>106</sup> existed alongside the old middle class of shopkeepers, farmers and ministers. The new middle class, larger and more diverse in occupational structure than the old middle class,<sup>107</sup> developed values and modes of behavior at odds with the old middle class. While both shared strong beliefs in home and school, order, civility, decorum, “refinement and respectability,”<sup>108</sup> the new middle class, increasingly urban and suburban, prized comfort and consumerism over frugality and self-dependence.<sup>109</sup>

Eastern European Jews gravitated towards the new positions comprising the

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<sup>104</sup> Gartner, “Jewish Migrants en Route,” 50-51.

<sup>105</sup> Lewis Corey, “Problems of the Peace: IV. The Middle Class,” *Antioch Review* 5, 1 (March 1945): 68.

<sup>106</sup> Daniel Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending: Attitudes toward the Consumer Society in America, 1875-1940* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 1985, 1992), 69; Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate, 1870-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 126-127, 146-147, 202; Corey, “Problems of the Peace,” 71, 72, 75-76, 79.

<sup>107</sup> Corey, “Problems of the Peace,” 75-81.

<sup>108</sup> Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending*, 106; Zunz, *Making America Corporate*, 127; Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (NY: Hill & Wang, 1982), 88, 145-146.

<sup>109</sup> Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending*, 68-69, 85, 86.

new middle class. A small New York State study of 1,535 Jewish families in 1925 found 50 percent of household heads, that is, males, had achieved middle class status: 13.2 percent in upper white collar positions, and 36.8 percent in lower white collar occupations. The same study showed another 29.6 percent of household heads as “skilled workers.” This classification did not differentiate among skilled workers to show how many held supervisory positions or had specialized skills such as dress designing, both of which would classify the household head as middle class. The 50 percent figure, then, probably underestimated the class status of Jewish males.<sup>110</sup> Historian Henry L. Feingold found that “. . . by 1929, 45 to 50 percent [of Jews] were employed in trade, more frequently as employees than as proprietors. An estimated 15 to 20 percent were involved in small-scale manufacturing and sales. . . .”<sup>111</sup> Additionally, between 1920 and 1930, the percentages of Jewish women entering the New York public school system as teachers went from 26 percent to 44 percent.<sup>112</sup>

Jewish dependency on social service institutions and agencies fell markedly in this period, including care of juvenile delinquents.<sup>113</sup> In another index of social mobility, Jewish students entered high schools and universities in increasing numbers during the post-World War One period.<sup>114</sup> “By 1920 both City College and Hunter

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<sup>110</sup> Thomas Kessner, “The Selective Filter of Ethnicity: A Half Century of Immigrant Mobility,” in *The Legacy of Jewish Immigration*, 178; see, also, Jacob Letstchinsky, “The Position of the Jews in the Economic Life of America,” in *Jews in a Gentile World: The Problem of Anti-Semitism*, edited by Isaac Graeber and Stuart Henderson Britt (NY: The Macmillan Company, 1942), 408-409.

<sup>111</sup> Feingold, *A Time for Searching*, 127, 126.

<sup>112</sup> Moore, *At Home in America*, 96.

<sup>113</sup> Feingold, *A Time for Searching*, 125-126.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

College had become 80-90 percent Jewish.”<sup>115</sup>

Although a Jewish working class continued to exist, a substantial number of immigrants moved on to better jobs, nicer neighborhoods, and had sufficient income to allow their children to attend school beyond the minimum period required by law. The economic success of Jewish males which led to a decrease in women working outside the home resulted in the the marriage of two expectations, one culturally Jewish, the other culturally American. In Eastern Europe, economic necessity had blunted fulfillment of the expectation that married women leave the world of work outside the family. At the same time, American middle-class culture consigned women to the domestic sphere. As historian Paula E. Hyman noted, “The decision to work outside the home was not left to women themselves. Indeed, immigrant Jewish men--and undoubtedly many women as well--shared the cultural norms prevalent among both European immigrants and the middle-class U. S. public that declared that wives working outside the home reflected the failure of their husbands to fulfill their responsibilities.”<sup>116</sup>

Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe coincided with the emergence of the new consumption-oriented American middle class women’s magazines such as the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, *McCall’s*, *Womans Home Companion*, and the *Pictorial Review*.<sup>117</sup> This genre had an essentially prescriptive nature and

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<sup>115</sup> Goldscheider and Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews*, 168.

<sup>116</sup> Hyman, “Gender and the Immigrant Experience,” 226.

<sup>117</sup> Helen Damon-Moore and Carl F. Kaestle, “Gender, Advertising and Mass-Circulation Magazines,” in *Literacy in the United States: Readers and Reading Since 1880*, edited by Carl F. Kaestle, Helen Damon-Moore, Lawrence C. Stedman, Katherine Tinsley and William Vance Trollinger Jr. (New Haven: Yale University

offered “expert” advice on home decorating, cooking, family relationships, child-rearing, medical issues, beauty, style and fashion pages, as well as news of events in women’s organizations, and fiction. The genre located the woman’s world in the sphere of home, family, and domestic consumption.<sup>118</sup> Even though women’s magazines existed before the Civil War, the woman’s page in newspapers did not appear until 1883, an innovation of publisher Joseph Pulitzer in the *New York World*.<sup>119</sup> The Yiddish daily newspapers in this study did not adopt that innovation until the period between 1914 and 1918.

Women’s magazines demonstrated changes in values between the old and new middle class. The older middle class women’s magazine genre, as exemplified by *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, emphasized domesticity and refinement, with columns on etiquette, fashions and child care, plus literature of an “edifying nature.”<sup>120</sup> Rosa Sonneschein followed this pattern of the old middle class women’s magazine when she founded the first Jewish women’s magazine, *American Jewess*, in 1895.

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Press, 1991), 248-249; Helen Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the Ladies’ Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, 1880-1910* (Albany: State University of New York, 1994), 24-25; Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies’ Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (NY: Routledge, 1995), 12-14.

<sup>118</sup> Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings*, 12-13; Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending*, 71; Damon-Moore and Kaestle, “Gender, Advertising and Mass-Circulation Magazines,” 248-249.

<sup>119</sup> Peter Connolly-Smith, *Translating America: An Immigrant Press Visualizes American Popular Culture, 1895-1918* (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2004), 325n.7.

<sup>120</sup> Rosemary Fry Plakas and Jacqueline Coleburn, “Rare Books and Special Collections,” in *American Women, A Library of Congress Guide for the Study of Women’s History and Culture in the United States*, edited by Sheridan Harvey

Austrian-born, she and her husband, a Reform rabbi, came to America in the 1860s from Prague, where her first three children were born; her American-born son Monroe would later contribute articles and poetry to *American Jewess*.<sup>121</sup> She turned to journalism after a divorce left her without an income.<sup>122</sup> *American Jewess* promoted a Jewish American identity for women which combined the American middle class cult of domesticity with the duties of perpetuating the Jewish people through transmission of identity and instilling morality in their children.<sup>123</sup> The “Ideal Jewess” placed home and hearth at the center of her life,<sup>124</sup> demonstrating pride in being Jewish, attending public services, displaying modesty, and never donning the role of a social climber.<sup>125</sup> Sonneschein sought to have her magazine uphold the beliefs of Reform Judaism, the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), and the political Zionism identified with Theodor Herzl.<sup>126</sup> Sonneschein attended the First Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland in 1897, the only woman in the American

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(Washington: Library of Congress, 2001), 106.

<sup>121</sup> Rothstein, “Sonneschein, Rosa (1847-1932),” 1289-1290.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 1290.

<sup>123</sup> Rothstein, “Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women’s Activism in the 1890s,” 23; see, also, Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860,” *American Quarterly* 16, 2 (Part 1) (Summer 1966): 151-174.

<sup>124</sup> Rothstein, “Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women’s Activism in the 1890s,” 26; cf. Lichtenstein, *Writing Their Nations*, 24, on the “Mother in Israel” ideal.

<sup>125</sup> Rothstein, “Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women’s Activism in the 1890s,” 27.

<sup>126</sup> Gerald Sorin, *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 75, 141.

delegation.<sup>127</sup> Sonneschein hoped that *American Jewess* would become the official voice of the NCJW,<sup>128</sup> which never happened. A Jewish manifestation of the American women's club movement, the NCJW initially defined itself in religious terms, but increasingly became involved in social service activities.<sup>129</sup> The organization's activities filled the pages of the magazine,<sup>130</sup> as did an increase in critiques of the NCJW for failing to fulfill its objective of restoring the Sabbath to its "pristine purity."<sup>131</sup>

Every issue of *American Jewess* contained fiction, usually of a serial nature, poetry, a medical column, a fashion section, news of women's philanthropic organizations and activities of the NCJW, a small feature of household tips, news of notable people, "From the Editor's Desk" and "The Woman Who Talks," the latter in a lighter vein than the former; and something reflecting "High Culture," such as concert or theater news. The magazine also published sections for children, albeit not in every issue.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Rothstein, "Sonneschein, Rosa (1847-1932)," 1291.

<sup>128</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (December 1896): 137.

<sup>129</sup> For an institutional history of the NCJW, see Faith Rogow, *Gone to Another Meeting: The National Council of Jewish Women, 1893-1993* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993); Faith Rogow, "National Council of Jewish Women," in *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore (NY: Routledge, 1997), 968-979.

<sup>130</sup> Between June 1895-November 1896, eleven reports under the title "National Council of American Women" appeared; from February 1898-Jul-August 1898, seven reports under the title "Council of Jewish Women" appeared. Additionally, each issue of *American Jewess* carried articles on the NCJW and its leadership.

<sup>131</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (January 1898): 191; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (February 1898): 245.

<sup>132</sup> See, e.g., "Juvenile Department," *American Jewess* (April 1895): 42, *American*

The *American Jewess*'s constituency were Central European Jewish women and their descendants, most of whom had emigrated to American shores in the 1830s and 1840s, the so-called "German Jews." As noted, *American Jewess* regularly reported on the activities of Jewish women in philanthropy, particularly among Jews. Americanizing the newly-arrived immigrants represented one of their philanthropic missions. The journal reported that the Atlanta Hebrew Orphans' Home's Board of Directors continued taking to heart the Hon. Simon Wolf's words at its 1889 dedication: "Teach them next to the love of God the love of country, and let no flag other than that of the starry emblem ever be unfurled over this House."<sup>133</sup> However, their view of Eastern European Jewish immigrants had a mixed character. An article in the January 1897 issue, "The Russian Jews," expressed the author's view of this group as ignorant, fanatic, superstitious, greedy, and referred to the time spent in "yeshlbahs" [sic], presumably a reference to yeshivas, that many of them were "... young men of brilliant talents, casting pearls, in the miserable jargon dialect, to the jargon readers . . ."<sup>134</sup> According to the editor's grandson, Rosa Sonneschein always referred to Yiddish as "jargon."<sup>135</sup> By November 1898. East Side "Ghetto Types" received respectful treatment in a photographic spread featuring six men and women.<sup>136</sup>

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*Jewess* (May 1895): 93, and *American Jewess* (June 1895): 142; Leah Levy, "How to Teach the Infant Class at Sabbath School," *American Jewess* (August 1897): 221, *American Jewess* (October 1897): 299, and *American Jewess* (January 1898): 175.

<sup>133</sup> "In the World of Charity," *American Jewess* (November 1895): 119.

<sup>134</sup> Bendno, "The Russian Jews," 170.

<sup>135</sup> Loth, "The *American Jewess*," 43.

<sup>136</sup> A. H. Fromenson, "Ghetto Types," *American Jewess* (November 1898): 5-6.



In a June 1898 editorial connecting the American cause against Spanish colonialism to the Spanish persecution of Jews during the years of the Inquisition, declaring “. . .let every Jewess remember that the fight is against Spain, the arch enemy of our religion, the slayer of our ancestors,” *American Jewess* called upon readers to “Remember not only the Maine, but also the Marranos!” there also appeared a notice of two publications, *The Jewish Gazette* and *The Jewish Daily News*, “written in the ‘Judisch’ jargon and printed with Hebrew type,” the former in existence for twenty-five years.<sup>137</sup> A month later, the magazine printed an article by Alexander Harkavy, “Yiddish; Or the Language of the Modern Jew,” in which he noted that if a language is to be demeaned as a jargon, “. . . the English language would be the most despicable specimen of speech on earth!”<sup>138</sup> In November 1898, *American Jewess* editorially congratulated *Dos yidishes tageblatt* for its efforts to exhume the Spanish-American war “Jewish soldier boys whose bodies lie mouldering in unconsecrated ground, whether in Cuba, Porto [sic] Rico or in the camps . . .” and give them a Jewish burial in New York.<sup>139</sup>

*American Jewess* was originally published in Chicago. The May 1896 edition announced that the magazine had moved to “the metropolis of America,”<sup>140</sup> that is, New York City. The number of advertisements declined in the magazine’s new

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<sup>137</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (June 1898): 157-158.

<sup>138</sup> Alexander Harkavy, “Yiddish; Or the Language of the Modern Jew,” *American Jewess* (July-August 1898): 40.

<sup>139</sup> “Editorials,” *American Jewess* (November 1898): 41.

<sup>140</sup> “Publisher’s Notes,” *American Jewess* (May 1896): 441.

location. By April 1898, the editor claimed a circulation of 29,000.<sup>141</sup> In the July-August 1898 edition, *American Jewess* informed readers that the journal was under new management, although Sonneschein would remain on the editorial board.<sup>142</sup> In May 1899, the magazine announced that it would henceforth appear on a monthly basis. The last issue appeared on August 1899. The publishers blamed readers for failing to support of the magazine, even to the extent of not paying for subscriptions in full. They accused the English-Jewish reading public of self-hatred and claimed that this public was ashamed of being associated with an interest in things Jewish. The publishers noted the contrast between their would-be readers and those of the “jargon press,” the “barbaric Russian” Jews, who without embarrassment read their Yiddish papers in public.<sup>143</sup>

On April 7, 1913, the first issue of a new magazine appeared: *Di froyen-velt*, subtitled *The Jewish Ladies Home Journal* in English on its masthead. *Di froyen-velt* did not imitate the *Ladies' Home Journal*, as a comparison of all extant issues of both magazines revealed. *Di froyen-velt* appeared as a monthly from April 1913 until it became a weekly on January 30, 1914. Each front cover announced the magazine as “a monthly journal devoted to the interests of the Jewish woman and the Jewish home.” When it became a weekly, that announcement changed: “a weekly journal for the Jewish home and family.” Aaron Grayzel, a publisher of small community papers and *Di bronzvil post* [*The Brownsville Post*]

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<sup>141</sup> “A Word to Advertisers,” *American Jewess* (April 1898): 23.

<sup>142</sup> “To Our Readers,” *American Jewess* (July-August 1898): 64.

<sup>143</sup> “Valedictory,” *American Jewess* (August 1899): 3.

served as editor.<sup>144</sup> The magazine's manager and coeditor, Mordkhe-Leyb Mansky, emigrated to the United States from Warsaw in 1903. He joined *Di froyen-velt*, after writing for various Yiddish papers, including the *Forverts* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, and editing the *Nuarker vokhenblat*, a Newark weekly.<sup>145</sup>

Grayzel's and Mansky's publication followed the conventions of the middle-class women's magazine genre.<sup>146</sup> The Yiddish press, whether magazine or newspaper, developed within the context of immigrants entering the middle class; becoming middle class, or taking on a middle class lifestyle and attitudes in and of itself represented "becoming American." *Di froyen-velt* contained recipes, fashions, home economics tips, question and answer columns, expert advice, advertisements, sheet music, short fiction, and "*Fun der froyen velt*" ["From the Woman's World"], a regular feature covering women's issues. *Di froyen-velt*'s stance towards religion and what it considered religious superstition will be discussed in the next chapter.

As with many of the Yiddish publications, *Di froyen-velt* sought to actively engage readers; women could write to Lena Perlmutter in the regular feature "The Post," during the magazine's monthly phase. The female voice of Lena Perlmutter belonged to Jacob Fridman. Born in Lithuania in 1880, he received a traditional religious education, coming to America in 1899. By the time he began writing for *Di froyen-velt*, he had written novels, humorous skits, articles and reportage, in addition

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<sup>144</sup> Chaikin, *Yidische bleter in amerike*, 203.

<sup>145</sup> "Manski, mordkhe-leyb," in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, Vol. 5, edited by Efraim Auerbach, Isaac Charlash and Mose Starkman (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1963), 461. This *Leksikon* entry errs, however, by confusing *Froyen-velt* with *Froyen zhurnal*, the latter appearing between 1922 and 1923.

<sup>146</sup> For a description of *Froyen-velt*, see Hyman, "America, Freedom, and

to editing a Yiddish weekly. Lena Perlmutter was just one of his many *noms de plume*. While writing for *Di froyen-velt*, he also served in editorial and reportorial capacities for *Dos yidishes tageblatt*.<sup>147</sup> Lena challenged readers to discuss their opinions on the “*nadn-frage*”--the “dowry question.” Lena came out firmly against the practice.<sup>148</sup>

During its life, *Di froyen-velt* had carried articles on the problems of women working in shops, with poor wages and possible damage to health. It recommended labor union involvement.<sup>149</sup> As for married women, the magazine noted that reduction in family income due to the wife’s withdrawal from the job market would lead to other problems, such as unhappiness with husbands over time spent at union meetings. The journal suggested wives develop a more supportive attitude, save, and join fraternal orders or insurance organizations.<sup>150</sup> For reasons unknown, *Di froyen-velt* ceased publication with the March 15, 1914 issue. Another Yiddish women’s magazine would not appear until 1922, eight years later.

*Froyen zhurnal/The Jewish Women’s Home Journal*, appeared in monthly form from May 1922 until October 1923 with the exception of a combined issue in June-July 1923. From May 1922 until February 1923, *Froyen zhurnal* [literally,

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Assimilation,” 116-118.

<sup>147</sup> Zalman Rejzen, “Fridman yakov-yisroel,” in *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese un filologie*, Vol. 3 (Vilna: Kletzkin Farlag, 1929), 185; Chaim-Leib Fuchs, “Fridman, yakov-yeshaye,” in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, Vol. 7, edited by Efraim Auerbach, Jacob Birnbaum, Dr. Elias Shulman and Moshe Starkman (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1968), 480-481.

<sup>148</sup> “Di post,” *Di froyen-velt* (November 1913): 18; “Di post,” *Di froyen-velt* (December 1913): 16.

<sup>149</sup> “Di ekonomishe lage fun der idisher froy,” Part 1, *Di froyen-velt* (July 1913): 3-4.

<sup>150</sup> “Di ekonomishe lage fun der idisher froy,” Part 2, *Di froyen-velt* (August 1913): 3.

“Women’s Journal”] averaged sixty-eight pages per issue, with five of those constituting the English section (approximately 6.5 percent of the magazine). From March 1923 to October 1923, the magazine contained fifty-two pages, with three in English.<sup>151</sup>

*Froyen zhurnal* carried no articles advocating labor unions, the hardships of life as a working woman, or friction over a husband who spent time trying to better the family’s economic position through involvement in trade union activities.

From its inception, *Froyen zhurnal* announced itself interested in Americanization, stating “Jewish immigrant--you who are anxious to learn what America means and represents, here is your medium for the knowledge you seek.”<sup>152</sup> The Yiddish section carried a regular cooking column, humor section, children’s section, several health columns by Dr. B. Dubrovsky, L. Lakson’s “Famous Women in World History,” and Yiddish theatre features. It also carried an etiquette column, reports of activities in Jewish women’s organizations compiled from letters by readers, occasional columns on beauty, home economy and decoration, sheet music, poetry, short fiction, essays, as well as articles on everything from religion to international women’s congresses.

*Froyen zhurnal*’s English section ostensibly appeared for the benefit of readers’ American-born daughters although authors directed some articles directly to immigrant mothers. The English section had fewer features than the Yiddish, carrying

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<sup>151</sup> For descriptions of *Froyen zhurnal*, see Hyman, “America, Freedom, and Assimilation,” 120-122; Glanz, *The Jewish Woman in America*, Vol. 1, 88; Pratt, “Transitions in Judaism,” 691-692.

<sup>152</sup> “The Jewish Woman’s Home Journal,” *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922): 66.

articles, poetry, and short fiction. In the magazine's last three issues, a full-page children's section appeared, "Our Children's Page," compiled by "Cousin Henrietta," as well as an advice column by "Constance." The Fashions Department contained pictures with bilingual captions. The pictures originated and appeared simultaneously with the English-language middle class women's magazine, *Pictorial Review*. This would enable both mother and daughter to read the fashion pages together, so that ". . . the mother will no longer be a 'greenhorn' in her daughter's eyes."<sup>153</sup> Writers in the Yiddish pages of *Froyen zhurnal* included two who continued to publish extensively in *Der tog*: Sarah B. Smith and Ray Malis.<sup>154</sup> The authors in the English-language section included Harold Berman, Ray Bril and I. L. Bril.

The world of Jewish journalism in America was close: Harold Berman and the Brils wrote for the English-language section of *Dos yidishes tageblatt/The Jewish Daily News*. I. L. Bril, a journalist, Zionist and ordained Rabbi, began writing for the English pages of *Di yidishe velt/The Jewish World*, a paper founded in 1902 by Louis Marshall as a counterweight to the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and the Socialist *Forverts*.<sup>155</sup> *Di yidishe velt* lasted from June 1902 until May 11, 1904, when Ezekiel Sarasohn, the son and partner of Kasriel-tsvi Sarasohn, publisher of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, purchased *Di yidishe velt*.<sup>156</sup> Other writers connected with *Di*

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<sup>153</sup> "Di froyen zhurnal," *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922): 3.

<sup>154</sup> "Fun monat tsu monat," *Froyen zhurnal* (November 1922): 5.

<sup>155</sup> For I. L. Bril, see, Zalman Rejzen, "Bril (lip), yitshak-lipa," in *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur prese un filologie*, Vol. 1 (Vilna: Kletzkin Farlag, 1928), 436-437; "Bril (lip), yitshak-lipa," in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, Vol. 1, edited by Shmuel Niger, Jacob Shatzky and Moshe Sarkman (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1956), 474; Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 319.

<sup>156</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz, "Louis Marshall's Yiddish Newspaper, *The Jewish World*:"

*yidische velt* appear throughout this study: the paper's original editor, Max Bucans, was replaced by D. M. Hermalin, later a mainstay of *Der tog*,<sup>157</sup> as was the poet Yehoash (Solomon Bloomgarden).<sup>158</sup> Jacob Rombro, also known as Philip Krantz, served as city editor.<sup>159</sup> Morris Rosenfeld, the "Sweatshop poet," became a regular writer for *Dos yidishes tageblatt*.<sup>160</sup>

*Dos yidishes ageblatt's* publisher, Kasriel-tsvi Sarasohn, a conservative *maskil* [believer in the *Haskalah*, or Enlightenment], was born in the Suwalka region of Lithuania near the Prussian border.<sup>161</sup> Sarasohn's first visit to the United States occurred in 1869, before Jewish mass immigration began in earnest. After several trips back home, he settled here in 1871.<sup>162</sup> In 1872, he returned to New York City from Syracuse, New York, where he served as a rabbi, to plunge into the world of Yiddish journalism. He published a weekly that lasted five months, the *Niu-yorker yidische tsaytung*. Others had attempted launching weeklies prior to Sarasohn, for

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A Study in Contrasts," *Jewish Social Studies* 25, 2 (April 1963): 123-124; Chaikin, *Yidische bleter in amerike*, 137-145.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 106n.12

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 106n.13.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 106n.13.

<sup>161</sup> Alexander Harkavy, "Di ershte tsaytn fun di idische prese in amerika," *Yidishes tagelbatt* Jubilee Number, Literary Supplement No. 3, March 20, 1910; Berl Kagan, *Yidische shtet, shtetlekh un dorfishe yishuvim in lite biz 1918* (NY: Self-published, 1990).

<sup>162</sup> On Sarasohn's early life, see Victor R. Greene, *American Immigrant Leaders*, 88 et seq.; Zalman Rejzen, "Sarasohn (sarazon), kasriel, tsvi," in *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur prese un filologie* Vol. 4 (Vilna: Kletzkin Farlag, 1929), 886-888; Moshe Starkman, "Di sarazohn-zikhroynes vegn der yidisher prese in amerike," in *Yorbukh fun amopteyl I*, edited by Alexander Mukdoni and Jacob Shatzky, 273-274 (NY: American Section of YIVO, 1938).

example *Die idische zeitung/The Hebrew Times* (1870-1872), *Die post* (1870-1871), and the *Hebrew News* (1871).<sup>163</sup> In 1874, Sarasohn began publishing the first truly successful Yiddish weekly in America, the *Yudishe gazetten*, which ran until 1928.<sup>164</sup> He unsuccessfully tried turning the *Yudishe gazetten* into a daily twice, in 1881 and 1883; twice he failed.

Success in founding a daily came in January 1885 with the publication of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. Sarasohn and Sons would publish it without interruption for the next forty-five years.<sup>165</sup> Kasriel-tsvi Sarasohn had created not just America's first Yiddish daily newspaper, but the first Yiddish daily in the world. He would become the first magnate of the Yiddish press, buying up opposition papers, including, as noted earlier, *Di yidische velt*.<sup>166</sup> To put his accomplishment into perspective, it would be another three years before the "classic" writer Y. L. Peretz would make his Yiddish literary debut in Russia. The Anarchist *Fraye arbeyter shtime* was founded in 1890, *Forverts* in 1897,<sup>167</sup> *Der fraynd*, the first European Yiddish daily paper

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<sup>163</sup> Chaikin, *Yidische bleter in amerike*, 51-53; Moshe Starkman, "Di antshteyung fun der yidisher prese in amerike," 13, 16-17.

<sup>164</sup> Chaikin, *Yidische bleter in amerike*, 54; Moshe Starkman, "Di antshteyung fun der yidisher prese in amerike," 17-19; Ezekiel Lifschutz, "The yudishe gazeten (874-1928)," translated by David Neal Miller, *Yiddish* 2, 2-3 (Winter-Spring 1976): 32-38.

<sup>165</sup> Moshe Starkman, "Di yidische prese in amerike, 1875-1885," 250.

<sup>166</sup> Kalman Marmor, "Der ershter yidisher tsaytung-trost," in *Der onhoyb fun der yidisher literatur in amerike (1870-1890)* (NY: Yiddisher Kultur Farband-YKUF, 1944), 114-117.

<sup>167</sup> Moshe Starkman, "Tsum onheyb fun der yidisher arbeter-prese," in *Geklibene shriftn*, Vol. 1, compiled by Mordecai Khlamish and Yitzhak Yanasovitch (NY: CYCO Publishing House, 1979), 110, 121.



(from St. Petersburg) in 1903,<sup>168</sup> and *Der tog* in 1914, newspapers not acquired by Sarasohn in his role as press magnate. By 1921, Yiddish newspapers had a daily paid circulation of 400,000, without counting copies passed from reader to reader.<sup>169</sup>

Sociologist Robert E. Park quoted with approval a statement in the *Jewish Communal Register 1917-1918* that the Yiddish press “. . . has the peculiar distinction of having practically created its own reading public.”<sup>170</sup> Neither weekly nor daily newspapers were part of the regular lives of the immigrants before coming to these shores. Sarasohn started by selling the *Yudishe gazetten* where Jewish wives bought food for the *Shabos* dinner. Unable to entice Jewish boys to hawk the *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, since they felt ashamed of peddling a Yiddish newspaper, Christian newsboys did the job, learning just enough Yiddish to sell their wares.<sup>171</sup> Kasriel-tsvi Sarasohn, writing about the early days of the *Yudishe gazetten*, said he faced a battle on three fronts: “fanaticism, *maskilism* and capitalism.” The ultra-religious maintained that only religious books should be read on *Shabos* (the weekly came out on Fridays); the *maskilim* preferred either German or Hebrew papers. As to “capitalism,” Sarasohn was not referring to the class struggle, but to the struggle of keeping the publication afloat without sufficient capital.<sup>172</sup>

From the beginning, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* was a “daily” paper which did not

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<sup>168</sup> Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Making Jews Modern: The Yiddish and Ladino Press in the Russian and Ottoman Empires* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 5.

<sup>169</sup> Soltes, *The Yiddish Press: An Americanizing Agency*, 24.

<sup>170</sup> Quoted in Robert E. Park, *The Immigrant Press and Its Control* (NY:Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922), 93.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 290-291; Chaikin, *Yidische bleter in amerike*, 278.

<sup>172</sup> Starkman, “Di sarazohn-zikhroynes vegn der yidisher prese in amerike,” 279.

come out every day. Being traditionalist or Orthodox in orientation, it did not appear on *Shabos* or other Jewish holidays. Years after the paper had ceased publication, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* writer and editor Gedaliah Bublick, who worked for the paper from 1904 to 1928, set forth its three aims: to defend Orthodox Judaism in America, resist the inroads of Reform Judaism, and counter Jewish radicalism.<sup>173</sup> The newspaper also had a decidedly pro-Zionist political stance. Unlike Socialist or Anarchist journals, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* declared itself an organ for “*kol yisroel*”--the “community of Israel,” that is, without class distinctions.

Before starting a woman’s section, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* had two English-language pages. The first attempt at this lasted five years, starting in 1901. One of the writers, Rose Pastor, under the name of “Zelda,” had worked as a cigar-maker and in 1903 advised a reader in her “Just between Ourselves, Girls” column that marriage with a Christian was wrong.<sup>174</sup> (Shortly thereafter she married the millionaire William Graham Stokes, wearing a crucifix at the wedding.<sup>175</sup>) Later Rose Pastor Stokes would work at *Forverts* writing answers to readers in its “*A bintel brief*” [“A Bundle of Letters”] feature.<sup>176</sup> The second attempt at an English-language section came on November 2, 1914.<sup>177</sup>

On November 14, 1914, a woman’s page for *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, “*Di froy un di familie*” [“The Woman and the Family”], appeared for the first time, sharing the

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<sup>173</sup> Bublick, “*Dos ‘tageblat’ un ortodoksishes yudentum in amerike*,” 80-81.

<sup>174</sup> Arthur Zipser and Pearl Zipser, *Fire and Grace: The Life of Rose Pastor Stokes* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989), 1-2, 21.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>176</sup> Cahan, *In di mitele yohren*, 552.

back page with “The English Department.”<sup>178</sup> The mainstays of “*Di froy un di familie*” consisted of “Sha! Sha!,” Israel Zevin, better known as Tashrak,<sup>179</sup> writing a humor column or stories for children, and A. Sheps who wrote columns under the name of “Eliash.”<sup>180</sup> Other features included occasional columns by L. Rozenherts or “The American *Rebbetsin*” [“The American Rabbi’s Wife”], *Khosn-kale briv* [“Groom and Bride Letters”--a personals column], articles or columns on raising children by A. Sofer, health articles, and a filler section of “strange and interesting” facts.

“*Di froy un di familie*” took up approximately a half page, the other half serving as the English section. “*Di froy un di familie*” evolved.<sup>181</sup> It gradually took shape early in 1914, beginning with a column concerning children.<sup>182</sup> By May 22, 1914, “*Far unzere kinder*” [“For Our Children”] had moved to the back page along

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<sup>177</sup> “The English Department,” *Yidishes tageblatt*, November 2, 1914.

<sup>178</sup> “Di froy un di familie,” *Yidishes tageblatt*, November 14, 1914.

<sup>179</sup> For Zevin (Tashtrak), see Shelby Shapiro, “Yiddish Cultural Figures: Isreal-Joseph Zevin (Tashtrak),” *Tsum punkt/To the Point* 3, 5 (June-July 2002): 7; Elias Shulman, “Onheyb fun der yidisher literatur in amerike,” in *Portretn un etiudn* (NY: CYCO Bikher Farlag, 1979), 450-458.

<sup>180</sup> For A. Sheps, better known as A. Almi (Eliash), see Shelby Shapiro, “Yiddish Cultural Figures: A. Almi,” *Tsum punkt/To the Point* 7, 1 (September-October 2005): 6-7; Shea Tenenbaum, “Kaos un harmonie: vegn a. almi’s ‘gezang un gevayn,’” in *Shnit fun mayn feld*, 295-299 (NY: Sh. Tenenbaum, 1949); Shea Tenenbaum, “Der sehps oyf der akeyde: zikhroynes vegn a. almi,” in *Mitnakht in varshe*, 508-516 (NY: CYCO Publishing House, 1987).

<sup>181</sup> Cf. Mary Ellen Waller, “Popular Women’s Magazines, 1890-1917” (PhD. diss., Columbia University, 1987) for a discussion of “product life cycles,” the ways in which publications take shape, introduce innovations, react to advertisers, and so forth.

<sup>182</sup> “*Far unzere kinder*” appeared 101 times, from January 4 1914 until September 26, 1915.

with the predecessor of “*Khosn-kale briv*.”<sup>183</sup> After June 30, 1915, the masthead and title “*Di froy un di familie*” disappeared although the same columnists and format continued.

About once a week, Getzel Zelikowitch, a longtime *Dos yidishes tageblatt* associate and seminal figure in the Yiddish press, wrote a column under the female *nom de plume* “*Di litvisher khakheymenes*” [“The Lithuanian Wise Woman”]. He also wrote under the male *nom de plume* “*Der litvisher filosof*” [“The Lithuanian Philosopher”]. Zelikowitch successfully fought against the *daytshmerish* [Germanized] Yiddish used in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* prior to his arrival for a more “Yiddish Yiddish.”<sup>184</sup> His columns as “*Di litvisher khakheymenes*” addressed “we women.”

Consistent with the general orientation of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the women’s page centered women in the home and entailed the notion of sacrifice for, and service to, husband, children, family, and faith.<sup>185</sup> One article, for instance, noted that in the Old Country, the pious [*frum*] wife dreamed of serving as her husband’s footstool in the “world to come.” Even though today’s wives and daughters might laugh at their *frum* grandmothers, the article asked where would we, our rabbis and

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<sup>183</sup> “*Khosn-kale frage*” (“The Groom and Bride Question”); the change took place on September 7, 1914.

<sup>184</sup> See, Shapiro, “From *Strassen* to *Gasn*,” 19-27; Shelby Shapiro, “Yiddish Cultural Figures: Getzel Zelikowitch,” *Yiddish of Greater Washington Newsletter* 15, 4 (March-April 1995): 6.

<sup>185</sup> See, e.g., Eliash, “*Di froy in sukes*,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 22, 1915; Esther J. Ruskay, “Our Mothers,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 12, 1916; Rabbi Isadore Goodman, “The Mothers of Israel,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 14, 1922; I. L. Brill, “A Mother’s Philosophy,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 23, 1923.

teachers be today, without such grandmothers?<sup>186</sup> In an eight-part series on Jewish women in America, author Mordecai Dantzis emphasized female suffering and sacrifice.<sup>187</sup> Eliash noted that women did not receive the religious education men did, yet seemed more religious than men, claiming women had nostalgia for a religious environment.<sup>188</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt's* Associate Editor Harold Berman, wrote short stories for the *Dos yidishes tageblatt's* English section in 1923 and simultaneously worked for *Froyen zhurnal's* English Department. The titles of pieces written by Berman in 1923 illustrated the differences in emphasis between *Froyen zhurnal* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. Berman's view of women, as expressed in *Froyen zhurnal*, placed them at the center of Jewish history and religion, instilling ideals and inspiration, sacrificing for faith and family, "[they are] . . . the fountain-spring of idealism and nobility all through the dark periods of our history . . ."<sup>189</sup> In *Froyen zhurnal* he wrote the six-part series, "Jewish Women Who Made History," whose subjects included the sixteenth century Italian writer Sarah Copia Sullam; the nineteenth century English writer Grace Aguilar; the French actress Rachel Felix; Veronica, Princess of Judea; Rebecca Gratz, the American Jew who inspired Sir

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<sup>186</sup> "Dos fusbenkele bay ihre fis," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 22, 1915.

<sup>187</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, "Di idishe froy in amerika," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, appeared on December 25, 1921, December 27, 1921, December 28, 1921, December 29, 1921, January 1, 1922, January 5, 1922, January 11, 1922 and January 13, 1922.

<sup>188</sup> Eliash (A. Almi), "Di froy un elul," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 13, 1915.

<sup>189</sup> Harold Berman, "The Mid-Winter Season," *Froyen zhurnal* (February 1923): 58; to similar effect, see, Harold Berman, "Passover and the Woman," *Froyen zhurnal* (April 1923): 49; Harold Berman, "Chanukah and the Woman," *Froyen zhurnal* (December 1922): 66; and Harold Berman, "Shevuos and the Jewish Woman," *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1923): 49.

Walter Scott's portrayal of Rebecca in his novel *Ivanhoe*; and Esther Kiera, a Turkish Jew of the sixteenth century.<sup>190</sup> At approximately the same time in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, Berman wrote the Van Fish series. Between February 1923 and July 1923 five out of fourteen Van Fish stories appeared, beginning with "Bernard Van Fish, Connoisseur of Art" and ending with "Mr. Van Fish Sees the Sights of London Town."<sup>191</sup>

Esther J. Ruskay, another English-language writer for *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, published articles in *American Jewess*. There, in "Progress: Its Influence upon the Home," she wrote how women should ". . . return with heart at rest to her highest and holiest trust-the Home."<sup>192</sup> Around twenty years later in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* she extolled "our mothers [who] were less educated from the modern point of view . . ." Unquestioningly adhering to the laws of Sinai , she scornfully compared the knowledge of the "less educated mothers" to ". . . the scientific pap fed to him [the progressive Jew] by Jewish evolutionists . . ."<sup>193</sup> Another writer, Lena Rozenherts, praised the pious women who read religious writings especially crafted for women.<sup>194</sup> She also stated that "[a]s woman and mother she fulfills the holiest duty which life

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<sup>190</sup> Harold Berman's "Jewish Women Who Made History" feature appeared in seven issues of *Froyen zhurnal* from January 1923 to June-July 1923, see Bibliography for details.

<sup>191</sup> Harold Berman's fourteen Van Fish stories appeared in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* from August 31, 1922 to November 7, 1923; see Bibliography for details of the six stories mentioned in the text above.

<sup>192</sup> Esther Ruskay, "Progress: Its Influence upon the Home," *American Jewess* (August 1895): 226.

<sup>193</sup> Esther J. Ruskay, "Our Mothers," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 12, 1916.

<sup>194</sup> Lena Rozenherts, "Di vaybershe tkhines," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 2, 1914.

places upon her and without her our entire existence would have no goal or purpose.”<sup>195</sup>

Interestingly, for a newspaper which placed women in the home, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* had, next to *Forverts* and *Der tog*, the fewest number of columns and articles on housework and household tips for the same time period: ten columns and seven articles, as compared to twenty-six and twenty-four in *Forverts*, and two hundred eighty-one columns and thirteen articles in *Der tog*. The statistics on recipes followed the same pattern: 21 columns and twelve articles in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, eighty-five and thirty in *Forverts*, and one hundred seventy-four columns and twenty-eight articles in *Der tog*.

As if to reinforce a belief in a mother’s primary role in the family, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* focused on children. From January 4, 1914 until September 26, 1915, one hundred one columns of stories, riddles and so forth, appeared under the title “*Far unzere kinder*” [“For Our Children”]. Within a week after the end of that feature, a new one began, Tashrak’s “*Mayse’lekh far ayere kinder*” [“Little Stories for Your Children”], which ended after a run of two hundred twenty-nine columns. Other Bible story type features and articles would follow the end of the Tashrak series.<sup>196</sup> In the same period, *Der tog* had fourteen in its “*Ayere kinder*” [“Your Children”] feature,<sup>197</sup> and *Forverts* had five columns printed in its “*Lezt es far ayere kinder*”

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<sup>195</sup> Lena Rozenherts, “Ferahayrathe un unferhayrathe froyen,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 20, 1915.

<sup>196</sup> Tashrak (Israel J. Zevin), “*Mayse’lekh far ayere kinder*” ran from October 3, 1915 until July 13, 1920.

<sup>197</sup> Prof. Arthur Dean, “*Ayere kinder*,” *Der tog*, ran from June 4, 1925 to August 5, 1925 and focused on child-raising.

[“*Read This to Your Children*”] column.<sup>198</sup>

The number of features aimed at children did not, of course, delineate the only differences between *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and the *Forverts*. Underneath the title on the front page of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* appeared the words “*Organ far kol yisroel*” [“Organ of the Community of Israel”]; flanking the title of *Forverts* on its front page were two small boxes: “Workers of all lands, unite!” and “The emancipation of the workers is the task of the workers themselves,” both quotations from *The Communist Manifesto*. *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Forverts* held fundamentally different political viewpoints. Advertisements announcing various religious organizations and religiously-based fraternal orders filled the pages of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*; the pages of *Forverts* contained announcements of union meetings and the secular fraternal order, Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring. *Forverts* printed editorials on both May Day and the American Labor Day, often critical of reformist union leaders such as Samuel Gompers.<sup>199</sup> Not once did a Labor Day editorial in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* even mention the labor movement.<sup>200</sup>

*Forverts* had its origins in the Socialist movement attempting to build labor unions for Jewish workers. Abraham (Ab.) Cahan, who edited *Forverts* until his death in 1951, was born in 1860 and escaped Russia to avoid arrest as a student

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<sup>198</sup> “Lezt es far ayere kinder,” *Forverts*, ran from May 5, 1918 to June 9, 1918.

<sup>199</sup> See, e.g., “Leybor-dei,” *Forverts*, September 3, 1917.

<sup>200</sup> See, e.g., “Leybor dey,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 8, 1914; “Der yomtov fun arbeyt,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 4, 1916; “Leibor dei,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 3, 1917; “Hayntiger leibor dei,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 2, 1918; and “Leibor dei,” September 1, 1919.



radical, coming to New York City in 1882.<sup>201</sup> After learning English well enough to teach the language to other immigrants, he became involved in agitation for socialism and the formation of labor unions.<sup>202</sup>

To reach their target audience of Jewish workers, the Jewish intellectuals who built the labor and radical movements had to use a language they had either abandoned or in which they no longer felt comfortable, namely Yiddish. For Cahan, Yiddish was a tool for reaching the Jewish masses. Dr. Chaim (Charles) Spivak who would later write for both *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Forverts*, apparently knew Cahan for three years before realizing his friend could speak Yiddish fluently; Cahan preferred to speak Russian.<sup>203</sup> Cahan and Spivak came out of the Am Olam movement, which sought to build Jewish agricultural colonies, as did the future lexicographer Alexander Harkavy and Cahan's associate at the *Forverts*, Mikhail Zametkin.<sup>204</sup> Credit goes to Cahan for being the first orator using Yiddish to address a crowd of Jewish workers in New York.<sup>205</sup>

Realizing the value of the press, Jewish Socialists unsuccessfully tried to start newspapers three times. Finally, on April 22, 1897 they launched the *Forverts*, with Cahan at the helm as editor. Cahan intended that workers would see the *Forverts* as

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<sup>201</sup> Moses Rischin, "Cahan, Abraham (1860-1951)," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 5 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 14.

<sup>202</sup> Madison, *Jewish Publishing in America*, 115.

<sup>203</sup> Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts*, 52-53.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 32-35; see, also, Alexander Harkavy, "Chapters from My Life," translated by Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Jewish Archives* 33, 1 (April 1981): 35-51; Starkman, "Tsum onheyb fun der yidisher arbeter-prese," 103-106.

<sup>205</sup> Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts*, 73.

a *vegwayzer* [“advisor, guide”] to life in America.<sup>206</sup> The ideological dogmatism and interference of his “comrades” was so much that Cahan stayed only about five months before quitting.<sup>207</sup> His desire was to start, not a class, but a mass, paper. After quitting *Forverts*, he went to work for Lincoln Steffens as a reporter at the *Commercial Advertiser* and began to publish short stories in English.<sup>208</sup> Cahan returned to the *Forverts* in 1902 because the doctrinaire Socialists running the paper had, in their ideological purity, caused circulation to stagnate with their heavy diet of theoretical articles and anti-religious diatribes. Cahan demanded, and received, total control over the paper and its contents. However, for the rest of his tenure at *Forverts*, he had to constantly fight ideological purists such as the writers Morris Winchevsky and Mikhail Zametkin.<sup>209</sup> To anyone reading *Forverts*, no doubt existed as to its political allegiance.

The newspaper was filled with stories about the Socialist and labor movements, both in the United States and worldwide. During elections, in addition to stories and editorials calling upon readers to vote for Socialist Party of America candidates, the names of the Party’s leadership and candidates appeared on the editorial page along with the paper’s publisher, editor and subscription cost.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Cahan, *In di mitele yohren*, 256; “Der ‘forverts’ als a kval fun entviklung un inteligents,” *Forverts*, February 15, 1925.

<sup>207</sup> Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 120.

<sup>208</sup> Madison, *Jewish Publishing in America*, 116; Moses Rischin, “Abraham Cahan and the New York *Commercial Advertiser*: A Study in Acculturation,” *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society* 43, 1 (September 1953): 10-36.

<sup>209</sup> Cahan, *In di mitele yohren*, 308, 504-507; Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 122, 123.

<sup>210</sup> See, e.g., “Vote for the Socialist Party,” *Forverts*, October 22, 1925.

Despite these facts, Cahan's opponents in the Forward Association continually complained that the newspaper did not have enough of a Socialist character.<sup>211</sup> Emblematic of Cahan's problems in building a mass newspaper with constant sniping from his "comrades" in the Forward Association was his decision to print an article which originally appeared in the *Commercial Advertiser* concerning books for the blind. When it first appeared, other English-language publications picked up the story, so that it enjoyed national prominence. Cahan's critics in the Forward Association, however, reacted to the story by demanding to know what this had to do with the class struggle and the Socialist revolution.<sup>212</sup>

Under Cahan's leadership, the circulation of the *Forverts* grew by five times to 19,000 within months of his return.<sup>213</sup> In 1900, *Dos yidishes tageblatt's* circulation stood at 40,000 and *Forverts'* at 19,502. However, by 1905, *Dos yidishes tageblatt's* circulation was 48,031 to *Forverts*, 53,190. In 1910, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* circulation rose to 68,769, while *Forverts* dropped to 45,000.<sup>214</sup> Nevertheless, by 1915, *Forverts* clearly emerged as winner of the circulation battle with 196,079 to *Dos yidishes tageblatt's* 64,496.<sup>215</sup> The *Forverts* circulation of 1915 represented roughly ten percent of the Jewish immigrant population. By the 1920s,

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<sup>211</sup> Cahan, *In di mitele yohren*, 273, 380, 506-507; Chaikin, *Yidische bleter in amerike*, 121-123, 164-165\_

<sup>212</sup> Cahan, *In di mitele yohren.*, 302-304.

<sup>213</sup> Madison, *Jewish Publishing in America*, 117.

<sup>214</sup> Shapiro, "From *Strassen* to *Gasn*," 20; Soltes, *The Yiddish Press: An Americanizing Agency*, 24.

<sup>215</sup> *N. W. Ayers & Son's American Newspaper Annual and Directory* (Phila: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1915), 1281.

*Forverts* came out in eleven local and regional editions.<sup>216</sup> The circulation of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* continued to fall, with the sole exception of 1922 when it reached 77,767.<sup>217</sup> *Der tog*'s circulation when founded in 1916 was 76,409.<sup>218</sup> In the period under study it would reach its high point in 1917 with 81,029,<sup>219</sup> and its low point in 1923 with 58,750.<sup>220</sup>

Regular features in *Forverts* included the "Gallery of Missing Husbands," comprised of photographs of men who had deserted their wives along with short descriptions; serialized novels; and "A bintel brief," ["A Bundle of Letters"] a column which answered readers' questions about everything from life in America to love affairs gone wrong.<sup>221</sup>

On February 2, 1917, the women's page, "*Froyen-interesen*" ["The Interests of Women"] debuted. After its next appearance on February 11, 1917, the section

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<sup>216</sup> Rischin, "Cahan, Abraham (1860-1951)," 15.

<sup>217</sup> *N. W. Ayers & Son's American Newspaper Annual and Directory* (Phila: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1922), 1340.

<sup>218</sup> *N. W. Ayers & Son's American Newspaper Annual and Directory* (Phila: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1916), 1289.

<sup>219</sup> *N. W. Ayers & Son's American Newspaper Annual and Directory* (Phila: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1917), 1292.

<sup>220</sup> *N. W. Ayers & Son's American Newspaper Annual and Directory* (Phila: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1923), 1376.

<sup>221</sup> For collections "A bintel brif," see *A Bintel Brief: Sixty Years of Letters from the Lower East Side to the Jewish Daily Forward*, edited by Isaac Metzker with an introduction and notes by Harry Golden (NY: Ballantine Books, 1971), and *A Bintel Brief: Letters to the Jewish Daily Forward, 1950-1980*, Vol. II, compiled and edited by Isaac Metzker (NY: The Viking Press, 1981). Some authors have raised questions as to the authenticity of the purported letter-writers, see, Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 191; Marvin Bressler, "Selected Family Patterns in W. I. Thomas' Unfinished Study of the Bintl Brief," *American Sociological Review* 17, 5 (October 1952): 564.

came out weekly on Sundays. \_At first, the page consisted of articles on suffrage, humorous sketches by Berl Botwinik,<sup>222</sup> with a story of scandal, sensation or murder on the rest of the page. Often a line drawing by artist Z. Maud accompanied one of the stories. On March 3, 1918, the longest-lasting feature began, “*Notitsen fun der froyen-velt*” [“Notes from the Women’s World”]. Written without attribution, it covered everything from news of the suffrage movement to stories concerning the battles over long skirts. It appeared almost without interruption, regardless of other changes in the page’s format. “Notes from the Women’s World” served as the site for most reports of women in the public sphere.

By 1919, the *Froyen-interesen* page typically contained an installment of a serialized novel; “Notes from the Women’s World;” an article on child-rearing, education or child psychology by Dr. Esther Luria; sketches of the lives of shopgirls by Sadie Vinokur; and Jacob Podalier’s “historical” pieces on Russian, Swedish or French royalty. Regina Frishvaser, who worked for the paper from 1918 onward, wrote articles on jealousy and gossip, marriage, parenting, cosmetics, fashion and wage-earning. She only mentioned Socialism in one article, “*Froyen mit shtimrekht*” [“Women with the Right to Vote”], which noted that the Socialist Party took a pro-woman stance and even had a few candidates.<sup>223</sup> Housework and recipe columns and articles appeared on an occasional basis, often under Lena Sherman’s byline. It was not until 1923, with the introduction of the rotogravure section, that *Forverts* had a regular, and nonjudgmental, fashion section. Prior to 1923, when fashion articles

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<sup>222</sup> For Berl Botwinik, see, Shelby Shapiro, “Yiddish Cultural Figures: Berl Botwinik,” *Tsum punkt/To the Point* 2, 4 (May 2001): 7.

<sup>223</sup> Regina Frishvaser, “Froyen mit shtimrekht,” *Forverts*, November 9, 1919.

appeared, they often had a disapproving tone, as if an interest in women's fashions represented the height of frivolity.<sup>224</sup>

The masthead for *Froyen-interesen* changed in 1920: before and after 1920, two graphics framed the title, a mother with children on the left, a grandmother figure on the right. The 1919 version presented a woman with a crying baby. By 1920, the babies had grown into little children listening to their mother read. A grandmother knitted in the 1919 masthead. In 1920, she continued to knit, but with another woman sitting nearby. These images of women placed them within the domestic sphere. Woman as wage-earner, political activist, or independent person never appeared on the masthead.<sup>225</sup>

By the end of the period under study, *Froyen-interesen* ceased filling an entire page. The conclusions of stories begun on earlier pages and "Our English Page," a section which began on February 4, 1923, took up between one-third to one-half of the page. Before "Our English Page" expanded, Sarah Taksen, originally writing as "A. Nurs" ["A. Nurse"] wrote a medical column. "Notes from the Women's World" and a collection of miscellaneous factoids, "Odd Things about Women," appeared along with occasional recipe or housekeeping articles or features, usually written by Judith Kopf, originally as "A. Froy" ["A. Woman"] and then under her own name. Besides *Froyen-interesen*, a full-fledged fashion section appeared in the rotogravure

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<sup>224</sup> See, also, Sellers, "World of Our Mothers," 98, for a general description of the *Forverts* women's page in 1919.

<sup>225</sup> Historian Rachel Rojanski made this point in a paper delivered at the 2004 Biennial Scholars' Conference on American Jewish History sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society at the State University of New York in Albany on June 6, 2004.

section.

In addition to the woman's section, "The Housewife's Guide" presented recipes, food advertisements and short essays on food, nutrition, health, housework, exercise, and room décor from December 25, 1922 until May 15, 1923. As stated in its opening essay, "The Housewife's Guide" sought to acquaint the Jewish mother and housewife with interesting details about groceries, food articles and other articles. . ."<sup>226</sup> Covering almost a full page, only the title and the names of products were in English. "The Housewife's Guide" did not appear on the women's page.

On April 2, 1925, the first of three features entitled "*Delikatessen zshurnal*" ["Delicatessen Journal"] appeared, sponsored by Branfmann's Meat Products; the last came out on April 22, 1925. Considering the decidedly secular *Forverts*, it is noteworthy that flanking the title of this paid column were two boxes, one of which read "Kashrut, purity and health go hand in hand," the other, "Kosher delicatessen is good for eating." The first issue it also spoke about the success of the "*shomer shabos*" movement, which urged adherence to all religious strictures surrounding the Sabbath.<sup>227</sup> In the last issue of the Branfmann-sponsored column, the essay "Kashrut and Unionism" held that unions internalize a sense of justice as part and parcel of Jewish religious culture.<sup>228</sup> *Forverts*, of course, did not act in a *shomer shabos* manner, appearing every day of the week. The newspaper's support of labor unions derived not from the *tanakh* ["Torah"] but from the *toyre* ["Torah"] of Karl Marx. The newspaper nevertheless had a sense of the sacred.

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<sup>226</sup> "The Housewife's Guide/*di hauzvayf's gayd*," *Forverts*, December 25, 1922.

<sup>227</sup> "Delikatessen zshurnal," *Forverts*, April 2, 1925.

The *Forverts* stood for Americanization, at one point writing that "[w]e Socialists hold high the banner of Americanization, in the holiest sense of the concept. Our candidates are human beings who have given their lives for a principle and whose loyalty to America is a high and deep loyalty. They are Americans in the best sense."<sup>229</sup>

The newspaper in general did not believe in Jewish peoplehood or nationality. Responding to a group of readers who had written the editor about antisemitism, Cahan (or his surrogate) wrote that "[t]he *Forverts* is a newspaper which believes in and preaches international socialism, the brotherhood of all people, believes and hopes that in the future all peoples will be one happy Socialist humanity and all peoples will live as brothers."<sup>230</sup> Religion was not part of the *Forverts* agenda.<sup>231</sup> By contrast, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* connected Jewish nationhood to Orthodox religiosity, stating at one point that "We have stood, and stand now, for an ideal which can be described in the following words: to uphold in America a Judaism filled with loyalty to our past, filled with love for our traditions, filled with commitment to the Jewish nation and hope for a Jewish future."<sup>232</sup>

On November 5, 1914, a new daily newspaper published its first issue: *Der tog/The Day*. *Der tog* stood for Jewish nationality but uncoupled from religiosity. In

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<sup>228</sup> "Delikatessen zshurnal," *Forverts*, April 22, 1925.

<sup>229</sup> "Amerikanizeyshon," *Forverts*, August 5, 1918.

<sup>230</sup> "A bintel brief," *Forverts*, February 24, 1922.

<sup>231</sup> Cahan, *In di mitele yohren*, 279.

<sup>232</sup> "Ayer pflikht tsu ayer tsaytung," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 13, 1916; see also, "Dos 'tageblatt' ihre idealen un pflikhten," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 2, 1914; Bublick, "Dos 'tageblat' un ortodoksishes yudentum in amerike," 80.



February 1919, *Der tog* absorbed another newspaper, *Di wahrheit* [“*The Truth*”], officially becoming *Der tog-vahrhey*.<sup>233</sup> *Der tog*’s three original incorporators included Herman Bernstein, Rabbi Judah L. Magnes and Bernard Semel.

Bernstein had connections to people of wealth and influence willing to lend the fledgling newspaper money. In later years he would join Henry Ford’s “Peace Ship,” but would also become the first person to publicly denounce Ford as an antisemite.<sup>234</sup> Bernstein, who wrote about Czarist Russia for the *New York Times*, did not actually know Yiddish. As *Der tog*’s first editor, Bernstein had another staff member translate his (Bernstein’s) pieces from English. Judah L. Magnes started out as a Reform Rabbi and was among the minority of Reform Jews supporting Zionism.<sup>235</sup> . After serving at New York’s prestigious Temple Emanu-El, he broke with Reform Judaism to become a rabbi at the Conservative synagogue B’nai Jeshurun. As a social activist, he helped broker settlements along the lines of the “Protocol of Peace” in 1913, a year of strikes in the needle trades.<sup>236</sup> Bernard Semel, a businessman, also led a *landsmanshaft* [fraternal organization based of men from the same town or region] of Jews from Galicia. Being a *galitsianer* [someone from Galicia], he was unlike most of the Jewish intelligentsia were *litvaks* [people coming from Lithuania]; *litvaks* had a particular reputation for intellectual prowess. Semel had high hopes of becoming a major community force, seeing himself, according to

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<sup>233</sup> Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 254.

<sup>234</sup> For Bernstein, see, Shelby Shapiro, “Yiddish Cultural Figures: Herman Bernstein,” *Tsum punkt/To the Point* 5, 3 (February-March 2004): 3.

<sup>235</sup> Lloyd P. Gartner and Daniel Efron, “Magnes, Judah Leon (1877-1948),” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 11 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 716-717.

<sup>236</sup> Gerald Sorin, *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*

*Der tog*'s J. Chaikin, as both Magnes' "spear-carrier" and a connecting point between "uptown" and "downtown" Jews.<sup>237</sup>

The first edition of *Der tog* set forth its policy on the front-page. Thereafter, this statement would appear on the editorial page of every issue:

*Der tog* will be completely free and independent: it will not be the organ of any party, group or class of the Jewish people. Its task will be to strengthen the constructive and creative vigor of the Jewish people in America whatever class or group to which they belong. It will energetically and fearlessly come out against every destructive and ruinous force in American Jewish life.

Nonpartisan, pure in politics, conforming to the spirit of the times, accurate and rich in news both from America and abroad, the newspaper will strive to become a constructive and creative force in the life of the Jewish people.<sup>238</sup>

"Nonpartisan" did not mean a refusal to take a stand; rather, it meant that *Der tog* would not be the mouthpiece for any particular party or tendency, in contrast to *Forverts* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. As its eleventh year anniversary editorial would state, "[t]he *Tog* came as a protest against the Party and clerical politics which were conducted in the Yiddish press of that time."<sup>239</sup>

Declaring itself as "the newspaper of the Jewish intelligentsia," *Der tog* took a decidedly positive approach toward Yiddish culture.<sup>240</sup> The early Jewish Socialists utilized Yiddish strictly as the means to reach the Jewish masses and convert them to

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(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 120.

<sup>237</sup> Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 234.

<sup>238</sup> "Program Declaration," *Der tog*, November 5, 1914; *Der tog*, August 18, 1915.

<sup>239</sup> "Elf yohr 'tog,'" *Der tog*, November 5, 1925.

<sup>240</sup> Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 240.

Socialism. They hoped to do this by first building temporary Jewish unions. For them, Yiddish had no intrinsic value, but rather served as an instrument for their propaganda. While *Dos yidishes tageblatt* had employed a lot of *daytshmerish* [Germanisms] in its Yiddish especially before Getzel Zelikowitch's arrival,<sup>241</sup> *Forverts* used Americanisms, or "potato Yiddish." The printer Benyomin Katz recalled an encounter with Cahan in which he passed on complaints by writers concerning the use of "potato Yiddish." Cahan replied that only immigrants fresh off the boat would use the Yiddish word for "potato," saying "How long do you think Yiddish will last? *Ekzektli* [Exactly] twenty-five years. This generation will wither away and the new generation will go completely into English."<sup>242</sup>

Historian Tony Michels noted the central paradox for these Socialists: "The early Jewish socialists created a labor movement they hoped to dissolve eventually and a Yiddish culture they denied could exist."<sup>243</sup> Dr. Nachman Syrkin, writing in 1917 for *Der tog*, attacked the Socialists of the *Forverts*-stripe as assimilationists, stating that "[t]he assimilationists taught that the Jewish people was without worth, a freak from the world-geist, a misfortune of the past, a caricature in the present, a hollow word for the future."<sup>244</sup> Syrkin went on to attack the Socialist press for having ". . . transformed itself into a '*bintel*,'" ["bunch"], a clear reference to the

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<sup>241</sup> See, Shapiro, "From *Strassen* to *Gasn*."

<sup>242</sup> Benyomin Katz, "Ab. kahan (a zikhrones fun a yidishn zetser in nu-york," *Di pen* (April 1995): 29. Unfortunately Katz did not state when this conversation took place; since it revolved around the publication of a book by poet Moyshe-Yankev Adershleger, it must have occurred before March 18, 1940, when Adershleger died.

<sup>243</sup> Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts*, 23.

<sup>244</sup> Dr. N. Syrkin, "Der tog," *Der tog*, November 4, 1917.

*Bintel brief* feature of the *Forverts*.<sup>245</sup>

In favor of Jewish nationalism or peoplehood as well as Yiddish culture, *Der tog* published articles by Abraham Cahan's main opponent on this issue, Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky.<sup>246</sup> Unlike *Dos yidishes tageblat*, *Der tog* did not present Jewish nationality and religion as inseparable. In a 1915 column, D. M. Hermalin wrote that "We are not God's policemen and do not wish to substitute for the position of God's attorney. *Der tog* is itself not a religious newspaper and, as everyone knows, appears on the Sabbath."<sup>247</sup> *Dos yidishes tageblat* had earlier attacked *Der tog* for appearing on the Sabbath and pretending to be a Jewish national newspaper.<sup>248</sup>

Until his sudden death in 1921, Hermalin's writings were one of the mainstays of what would become the woman's page in *Der tog*. His columns, signed "H.," started appearing in 1914 and continued for the next seven years on the newspaper's back page, along with other articles and columns aimed at women.<sup>249</sup> J. Chaikin would replace Hermalin, signing his columns "Ch." Hermalin's advice and opinions ranged from the barbarism of the death penalty to warnings about the dangers lurking

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky, "Hertsl-kult," *Der tog*, February 24, 1915; Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky, "Der arbeter ring," *Der tog*, April 4, 1915; Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky, "Vos iz asimilatsie?" *Der tog*, June 30, 1915; Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky, "Idishistisher tsionizm," *Der tog*, March 3, 1918; Zalman Rejzen, "Zshitlovski, khaym," in *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur prese un filologie*, Vol. 1 (Vilna: Kletzkin Farlag, 1928), 1131; on the struggle between Cahan and Zhitlowsky, see, Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts*, 125-136, 145-146.

<sup>247</sup> H. [D. M. Hermalin], "Di miskherim mit tikets in shuhlen um shabos," *Der tog*, August 24, 1915; see, also, H., "Vegen der emune fun di reformirte iden," *Der tog*, November 11, 1919.

<sup>248</sup> "Di rabonim un di shabos-tsaying," *Der tog*, November 24, 1914.

<sup>249</sup> On Hermalin, see, Shelby Shapiro, "Yiddish Cultural Figures: D. M. Hermalin,"

in the summertime from eating unhealthy food and running in front of cars pursuing “*plezshur*” [“pleasure”] and “*fon*” [“fun”]. Writing against campaigns for Americanization sponsored by non-Jews, he declared:

have We doubt if we have pure Yankees in America who love America more than the foreign-born Jews. The Jews not only love America, but are very interested in American history. You can find several translations in Yiddish of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and various outstanding histories of America. Jews have a deep respect for the great Americans of the past and present, and Jews have a considerable grasp of American politics.

The Yiddish press and the Yiddish books appearing . . . do more in one week for the Americanization of the Jews than all of the Christian preachers and *frum* Christian souls could do in years and years.<sup>250</sup>

On February 12, 1915, “*In der froyen velt*,” [“In the Woman’s World”], another column debuted. written by Rosa Lebensboym. Rosa Lebensboym, best known today under her *nom de plume* as the poet Anna Margolin, started as Zhitlowsky’s secretary. In 1909 she published short stories in the *Fraye arbeter shtime* as Chava Gross and Khane (Hannah) Barut. Six years later she became ensconced at *Der tog*. After the first eight columns of “*In der froyen velt*” appeared carrying Lebensboym’s byline, Avrom Radutski, a man writing to “we women,”<sup>251</sup> took over, until replaced by Anna Weiss, another *nom de plume* for Rosa Lebensboym. In 1917, Rosa Lebensboym would write articles as Sofia Brandt and

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*Tsum punkt/To the Point* 4, 1 (September-October 2002): 7.

<sup>250</sup> H., “Bald vet men onhoyben ‘amerikanizeren’ iden,” *Der tog*, October 10, 1919.

<sup>251</sup> See, e.g., A. R. [Avrom Radutski], “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, September 27, 1915.

Anna Weiss. At times articles under both names appeared on the same page.<sup>252</sup> When the woman's page commenced on February 4, 1917 as "*Di froy un di heym*" ["The Woman and the Home"], nine of her columns had the Brandt byline and one had the Weiss byline. Rosa Lebensboym, who claimed to hate journalism, served as a full member of *Der tog*'s editorial board until 1920, and wrote for the newspaper weekly as "Klara Levin" for about thirty years.<sup>253</sup>

Even though "*Di froy un di heym*" only lasted until June 13, 1917, the woman's section continued on the back page, although without a special heading. It often contained the "chess world" feature, a humorous piece by Moyshe Nadir, and a serialized novel chapter. The regular features included a column by Hermalin and later Chaikin, "*In der froyen velt*" by a succession of authors, household and cooking columns and articles, a home decoration article by Ray Malis, fashion columns, and fashion photographs. In contrast, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* had no fashion columns but had twenty-six articles, two with photographs, on fashion, in the period under review. *Forverts* carried one hundred ninety-seven columns on fashion, one-hundred forty-nine with photographs, and forty-three articles. Those with photographs appeared in the rotogravure section. *Der tog* had three hundred thirty-two columns on fashion, most with drawings, plus three hundred sixty-three separate items, primarily photographs with descriptions.

Adella Kean Zometkin, the most prolific author to appear in the woman's

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<sup>252</sup> Anna Weiss, "Shmuesen mit muters," *Der tog*, February 26, 1917; Sofia Brandt, "Vi azoy vert men shlank?" *Der tog*, February 26, 1917.

<sup>253</sup> For Lebensboym, see, Shelby Shapiro, "Yiddish Cultural figures: Anna Margolin," *Tsum punkt/To the Point* 8, 1 (Winter 2006): 7-8; Sheva Zucker, "Ana margolin in di poezie funem geshpoltenem ikh," *YIVO bleter* (N.S.) 1 (1991): 175.

section of *Der tog*, began writing “*In der froyen velt*” column on February 3, 1918. Originally under the byline “Adella Kean Zametkin,” by 1919 she was for the most part signing the columns “Adella Kean.” Born in the Ukraine in 1863, Adella Emanuelovna Khean, one of fifteen children, came to the United States with one of her siblings; on Ellis Island, “Khean” became “Kean.” Her future husband, Mikhail Zametkin, came to America as part of the Am Olam movement which also brought Abraham Cahan and Alexander Harkavy to American shores. She met Zametkin as he agitated for Daniel DeLeon’s Socialist Labor Party. The journalist J. Chaikin described Mikhail Zametkin as a “*frum Orthodox Marxist.*”<sup>254</sup>

Adella Kean’s journalistic debut took place in the Socialist press. In 1897, the Zametkins, Abraham Cahan and Louis Miller founded the *Forverts*. While Mikhail worked as an editor, Adella served as its first cashier. In the years before World War One, she wrote a column for *Der fraynd* [*The Friend*], monthly publication of the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring. She did not hesitate to take both the Workmen’s Circle and the Socialist Party to task (Cahan and the Zametkins had left the Socialist Labor Party and joined the Socialist Party) for giving women’s suffrage strictly lip-service.<sup>255</sup>

Following World War One, she went to work for *Der tog*, staying there until after the period under review. In 1920, with a new children’s column printed on an inside page by Leon Elbe under the name “*Leybel der royter*” [“Leon the Red”], two of Adella Kean’s columns remained on the back page, with a third on the same page

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<sup>254</sup> Chaikin, *Yidische bleter in amerike*, 123.

<sup>255</sup> McCune, “*The Whole Wide World, Without Limits,*” 53.

as Elbe's. More and more non-women's items, such as stories on boxing, started appearing on the back page, site of the women's section in *Der tog*. In addition to two hundred columns of "*In der froyen velt*," she wrote two hundred ninety-two columns of "*Fun a froy tsu froyen*" ["From a Woman to Women"] under both names; thirty-one columns of a "how-to" feature entitled "*Froyen klobs*" ["Women's Clubs"]; six columns of "*Vegen geburt kontrol*" ["About Birth Control"], in addition to birth control columns in "*Fun a froy tsu froyen*" and freestanding articles on contraception. In 1923 she had three columns of a new feature printed, "*Naye foygel, naye lieder*" ["New Bird, New Songs"]. She wrote about the women's movement worldwide, the evils of the trusts, nutrition, health, the necessity of instilling a systematic and efficient approach to housework, similar to the methods used to improve productivity in factories. Her columns also contained household tips and recipes. She glorified the Eugenics movement, speaking of the "menace" of the so-called feeble-minded.

Unlike many other writers for *Der tog*, such as Hermalin and J. Chaikin, Adella Kean wrote very little about things Jewish. Yiddish and Yiddish culture received almost no mention. In her hundreds of columns she did not discuss Jewish religious or national holidays beyond four columns in which she gave Passover recipes and made health admonitions.<sup>256</sup> In her "*Froyen klobs*" feature, she encouraged women in the Jewish quarter to organize for self-betterment and self-education. In only one column did she suggest they form Yiddish culture

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<sup>256</sup> Adella Kean Zametkin, "Fun a froy tsu froyen," *Der tog*, April 5, 1919; Adella Kean Zametkin, "Fun a froy tsu froyen," *Der tog*, April 14, 1919; Adella Kean, "Faryshaydene pesakh'dige gerikhten vos zeynen geshmak un gezunt," *Der tog*, April



clubs.<sup>257</sup> In the August 11, 1921 “*In der froyen velt*” she discussed the feminist movement in Palestine among both Jews and Muslims.<sup>258</sup> In another column, she noted that in Jewish society men had specific religious duties, but asked how women fit into this scheme. “They too carry the same idealistic fires and in modern times have become involved in revolutionary movements and remain the carriers of Jewish national feeling”<sup>259</sup> Thus, specifically Jewish matters received mention in only seven columns out of more than five hundred. Indeed, her daughter, Laura Z. Hobson, author of the novel *Gentleman’s Agreement*, noted in her memoirs that her parents deliberately lived in a non-Jewish neighborhood and spoke Russian at home. Adella gave her daughter a book of her favorite columns from *Der tog*, six hundred forty-eight pages long. Yet Laura could not read them, since nobody taught her Yiddish.<sup>260</sup>

Other columnists in *Der tog* included Sarah B. Smith, who had a long-running column, “*Bilder fun di kourts*” [“Pictures from the Courts”], as well as a series that ran more than one hundred columns entitled “*Farvos menshen get’n zikh*” [“Why People Get Divorced”] and “*Di froy oyf der bihne*” [“The Woman on the Stage”]. Ray Malis (Raskin) also contributed articles on home decoration and beauty.

In conclusion, the six publications did not share common views on religion,

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21, 1924; Adella Kean, “Fun a froy tsu froyen,” *Der tog*, April 6, 1925.

<sup>257</sup> Adella Kean, “Froyen klobs,” *Der tog*, September 29, 1920.

<sup>258</sup> Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, August 11, 1921.

<sup>259</sup> Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, July 21, 1921.

<sup>260</sup> For Adella Kean, see, Shelby Shapiro, “Yiddish Cultural Figures: Adella Kean Zametkin,” *Tsum punkt/To the Point* 8, 2 (Spring 2007): 5-6; Laura Z. Hobson, *Laura Z: A Life* (NY: Arbor House, 1983), 22-25; McCune, “*The Whole Wide World*,

peoplehood or politics. The value placed upon personal beauty and fashion differed widely. What did all six of these publications have in common? The Yiddish daily papers all opposed campaigns to forcibly Americanize immigrants.<sup>261</sup> All of these publications held positive beliefs concerning the voluntary Americanization of the immigrants, however that might be defined.<sup>262</sup> Learning the language and customs of the new country, serving in its armed forces, or believing in its ideals all represented different kinds of Americanization.<sup>263</sup>

The next chapter examines the belief systems championed by each publication, their ideologies, both sacred and secular. The variety of Jewish religious

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*Without Limits*," 53-54, 68, 73-75, 164-166, 217n.23.

<sup>261</sup> S. Dingol, "Amerika un amerikanizeyshon," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 30, 1914; H., "Bald vet men onheyben 'amerikaniziren' iden," *Der tog*, October 10, 1919; "'Tsvang'-amerikanizeyshon," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 21, 1920; Sh. Niger, "Amerikanizatsie," *Der tog*, February 14, 1925.

<sup>262</sup> "In the World of Charity." *American Jewess* (November 1895): 119; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (June 1896): 493; "Der amerikanizm fun di eyngenvanderte," *Der tog*, October 13, 1915; "Idishkeyt un amerikanizm," *Der tog*, June 13, 1916; "The Making of American Citizens," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 10, 1916; H., "Rayoynes vos kumen fun sdorim in amerika" *Der tog*, April 18, 1916; "Who Are True Americans," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 9, 1917; "Amerikanizeyshon," *Forverts*, August 5, 1918; "Vos heyst amerikanizirt?" *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 26, 1922; "The Jewish Woman's Home Journal," *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922): 66; Dr. Stephen S. Wise, "What Is Americanization?" *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 5, 1922; Mordecai Dantsis, "Vos amerika maynt far dem hayntigen idishen imigrant", *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 1, 1922; Adella Kean, "Vatsh yur step," *Der tog*, July 2, 1923; Ch., "Vos rufen mir amerikaniziren zikh?" *Der tog*, August 9, 1923; Ch., "Gor a nayer bilbul fun an antisemit," *Der tog*, August 19, 1923; I. L. Brill, "Americanization," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 21, 1924; "What the Jew Has Done for America," *Der tog*, May 5, 1925.

<sup>263</sup> Esther Broido, "Idishe mames lernt english!" *Di froyen velt*, March 8, 1914; Eliash, "Vos heyst 'amerikanizirt?'" *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 23, 1916; "Lerent english durkh'n 'forverts,'" *Forverts*, November 26, 1920, announcing a series by Alexander Harkavy which ran from December 1, 1920 until May 15, 1921; "Vos heyst amerikanizirt?" *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 26, 1922; "The Jewish Woman's Home Journal," *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922): 66.

beliefs ran the gamut from anti-religious to Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Judaism; political beliefs in this study ranged from Socialism to various forms of Zionism. The commitment to Americanization represented yet another variable; to what extent did these publications advocate varying degrees of acculturation, assimilation or cultural autonomy? As will be shown, writers in the various publications very often answered this question in the terms of the various belief systems advocated by their journals. Their ideologies would determine how they viewed both the American and Jewish worlds, how they approached everything from working outside the home to celebrating American secular and Jewish religious (or national) holidays.

### Chapter 3: **Politics and Piety**

Unlike émigré or exile publications which defined themselves with events and struggles in their homelands, the publications in this study did not envision the immigrants returning to Central Europe, Russia or Poland.<sup>264</sup> While certainly interested in the events of the Old World, they set their sights on life in the New World.

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<sup>264</sup> On the distinctions between émigré or exile publications and the immigrant press, see Vecoli, “The Italian Immigrant Press,” 20-25.

While the previous chapter discussed the general ideologies of the various publications in this study, this chapter examines their political, religious and social attitudes in depth. Each journal defined itself in political, religious, or national terms. Sometimes combining and sometimes ignoring these categories, these publications became sites for the construction of identity. Sacred or secular, Socialist or Zionist, Orthodox or Reform, the results of the negotiations among all these categories remained both Jewish and American.

This chapter examines the ideologies of the six publications in this study to answer two basic questions: (1) what was the basic ideological “line” of each journal under review; and (2) how did those involved in these journals transmit their ideologies to woman in particular? \_ In addition, this chapter will compare and contrast the publications in regard to what they advocated concerning the Jewish education of children and youth, the means by which an ideology could perpetuate itself to future generations.

“Ideologies” refer to the different systems of belief, sacred or secular, shaping how those adhering to the particular ideologies saw the world as it was, it is, it should be, and often how it will be. “Ideology” in this sense goes much deeper than an allegiance to a particular political party. Of all the publication in this study, only one, *Forverts*, aligned itself with a particular party. The views crafted by publishers, editors and writers determined how they hoped to frame their readers’ perspectives. Thus, for example , the red, or at least pink, tint of the Socialist lenses of *Forverts* tended to filter out the blue-and-white of Jewish nationalism.

As stated in Chapter 2, Rosa Sonneschein and *American Jewess* supported Reform Judaism, the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), and the political Zionism identified with Theodor Herzl. Rosa Sonneschein, as editor, sought to influence not only the views of her individual readers, but those of the NCJW collectively. The NCJW, founded in 1893 as an outgrowth of the Jewish Women's Congress, part of the World Parliament of Religions at the 1893 Chicago World Exposition, had three main areas of concern: religion, education and philanthropy.<sup>265</sup> Sonneschein offered to have *American Jewess* serve as the NCJW's official voice in December 1896.<sup>266</sup> In February 1897, the *American Jewess* "Editorial" quoted *The Hebrew Standard*, which felt that acceptance of the offer "... would have been a very graceful act . . ." and wondered whether failure to do so had as its motivation "... personal pique or politics . . ."<sup>267</sup>

From its inception, *American Jewess* had two main religious missions: pushing for full institutional equality for women in the synagogue, that is, "religious suffrage," and restoring the Sabbath to its "pristine purity."<sup>268</sup> In November 1895, *American Jewess* proudly claimed victory in obtaining full religious suffrage in

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<sup>265</sup> McCune, "*The Whole Wide World, Without Limits*," 16; Mary McCune, "Formulating the 'Women's Interpretation of Zionism': Hadassah Recruitment of Non-Zionist American Women, 1914-1930," in *American Jewish Women and the Zionist Enterprise*, edited by Shulamit Reinharz and Mark A. Raider (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2005), 92-93; Deborah Grand Golumb, "The 1893 Congress of Jewish Women: Evolution or Revolution in American Jewish Women's History?" *American Jewish History* (September 1980): 52-67

<sup>266</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (December 1896): 138.

<sup>267</sup> Quoted in "Editorial," *American Jewess* (February 1897): 236.

<sup>268</sup> "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (October 1895): 63; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (February 1897): 235; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (May 1897): 95; "A Word to Our Readers," *American Jewess* (April 1898): 22.

Chicago's Temple Isaiah.<sup>269</sup> *American Jewess* called for a situation in which "[t]he Jewess and religiosity should be interchangeable terms."<sup>270</sup> The magazine sought to hold the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) accountable for failing in its ". . . main mission of restoring the Sabbath to its pristine purity."<sup>271</sup> This demand, first been made in 1868, predated *American Jewess*.<sup>272</sup> *American Jewess* advocated that a woman's membership in the NCJW be contingent, not on payment of dues, but rather upon a pledge ". . . to keep the Sabbath day holy . . . and . . . to use her influence in the family to respect its sanctity."<sup>273</sup>

The NCJW increasingly put its efforts into philanthropy. In defending the NCJW from an attack by the former president of a Young Men's Hebrew Association branch, the journal stated in its February 1897 "Editorial" that with regard to ". . . philanthropy, it is practiced by the Council, because it is synonymous with Judaism, and is as essential a feature in the Council as in any other Jewish organization."<sup>274</sup> But by 1898, *American Jewess* took a more critical attitude toward the NCJW for ignoring religious concerns in favor of philanthropic endeavors:

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<sup>269</sup> "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (November 1895): 112.

<sup>270</sup> Philipson, "The Ideal Jewess," 257.

<sup>271</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (January 1898): 191; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (February 1898): 246; Rosa Sonneschein, "The American Jewess," *American Jewess* (February 1898): 208; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (April 1898): 46; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (May 1898): 97; see, also, Rothstein, "Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women's Activism in the 1890s," 57.

<sup>272</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 135.

<sup>273</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (April 1898): 46; see, also, "Editorial," *American Jewess* (May 1898): 97.

<sup>274</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (February 1897): 234.

The inconsistency with which the Council pursues its religious mission is almost tragical. All sections unite to make the Bible classes of supreme importance. The readers of the bible will encounter the sanctity of the Sabbath and its importance to preserve the body of Judaism. The Bible--the history of Judaism, will teach them how their ancestors have suffered and died for the maintenance of the Jewish Sabbath; that its sanctity was proclaimed on Sinai. They will read that to keep it holy the Jews have sacrificed wealth, home and country and ever and anon will they be reminded of their own transgressions and of the fact that the organization which tries to bring nearer to them the book of books does not oblige its members to observe its mandate.

The Sabbath has not sufficiently long been desecrated by a fraction of Jews to judge in how far this desecration effects the body Judaism. But we do know, that Judaism has stood the test of time without Bible classes for women; we do know that it was flourishing at a time when the Jewish women could not even read the Bible, for the simple reason that they could not read at all; and we do know, that Judaism stood at the zenith of its glory when the Bible was accessible only to scholars . . . <sup>275</sup>

For months thereafter, *American Jewess* continued to scold the NCJW for failing to restore the Sabbath to its “pristine purity.” The magazine spoke its last word on the subject in January 1899 discussing the Jewish Charity Fair in Chicago that kept “. . . open on the Jewish Sabbath . . . closing it on the Christian Sunday . . .” Chicago served not only as the NCJW’s birthplace, but its members had actively worked in the Charity Fair. The magazine continued:

Now, if the Council of Jewish Women stands for aught else than to give prestige to a few women, who without the Council as foliage would descend to their original nothingness; and if the Council stands for religion and the purity of the Sabbath this outrageous conduct of the mother section must be resented upon

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<sup>275</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (January 1898): 191-193.

the leaders. A body formed to guard religious interests cannot idly view the indifference or, worse, the abuse heaped upon their mission by their very representatives. The few sections of the Council of Jewish Women, who do serious work and further the aims for which they were called into existence, should band together, decapitate the official heads of those who have offended the entire organization by their culpable indifference and elect women in their stead who will stand the test of sincerity.<sup>276</sup>

In this campaign, Rosa Sonneschein found common ground with more traditional Jews. While favoring adherence to the traditional dietary laws eschewed by Reform,<sup>277</sup> she viewed the Orthodox in evolutionary terms as a lower form of Judaism.<sup>278</sup>

Despite the journal's lack of success in the "pristine purity" campaign, the magazine and the NCJW served notice on the American Jewish world that Jewish women in America had a role to play in the religious sphere. In America, unlike Europe, the public religious sphere would no longer remain exclusively male. The new roles for Jewish women in the religious sector actually began in 1819 with Rebecca Gratz in Philadelphia. Gratz, following the example of Christian women, founded the first Jewish philanthropic organization in Philadelphia, the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society, as well as the first Jewish Sunday Schools in the country.<sup>279</sup> As with Christian women, Jewish women would become responsible for

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<sup>276</sup> "The Woman Who Talks," *American Jewess* (January 1899): 44.

<sup>277</sup> Rothstein, "Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women's Activism in the 1890s," 57.

<sup>278</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (April 1897): 48.

<sup>279</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 49-50.



educating the young.<sup>280</sup> In June 1895, the magazine quoted from a paper read by Rose Kohler to the NCJW earlier that year:

The Reform Jewess ought to feel very grateful that there is no longer a distinction made between her rank as a child of God and that of man. That quaint benediction which the orthodox Jew recites every morning, thanking God that he was not made a woman, Reform has put that aside, with the women's gallery in the synagogue, as a mere relic of Orientalism. The Reform Jewess does not *resignedly* thank her Maker for her lesser importance. At her father's or husband's side she reads her prayers in the House of God. And why should she not? Nay, I say more, why should she not enjoy the same right of becoming a member of the Temple she attends on the Sabbath morn; a member of the Sabbath-school Board, that often sadly needs her practical wisdom and active interest. Why is the Jewish woman behind her Christian sister therein? There is no reason why she should not have the same opportunities for activity and power in regard to matters pertaining to religion, that she has in her charitable work . . .<sup>281</sup>

*American Jewess* realized that a lot more had to occur before men and women could truly have equality, starting, as Rose Kohler did, with the simple issue of institutional membership. In the same column as the Rose Kohler quotation, *American Jewess* fired the initial salvos in the temple membership battle:

Recently we have had occasions to read the membership list of 102 Jewish congregations, coming from every section of this country, and representing every shade of our ancestral belief. They contained of radical reformers, conservative and ultra orthodox Jews, altogether more than 20,000 names. The lists varied in size and importance, each containing different names. But in one respect they were all alike. No matter where the list came from, no matter how the name sounded, it was prefaced by the simple *Mr.* Not even

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<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, 138-139.

<sup>281</sup> Rose Kohler, extracts from paper read to New York Section, NCJW, February 10, 1895, reprinted in "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (June 1895): 154-155.

the most radical  
*Mr. and*

congregation on record put before its members' names  
*Mrs.---*

The fact stares us plainly in the face that in Jewish congregations married women are still debarred from membership. This ought not to be. Our girls receive the same religious instructions as our boys, most of our congregations are governed by laws equally well understood by women and men; and morally and materially supported by both. Would it therefore not be befitting the spirit of our time, to record as members of a Jewish congregation *Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So*? A great deal could be said on this subject, but we prefer deeds to words. Which will be the first congregation to combine justice with dignity? Which will be the first to record our names?<sup>282</sup>

The *American Jewess* "Editorial" of December 1896 set forth the new role of women and the part taken by the Council and the magazine in shaping that role, as it wrote about the NCJW convention:

. . . This is a religious propaganda which is not recorded on any page in history; it is an entirely new historical movement, a religious innovation, more remarkable when we consider that to the Jewish women was denied religious franchise through all the centuries; that she was expatriated from the religious councils of men since the days of the dim past to our time; that she was denied the study of the sacred scripture and lore of the Jewish faith, and even not permitted to understand the language in which she prayed. A glance at the temples of Europe tells the tale of woman's position in the synagogue.

In the old holy structures, where Jews have worshipped almost a thousand years, the place awarded to women was a kind of a garret, with a few pigeon holes in the wall, where women neither saw nor heard the manner in which man sought the Throne of Grace.

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<sup>282</sup> "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (June 1895): 153; see, also, "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (October 1895): 64; "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (November 1895): 112, noting that Chicago's New Congregation had granted "religious suffrage," and challenged other congregations to follow its lead.

Centuries later she was permitted to sit in a gallery behind a curtain, where she could hear, but not see, in what form man worshipped divinity. And even to-day [sic], in some luxurious temples of Europe, she sits caged behind iron bars, like a dangerous animal, apart from man, and it is only in America that Jewish women are permitted to pray, side by side with man, to the one God who has created both.

them

But even in America the Jewess is still religiously disfranchised. It is only of late, mostly through the instrumentality of the Council, that women are permitted to become members of the Sabbath School Board, and we have but a few Jewish congregations which admit as members single and widowed women only, and there is but one Jewish congregation in the world where women have the unconditional right of membership and representation, and that is the blessed Temple Isaiah, in Chicago. And what we will now state will surprise many and may be news even to some Chicago women. In all humility we wish to say that this important fact was accomplished through the influence of "The American Jewess," and through the direct efforts of its editor . . .

The magazine urged the NCJW to push other congregations to take the same step as Temple Isaiah.<sup>283</sup>

In April 1896, the magazine rose to the defense of the NCJW from an attack by Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger, a prominent clergyman in San Francisco and the editor of *Emanu-El*,<sup>284</sup> which stated, among other things that "These one-sex organizations have a a tendency to widen the breach that already exists between the sexes. It is contrary to social instinct; it is unnatural" and "The Jewess has no mission apart from the Jew." Accusing Rev. Dr. Voorsanger of being blind to the changes occurring around him, the journal declared:

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<sup>283</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (December 1896): 137-138.

<sup>284</sup> Sefton D. Temkin, "Voorsanger, Jacob," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 16, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 223.

. . . Surely the world has learned something in all these many years! There have been great changes since the times alluded to by the rabbi-editor, when women were hidden spectators in the synagogue; when men alone were admitted to participation in public worship; when rabbis did nothing but study and expound the Talmud and the Thora [sic]. If Dr. Voorsanger is so fond of those old-time conditions let him first lead backwards our men and our rabbis; that accomplished, the women will naturally and gracefully follow, and the National Council of Jewish Women cease to exist. But not before.<sup>285</sup>

Rosa Sonneschein saw the desire for a Jewish homeland as an issue around which American Jewish women could rally and which could animate the NCJW. By October 1898, after three years of existence, the Council still only had three thousand members. What the NCJW lacked from its inception, she felt, was an ideal to “serve as an uplifting power,” in the same way that the ideal of women’s voting rights served the Women’s Suffrage Association or the ideal of saving people from “vicious surroundings” served the Women’s Branch of the Salvation Army, Sonneschein declared : “To our mind, there is no loftier ideal, worthier of realization, than *Israel’s Dream of Nationality!*”

Arguing that the Ottoman Empire was teetering on the brink of destruction, she predicted its ownership of Palestine would soon cease. International Jewish wealth and influence, Sonneschein wrote, could make the Homeland a reality. Pointing to the miserable position of Jews under the Czar, she stated that the traditional invocation at the end of the Passover Seder, “Next year, in Jerusalem!” (leaving out the words that followed: “This year we are slaves, next year may we all

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<sup>285</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (April 1896): 381; see, also, “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (April 1898): 46.

be free!") “. . . is still the hope of countless thousands, that being the last and only consolation man’s inhumanity has left them.” But, she wrote, the hope for a Zion restored went beyond those living under oppression, asking “[y]et, what Jew has not dreamed of Israel again as a nation?” Going on to say that “In the land once again flowing with milk and honey he sees the realization of mankind’s highest aspirations--the Utopia of poet, philosopher and philanthropist--the Kingdom of God as it was revealed to prophetic eyes,” Sonneschein returned to the National Council of Jewish Women, and the proposal that the task of a Jewish homeland be the NCJW’s ideal.<sup>286</sup>

In July 1897, Sonneschein announced that the first Zionist Convention would be held in Munich the following month. The article announcing the convention dealt primarily with antisemitism, and illustrates the complex nature of identity as presented in *American Jewess*. The success of Jewish assimilation had led to envy of the Jews as a people on the part of non-Jews, and hence antisemitism.<sup>287</sup> She cited a number of explanations for antisemitism.<sup>288</sup> A faith community, a people, a race (though without mention of biology): whatever Jews might be, Zionism would serve as the answer to persecution, antisemitism and rootlessness.

The October 1897 *American Jewess* contained a long, glowing report on the First Zionist Congress held in Basle, Switzerland, not in Munich where the Jewish

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<sup>286</sup> Rosa Sonneschein, “The National Council of Jewish Women and Our Dream of Nationality,” *American Jewess* (October 1896): 29-32.

<sup>287</sup> Rosa Sonneschein, “Anti-Semitism and Zionism,” *American Jewess* (July 1897): 156.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

community had opposed the gathering.<sup>289</sup> Sonneschein was one of twenty-one women in attendance, one of the four American representatives, and the only American journalist.<sup>290</sup> In addition to her report, the issue contained an English translation of a speech by Theodor Herzl's associate, Dr. Max Nordau.<sup>291</sup> *American Jewess* would also carry reports on the Second and Third Zionist Congresses.<sup>292</sup>

As will be discussed in Chapter 5, Rosa Sonneschein remained ambivalent on the issue of women's political suffrage in America. Instead, she fought for full "religious suffrage," that is, equality within the walls of Reform Temples. Expressing disapproval that female delegates could not vote at the First Zionist Congress, she blames this state of affairs on Mohammedan biases:

And strange to say, with this strong craving for liberty and equality, the Zionists began their proceedings by disfranchising women. I am sorry that I have to relate this fact, as the step is Oriental, but not Jewish. The strict laws of the Orient against its women has its origin in the fear and jealousies of Mohammed, who in his old age became too fond of young women. The Angel Gabriel, who gave Mohammed exceptional privileges towards the fairer sex, was accommodating enough to declare at the same time strict and ever more strict laws for women.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> Rosa Sonneschein, "The Zionist Congress," *American Jewess* (October 1897): 13-20; Getzel Kressel, "Zionist Congresses," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 16, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 1164.

<sup>290</sup> Rothstein, "Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women's Activism in the 1890s," 60.

<sup>291</sup> Dr. Max Nordau, "Max Nordau on the General Situation of the Jews," *American Jewess* (October 1897): 21-28.

<sup>292</sup> "Editorials," *American Jewess* (November 1898): 40-41; Dr. Max Nordau, "The Present Situation of the Jews," *American Jewess* (August 1899): 5-9; "Dr. Herzl's Address at the Zionist Congress," *American Jewess* (August 1899): 13.

<sup>293</sup> Sonneschein, "The Zionist Congress," 20; on "Orientalism," see, Riv-Ellen Prell, "The Vision of Woman in Classical Reform Judaism," *Journal of the*

In May 1898, *American Jewess* announced a convention of American Zionists to form a national organization in accordance with the Basle Platform and to send delegates to the Second Zionist Congress.<sup>294</sup> Two months later, the magazine announced the Second Zionist Congress.<sup>295</sup> In September, Sonneschein expressed her fears that the Second Zionist Congress would become enmeshed in issues of practical detail and religion. As to suffrage, she wrote that “[t]he question of woman’s right to vote and to participate in the debates, which was suppressed last year, cannot be preconcertedly shelved this time as the Zionists of New York has [sic] delegated a woman (Mrs. R. Gottheil) to represent that city.”<sup>296</sup>

Emma Leon Gottheil, wife of Columbia University professor Richard Gottheil and daughter-in-law of Reform Temple Emanu-El’s Rabbi Gustav Gottheil, represented a leading figure among the small number of Reform Jews supporting Zionism before the 1930s.<sup>297</sup> The support of political Zionism by the Gottheils, Rosa Sonneschein and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise represented a substantial deviation from the principles of Reform Judaism in America, set forth in point five of the 1885

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*American Academy of Religion* 50, 4 (December 1982): 576-579, 584-585, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1462943>.

<sup>294</sup> “Convention of Zionists,” *American Jewess* (May 1898): 64.

<sup>295</sup> “Editorials,” *American Jewess* (July-August 1898): 55.

<sup>296</sup> Rosa Sonneschein, “Zionism,” *American Jewess* (September 1898): 5.

<sup>297</sup> Herbert Parzen, “The Federation of American Zionists (1897-1914),” in *Early History of Zionism in America*, edited by Isidore S. Meyer (NY: American Jewish Historical Society and Theodor Herzl Foundation, 1958), 245; Norma Spungen, “Gottheil, Emma Leon (1862-1947),” in *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore (NY: Routledge, 1997), 546-547.

“Pittsburgh Platform,” which declared: “We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and, therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.”<sup>298</sup> Following the First Zionist Congress, Reform Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise (not related to Rabbi Stephen S. Wise) stated that “we denounce the whole question of a Jewish state as foreign to the spirit of the modern Jew of this land, who looks upon America as his Palestine and whose interests are centered here.”<sup>299</sup> He also referred to Zionism as a “momentary inebriation of morbid minds.”<sup>300</sup> Reform opposition to Zionism reached the point that pro-Zionist teachers at Reform’s Hebrew Union College left their posts, either as the result of pressure or a purge by Reform Rabbi Kaufmann Kohler, its president.<sup>301</sup>

In 1898, Reform Judaism’s Union of American Hebrew Congregations passed a resolution elaborating its stance vis-à-vis the Pittsburgh Platform and Zionism:

We are unalterably opposed to political Zionism. The Jews are not a nation, but a religious community. Zion was a precious possession of the past . . . As such it is a holy memory, but it is not our hope of the future. America is our Zion, the fruition of the beginning laid in the old. The mission of Judaism is spiritual, not political. Its aim is not to establish a state, but to spread the truths of religion and humanity throughout the world.<sup>302</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> Quoted in Sarna, *American Judaism*, 149; Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (NY: Schocken Books, 1972, 2003), 402; Gerald Sorin, *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 128.

<sup>299</sup> Quoted in Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 394.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, 402.

<sup>301</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 203; Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 403

<sup>302</sup> Quoted in Sarna, *American Judaism*, 202.



In a March 1898 article, “Zionism,” Rosa Sonneschein discussed Reform hostility to the Zionist enterprise, accusing Reform Jews of intolerance, especially towards Orthodox Jews sympathetic to Zionism. She referred to the movement as “. . . an economic measure--a necessary move to find a home for persecuted Israel.”<sup>303</sup> In her account of the First Zionist Congress, Rosa Sonneschein reported that “Dr. Herzl then said in his earnest, convincing manner that it is not in the Zionist programme to discuss religious questions, but that he can honestly declare that Zionism never had nor ever will have the slightest intention to interfere with the religious conviction of any portion or faction of Judaism.”<sup>304</sup>

The *American Jewess* position supporting Zionism was apparent. The magazine reprinted a letter to London’s *Jewish Chronicle* from Israel Zangwill.<sup>305</sup> Rebecca A. Altman, a frequent writer for *American Jewess*, contributed a three-part series culminating in a call to support Zionism.<sup>306</sup> Benzion wrote about the Jewish Colonial Trust, founded at the First Zionist Congress to finance Zionist colonization and industry.<sup>307</sup> Jeannette Feingold asked “Can We All Be Zionists?”<sup>308</sup> While Rosa

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<sup>303</sup> Rosa Sonneschein, “Zionism,” *American Jewess* (March 1898): 271.

<sup>304</sup> Sonneschein, “The Zionist Congress,” 19; on this theme for the Second Zionist Congress, see, Sonneschein, “Zionism,” *American Jewess* (September 1898): 6.

<sup>305</sup> Zangwill, Israel. “Zangwill’s Latest on Zionism,” *American Jewess* (September 1898):50-52.

<sup>306</sup> Rebecca A. Altman, “Israel’s Past, Present and Future” appeared in *American Jewess* (November 1898): 7-10), *American Jewess* (December 1898): 36-38; and *American Jewess* (January 1899): 26-31.

<sup>307</sup> Benzion, “The Jewish Colonial Trust,” *American Jewess* (May 1899): 7-8.

<sup>308</sup> Jeannette Feingold, “Can We All Be Zionists?” *American Jewess* (May 1899): 29-30.

Sonneschein believed in both Reform Judaism and political Zionism, neither she nor her writers insisted that the two movements were, should or could be, identical.

Indeed, the magazine celebrated the eightieth birthday of Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, an arch-enemy of Zionism, without a single mention of his stance.<sup>309</sup>

*Di froyen-velt/The Jewish Ladies Home Journal*, unlike *American Jewess*, took no position on Zionism. Politically, it concerned itself with women's rights in general and women's suffrage in particular. The column "*Fun der froyen velt*" ["From the Woman's World"] appeared in the magazine's first eight issues from April to December 1913; *Di froyen-velt* lasted six more issues as a weekly publication. "*Fun der froyen velt*" carried news not only of the suffrage movement (discussed in Chapter 5), but of other issues of concern to women ranging from employment to legislation against "immoral" clothes and dances, serving on juries, laws on the status of children born out of wedlock, and so forth. The article "*Froyen rekhte in yunayted steys*" ["Women's Rights in the United States"] discussed the status of women after marriage in various states vis-à-vis the raising of children, inheritance of property, and most importantly, a loss of individuality by virtue of marital status.<sup>310</sup> The magazine examined 1910 census statistics on male and female populations, births, and educational attainment to provide a statistical portrait of American women.<sup>311</sup> In another article, Yitzhak Krim hailed the arrival of the New Woman, tracing her development to changes inaugurated during the French

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<sup>309</sup> Rosa Sonneschein, "Rabbi Isaac M. Wise, Octogenarian," *American Jewess* (January 1899): 8-9.

<sup>310</sup> "Froyen rekhte in yunayted steys," *Di froyen velt* (May 1913): 6; see, also, "Der kampf far di rekhte fun froyen," *Di froyen velt*, February 8, 1914.

Revolution.<sup>312</sup> The magazine carried an article by feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “*Di tsukunft fun der heym*” [“The Future of the Home”], followed a week later by an answer, “*Di heylikayt fun der familie*” [“The Holiness of the Family”].<sup>313</sup> *Di froyen-velt* thus asked questions about traditional gender roles without going so far as advocate for fundamental changes.

Moving from women in general to Jewish women in particular, two lead articles examined the economic situation of Jewish women, the first concerning those working in the “shops,” the second on those who left the workforce.<sup>314</sup> The first piece examined the general conditions in the Jewish trades, and then the situation of Jewish women working within those trades, noting the low wages, long hours and health hazards. It encouraged Jewish women to decrease the number of strikes and join unions to improve their conditions in a more organized fashion. The second article emphasized the importance of unions as well as the benefits of the insurance societies to which their husbands belonged. Dr. Ida Rovinski wrote extensively about the health problems faced by women workers in the shops.<sup>315</sup> She wrote five regular health columns for *Di froyen-velt*, as well as more than five hundred for *Forverts* and one hundred eight for *Der tog*, all the while conducting an active medical practice, as evidenced by five hundred twelve advertisements for her office at 1340 Madison

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<sup>311</sup> “Froyen in yunayted steyts,” *Di froyen velt* (June 1913): 6.

<sup>312</sup> Yitzhak Krim, “Di geburt fun der nayer froy,” *Di froyen velt* (July 1913): 11.

<sup>313</sup> Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “Di tsukunft fun der heym,” *Di froyen velt*, February 22, 1914; “Di heylikayt fun der familie,” *Di froyen velt*, March 1, 1914. Gilman’s authorship of the first article is set forth in “Di heylikayt.”

<sup>314</sup> “Di ekonomishe lage fun der idisher froy,” Part 1, *Di froyen velt* (July 1913): 3; “Di ekonomishe lage fun der idisher froy,” Part 2, *Di froyen velt* (August 1913): 3.

Avenue appearing in *Der tog*. For the most part she used her maiden name, Dr. Ida Badanes, sometimes using “Rovinski” and other times “Rovinski (Badanes).”

*Di froyen-velt*, unconcerned with restoring the Sabbath to its “pristine purity,” hailed the National Council of Jewish Women for working on behalf of young Jewish working girls, often from very small towns. NCJW representatives in European and American ports sought to insure that these young women would not be exploited, cheated, or lured into prostitution. The magazine gave individual examples of what the NCJW had done, ranging from placement in decent homes to NCJW leader Sadie American intervening directly to obtain a union card for a young woman.<sup>316</sup>

*Di froyen-velt* waged a war against religious superstition, denouncing the concept of *bashert* [the “fated one”], arguing that the choice of a marriage partner had nothing to do with Divine plans. Instead of waiting for God to magically provide a mate or paying a professional matchmaker, *Di froyen-velt* instituted a personals column in its last two issues.<sup>317</sup> It also inveighed against the use of hair “puffs,” extensions made of real or artificial hair used to lengthen or thicken a hairdo, by connecting that beauty practice to the wearing of a *sheytel*, the wig worn by extremely Orthodox married women. The magazine denounced the *sheytel* as an ugly, unhealthy and a fanatical practice. This was also among the first customs attacked by

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<sup>315</sup> Dr. Ida Rovinski, “Di higiene fun shap,” *Di froyen velt* (August 1913): 10-11.

<sup>316</sup> “Nobele arbeyt fun kounsil ov dzshuish vimen,” *Di froyen velt*, February 22, 1914.

<sup>317</sup> *Di froyen-velt*, “Vi azoy ferliebt men zikh?” *Di froyen velt*, March 1, 1914; “Kandidaten oyf khasene hoben,” *Di froyen velt*, March 8, 1914; “Kandidaten oyf khasene hoben,” *Di froyen velt*, March 15, 1914; see, also, Shapiro, “For Lena and Libe.”

the *maskilim* in Europe.<sup>318</sup>

In another struggle, *Di froyen-velt* denounced rabbis involved in battles over kosher certification of chickens slaughtered under their auspices. The magazine accused these rabbis of turning principles into profit, transforming the ideals underlying the dietary laws into a “*biznes*” [“business”]. Author Esther Broido noted how observant Jewish housewives paid more for kosher chickens than for non-kosher birds. The Jewish mother, she wrote, became the person in the family protecting and perpetuating traditional Jewishness. The activities of the rabbis had a very destructive effect on the efforts of Jewish mothers.<sup>319</sup> *Di froyen-velt* otherwise contained little religious content, although it did have celebratory pieces on Purim and Chanuka, discussed in Chapter 7.

Like *American Jewess*, but unlike *Di froyen-velt*, *Froyen zhurnal/The Jewish Women’s Home Journal*, published from May 1922 to February 1923, had regular religious columnists: Ella Blum in the Yiddish section, and Harold Berman, Ray and I. L. Brill in the English section. *Froyen zhurnal* promoted non-dogmatic traditional Judaism. I. L. Brill’s articles appearing at approximately the same time in the avowedly Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* had a much sharper edge, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Reform Rabbi Stephen S. Wise contributed an article on intermarriage in the English section consistent with Orthodox Jewish beliefs.<sup>320</sup> *Froyen zhurnal’s* references to Reform Judaism cast it not as the enemy, but as the

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<sup>318</sup> “Der paruk amol un haynt,” *Di froyen-velt* (November 1913): 3.

<sup>319</sup> Esther Broido, “Di idische froy un di rabonims makhloyke,” *Di froyen velt*, February 15, 1914.

<sup>320</sup> Dr. Stephen S. Wise, “Intermariage,” *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 65.

Jewish Other. Thus, rather than casting everything Reform as synonymous with assimilation, Harold Berman suggested American Orthodox Jews “. . . follow in the footsteps of their brothers of the Reform persuasion . . .” in the celebration of the Shevuos holiday (discussed in Chapter 7).<sup>321</sup>

Unlike *Di froyen velt*, *Froyen zhurnal* did not take a critical attitude toward religion or religious practices, customs or beliefs. *Froyen zhurnal* printed a number of columns in both the Yiddish and English pages with quotations concerning women and children from the Talmud and other Jewish religious texts.<sup>322</sup> Ella Blum’s columns primarily dealt with Jewish holidays (discussed in Chapter 7). As a constant theme, she stressed self-sacrifice on the part of Jewish mothers. She repeated the concepts of self-sacrifice, martyrdom, dedication to faith, folk and family in both holiday and non-holiday columns. She noted that Jews would resist assimilation as long as parents maintained Jewish traditions.<sup>323</sup> Blum insisted that Jewish mothers had more piety, kindness and dedication to their families than non-Jews.<sup>324</sup>

As a non-partisan publication, *Froyen zhurnal* endorsed no political

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<sup>321</sup> Harold Berman, “Shevuos and the Jewish Woman,” *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1923): 49.

<sup>322</sup> Shulamith Magnus, “The Jewish Concept of Womanhood,” *Froyen zhurnal* (June 1922): 64; Joseph Margoshes, “Gemora-vertlakh vegen froyen,” *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 16; Joseph Margoshes, “Gemora vertlakh vegen kinder,” *Froyen zhurnal* (April 1923): 18; “Vegen kinder un kinder ertsihung,” *Froyen zhurnal* (June-July 1923): 34.

<sup>323</sup> Ella Blum, “Idishe froyen un idishe traditsie,” *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1922): 5.

<sup>324</sup> Ella Blum, “Di idishe mame,” *Froyen zhurnal* (July 1922): 5; Ella Blum, “A grenets tsu muter-liebe,” *Froyen zhurnal* (November 1922): 7; Ella Blum, “Unzder mishpokhe-leben,” *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1923): 6.

candidates or parties. Bertha Broido's column "*In der froyen velt*" ["In the Woman's World"] appeared in all but the first and last issues. Unlike similar columns in the other publications in this study, Bertha Broido's column took up an entire page, providing a wide range of news about women's employment, achievements, statistical material, and women's movements. These movements included the Pan American Woman's Congress, the Federation of Women's Clubs, the Women's Union for Peace, the Women's International Peace League, the Women's Doctors Council, the National Suffrage Party of Cuba, the Industrial Women's Congress, the Lucy Stone Blackwell League, which urged married women to retain their maiden names, and the Congress of Jewish Women.<sup>325</sup> In a typical column a reader would learn not only about women in the United States but also in Europe, Asia and the Mideast. Broido, like Harold Berman, Ray and I. L. Brill, also wrote for *Dos yidishes tabblatt* while contributing articles to *Froyen zhurnal*. Mordecai Dantzis wrote articles on a number of topics with regard to Jewish women in America including a comparison of Jewish and non-Jewish women,<sup>326</sup> the economic status of Jewish women,<sup>327</sup> and general articles on American Jewish women.<sup>328</sup> Dantzis pointed to the labor movement as a main cause for the

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<sup>325</sup> See, Bertha Broido, "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (June 1922): 6; (August 1922): 7; (September 1922): 7; (January 1923): 7; (February 1923): 8; (March 1923): 7; (May 1923): 6; (June-July 1923): 5.

<sup>326</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, "Di idishe froy un di amerkanerin," *Froyen zhurnal* (November 1922): 18.

<sup>327</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, "Di ekonomishe unobhengikeyt fun der idisher froy," *Froyen zhurnal* (June-July 1923): 9.

<sup>328</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, "Di amerikaner idishe froy," *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1923): 10; Mordecai Dantzis, "Di idishe froy als birgerin," *Froyen zhurnal* (September 1922): 51.

improvement in the conditions for Jewish workers in general and Jewish women workers in particular. He also favorably reported on the International Peace Congress started by women's organizations and chaired by Jane Addams and the Woman's Congress in Rome.<sup>329</sup>

Even though articles or mentions of Zionism did not occur on a regular basis, invariably such mentions were favorable. Bertha Broido's column noted French actress Sarah Bernhardt's declaration that at the age of eighty she would devote the rest of her life to Zionism.<sup>330</sup> Broido also reported on resolutions passed at an international Jewish women's conference in Vienna, which included unanimous support for students going to Eretz Israel as pioneers to till the land.<sup>331</sup>

Furthermore, the American Jewish Zionist women's organization Hadassah received praise in the pages of *Froyen zhurnal*.<sup>332</sup> Curiously, in October 1923, Mordecai Dantzis claimed that fewer Jewish women than men, whether immigrant or native-born, became involved in American Zionism.<sup>333</sup> In the June-July 1923 issue, Rae Raskin reported a growing membership in Hadassah, then at 15,000.<sup>334</sup> Hadassah's original membership had already increased from 519 in 1914 to 2,710 by

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<sup>329</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, "Froyen un friden," *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 8; Mordecai Dantzis, "Der froyen kongres in roym," *Froyen zhurnal* (April 1923): 11.

<sup>330</sup> Bertha Broido, "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (December 1922): 9; see, also, "Her Awakening: The Confession of Mme. Sarah Bernhardt," *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 63.

<sup>331</sup> Bertha Broido, "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (June-July 1923): 5; Sh. Y. Dorfzohn, "Nokh'n idishen froyen kongres," *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1923): 15.

<sup>332</sup> Dr. B. Gitlin, "Di idishe froy un der keren heysod," *Froyen zhurnal* (April 1923): 33; Rae Raskin, "Di 'hadasa' un ihr arbeyt," *Froyen zhurnal* (June-July 1923): 11.

<sup>333</sup> Dantzis, "Di amerikaner idishe froy," 10.

<sup>334</sup> Raskin, "Di 'hadasa' un ihr arbeyt," 11.



1917.<sup>335</sup> Historian Mary McCune, comparing membership in the male Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) and Hadassah, noted that ZOA membership “. . . fell throughout the decade from a wartime high of nearly 200,000 to a mere 13,500 by 1931 . . . In this period of ZOA decline, Hadassah saw its own membership skyrocket from 2,710 in 1917 to 44,000 by 1931.”<sup>336</sup> Rae Raskin’s 1923 report thus represents a midpoint between the 2,710 Hadassah members in 1917 and the 44,000 members in 1930-1931. Historian Shulamit Reinharz states that “[t]his was a glorious period for Hadassah. From 1921 to 1930 . . . membership increased from ten thousand to thirty-five thousand.”<sup>337</sup>

Hadassah also received praise from *Dos yidishes tageblatt* in the early 1920s.<sup>338</sup> A decade earlier, in 1914, the same Mordecai Dantzis who wrote for *Froyen zhurnal* celebrated the organization and called for even more participation by women. In the article he stated that modern Zionism and the women’s emancipation movement began at the same time. The predecessor of political Zionism, the *Hovevi Tsion* [“Lovers of Zion”] had a mostly male membership. He wrote that it was as if a *mekhitse* [the barrier separating men and women in a traditional synagogue] existed

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<sup>335</sup> Mary McCune, *“The Whole Wide World, Without Limits”: International Relief, Gender Politics, and American Jewish Women, 1893-1930* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005), 26.

<sup>336</sup> Mary McCune, “Formulating the ‘Women’s Interpretation of Zionism’: Hadassah Recruitment of Non-Zionist American Women, 1914-1930,” in *American Jewish Women and the Zionist Enterprise*, edited by Shulamit Reinharz and Mark A. Raider (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2005), 90-91.

<sup>337</sup> Shulamit Reinharz, “Irma ‘Rama’ Lindheim: An Independent American Zionist Woman,” in *American Jewish Women and the Zionist Enterprise*, edited by Shulamit Reinharz and Mark A. Raider (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2005), 263.

<sup>338</sup> See, e.g., “Ten Year Old Hadassah,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 21, 1922; I. L. Brill, “Twelve Years of Hadassah,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 21, 1924.

within the early Zionism movement.<sup>339</sup>

While readers could infer *Froyen zhurnal*'s support for Zionism and traditional Judaism from the tone of the magazine's content, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* expressed its support of Zionism and Orthodox Judaism directly. Where *Froyen zhurnal* avoided criticism of other Jewish religious tendencies, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* saw Reform Judaism not as the Other, but as the enemy leading the Jewish masses to assimilation.

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* set forth its agenda in a 1914 editorial, "*Dos 'tageblatt' ihre idealen un pflikhten*" ["The *Tageblatt*, Her Ideals and Duties"], which stated, among other things, the following:

its holy and traditions of Jewish	The ideals which this newspaper has served, serves now, and will serve further, are the old, eternal Jewish and human ideals of the Jewish nation. Pleasant and dear to us is the Jewish past with and exalted traditions for which Jews have gone through fire water for thousands of years. Without the teaching and Rabbi Akiba, Rabbi Hananiah ben Teradyon, sanctified in the Spanish Inquisition dying with God's name on their lips, the people could not exist and will not exist.
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After stating that European Jewry remained in grave danger, it turned its sight on its competitors in the Yiddish press:

The *Tageblatt* is fortunate to feel it has had a considerable part of this great work of erecting a Jewish structure in America. In a time when Yiddish newspapers printed in Yiddish letters have violently assailed everything which is Jewish; at a time when they have preached that we should refuse the Jewish nation, our people, our history, our parents; at a time when they have preached that we should uproot entirely the Jewish tree, we have, with all our strength, warmed the

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<sup>339</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, "Di froy in tsionizm," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 26, 1914.

Jewish heart, so that the Jewish spark, God forbid, should not be extinguished. We have given our columns to Jewish institutions and nothing makes us happier than the feeling that our work has not been in vain.

And from this path the *Tageblatt* will not deviate even a single

hair...<sup>340</sup>

The editorial quoted above also demonstrates the Orthodox application of religious law to everyday life:

Judaism. Our entire heart and sympathy is with the Jewish worker. The love and friendship for the worker occupies a very great place in the world? Was not the Torah the first to make the best labor laws in the world? Did not the Torah say that a worker should be paid on the same day, because to wait for tomorrow was hard? Did not the Gemora say that if a worker demands wages from his employer and there is no doubt as to whether he is correct, one ought to find for the worker?<sup>341</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* compiled columns of translated quotations from Jewish religious writings in both Yiddish and English which appeared on the women's page.

Thus two authors, Di Amerikaner Rebetsin ["The American Rabbi's Wife"] and

"Z...Ts" gathered sayings from the *Pirke-oves* ("Ethics of the Fathers") in ten

columns during the summer of 1915.<sup>342</sup> In 1916, Dr. I. M. Siman compiled material

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<sup>340</sup> "Dos 'tageblatt' ihre idealen un pflikhten," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 2, 1914; see, also, "Ayer pflikht tsu ayer tsaytung," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 13, 1916; on the martyrdom of Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Hananiah ben Teradyon in 2 C. E., see, Moshe David Herr, "Hananiah (Hanina) ben

Teradyon," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 7, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 1254-1255.

<sup>341</sup> "Dos 'tabgeblatt' ihre idealen un pflikhten," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 2, 1914.

<sup>342</sup> Di Amerikaner Rebetsin and Z...Ts, "Perl fun prokim," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 21, June 28, July 12, July 19, July 25, August 2, August 9, August 15, August 23, and August 29, 1915.

on women in the Talmud and translated it into English.<sup>343</sup> Lina Rozenherts wrote about prayers written by and for women.<sup>344</sup> The writer Eliash discussed Jewish religious books for women, which were the beginnings of Yiddish literature. Eliash further noted in his columns the gender role separation in the world of religious texts.<sup>345</sup>

In battling Reform Judaism, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* contrasted the Reform movement's betrayal of Jewry to Orthodoxy's loyalty. Thus, in denouncing Reform Rabbi Rev. Dr. Joseph Krauskopf of Philadelphia's Temple Kenetheth Israel for his comments against "hyphenated" identities, the newspaper stated:

Judaism is not a local religion, it is city-wide, and country-wide and world-wide. It is to be the universal religion. It has principles which are accepted by Jews everywhere; it has laws which are obligatory upon Jews the world over. Dr. Krauskopf may change the Sabbath to Sunday, but then he would no longer belong to the Keneseth Israel; he may abrogate Milah [male circumcision], but then he would stand outside the Jewish fold. The Bible which is city-wide, country-wide and world-wide may not be authoritative to him, but then we should question his right to call himself a believing, conforming Jew.<sup>346</sup>

In 1857, Reform Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, whose eightieth birthday *American Jewess* celebrated in 1899, published a prayer book modernizing European religious practices in a shortened Reform version which he called *Minhag Amerika* ["The

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<sup>343</sup> Dr. I. M. Siman, "The Woman in the Talmud," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 27, March 28, March 29, March 30, April 2, April 3, 1916; see, also, "The Jewish Law and Women," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 12, 1915; Nahida Remy Lazarus, "The Jewish Mother," *Dos yidishes tabeblatt*, May 14, 1922.

<sup>344</sup> Lina Rozenherts, "Di vaybershe thines," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 1, 1914

<sup>345</sup> Eliash, "Sforim far froyen," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 11, 1916.

<sup>346</sup> "A Dangerous Policy," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 13, 1915.

*American Rite*”].<sup>347</sup> In 1919, near the centenary of Rabbi Wise’s birth, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* attacked Reform Judaism in a three-part series called “Minhag America.” The newspaper charged Reform Judaism for making Judaism too easy, too Christian in spirit and practice, utilizing organs and choirs, breaking with the past, declaring the dietary laws unimportant, discarding Hebrew, and not demanding personal sacrifice. The result, the newspaper wrote, was “. . . a religion of the dead . . . The Minhag America became a Kaddish religion [Kaddish is the prayer for the dead], something entirely foreign to the spirit of Judaism and the Jewish people.”<sup>348</sup>

In 1920, the seventy-fifth year for Temple Emanu-El, one of the nation’s most prominent Reform Temples, provided *Dos yidishes tageblatt* another platform for its campaign against Reform Judaism. In articles appearing both in Yiddish and in English, the newspaper denounced the Pittsburgh Platform, the Americanized Judaism which eliminated much of the Hebrew from the prayer book, discarded the Talmud, and especially rejected the concepts of a Messiah and a Jewish Homeland.<sup>349</sup> The newspaper did commend Reform Jews for their philanthropy and ability to organize,<sup>350</sup> but nevertheless considered Reform Judaism a destructive force.<sup>351</sup> It had, according to former editor Gedaliah Bublick, “. . . thrown over all that is

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<sup>347</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 98.

<sup>348</sup> “Minhag America,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 12, March 13 and March 14, 1919.

<sup>349</sup> “75-yehrige yubileum fun templ emnual,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 18, 1920; “Seventy-Five Years Reform,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 18, 1920.

<sup>350</sup> “75-yehrige yubileum fun templ emnual,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 18, 1920; “Seventy-Five Years Reform,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 18, 1920; “Orthodox Jews, Wake Up!,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 21, 1920.

<sup>351</sup> “Fifty Years of Reform,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 25, 1922.

Jewish”]; further, “[t]he ‘Americanization which they so often preached meant that Jews should throw off the national-religious traditions which they brought with them from whence they came.’”<sup>352</sup>

Those involved in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* advocated Zionism long before Theodor Herzl called the First Zionist Congress in 1897. The *Hovevei Zion* [“Lovers of Zion”] was founded in Eastern Europe in 1882 near the area from which Kasriel-tsvi Sarasohn, the founding publisher of *Yudishe gazetten* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt* came.<sup>353</sup> Branches of the organization appeared on American soil by 1884, primarily attracting Orthodox Jews.<sup>354</sup> Sarasohn was active in Hovevei Zion.<sup>355</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* both reported and supported the activities of various Zionist organizations, the Order of B’nai Tzion, the Federation of American Zionists, Young Judea, and Daughters of Zion, for example.<sup>356</sup> The paper discussed the role of women in the Zionist movement.<sup>357</sup> The allegiance of prominent people or

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<sup>352</sup> Bublick, “Dos ‘tageblat’ un orthodoxishes yudentum in amerike,” 80.

<sup>353</sup> Shlomo Noble, “Pre-Herzlian Zionism in America as Reflected in the Yiddish Press,” in *Early History of Zionism in America*, edited by Isidore S. Meyer (NY: American Jewish Historical Society and Theodor Herzl Foundation, 1958), 39; Hyman B. Grinstein, “Orthodox Judaism and Early Zionism in America,” in *Early History of Zionism in America*, edited by Isidore S. Meyer (NY: American Jewish Historical Society and Theodor Herzl Foundation, 1958), 219; Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 75.

<sup>354</sup> Noble, “Pre-Herzlian Zionism in America as Reflected in the Yiddish Press,” 39, 43; Grinstein, “Orthodox Judaism and Early Zionism in America,” 219.

<sup>355</sup> Grinstein, “Orthodox Judaism and Early Zionism in America,” 219.

<sup>356</sup> “Der kapitel tsionistische konvenshons,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 21, 1914; Eliash, “Di tekhter fun tsion,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 1, 1915; Alf-Lamed, “Tekhter fun tsion,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 24, 1918.

<sup>357</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, “Di froy in tsionizm,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 26, 1914; Eliash, “Idishe froyen in nationalen lager,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 7, 1916.

celebrities to Zionism, received mention as well. Thus, the first female member of the British Parliament, American-born Lady Nancy Astor declared herself as a Zionist, as did French actress Sarah Bernhardt toward the end of her life.<sup>358</sup> In 1919, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* honored the anniversary of novelist George Eliot, whose proto-Zionist novel *Daniel Deronda* the newspaper translated into Yiddish and serialized. The article on Eliot noted that Hovevei Zion members had quoted the book “left and right.”<sup>359</sup> The newspaper celebrated the American Jewish poet Emma Lazarus in a 1921 article, “The Mother of Zionism.”<sup>360</sup> One of Emma Lazarus’s poems not discussed in this article was “The New Colossus.” Written in 1883, it was affixed to the base of the Statue of Liberty in 1903 and was almost totally ignored at the time. The connection between the Statue, immigration and the words of the poem (“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses . . .”) occurred almost single-handedly as a result of the efforts of Louis Adamic beginning in 1934.<sup>361</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* did not restrict its attacks against anti-Zionists to Reform Jews. The paper denounced playwright and author Israel Zangwill (“The Melting Pot”) for supporting a Territorialist position, that is, for a Jewish Homeland, but not necessarily in Palestine.<sup>362</sup> Not surprisingly, the newspaper excoriated

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<sup>358</sup> Ray Bril, “Lady Astor Declares That She Is a Firm Friend of the Jews,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 25, 1922; “Sarah Bernhardt Hears the Call of Her People,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 1, 1922.

<sup>359</sup> “George Eliot,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 4, 1919.

<sup>360</sup> “The Mother of Zionism,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 8, 1921.

<sup>361</sup> John Higham, “The Transformation of the Statue of Liberty,” in *Send These to Me: Immigrants in Urban America*, rev. ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975, 1984), 73. 74. 77.

<sup>362</sup> “Mr. zangvil un di idische tsukunft in amerika,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 27,

Jewish Socialists for their opposition to Zionism, referring to them as “heretics” who preferred to sing the “Marseillaise” to the Zionist anthem “Hatikvah.”<sup>363</sup>

While *Dos yidishes tageblatt* printed articles and editorials supporting Zionism in general,<sup>364</sup> it primarily supported Mizrachi, the Orthodox Zionist party founded in 1914.<sup>365</sup> In a 1915 editorial, the paper stated that “Dr. Herzl once said: Zionism pre-supposes the return to Judaism,” attempting to make him Orthodox by association.<sup>366</sup> In 1916, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* noted the double role of Mizrachi: “. . . [O]ne could say that the founders wanted to *Zionize* the Orthodox and *Orthodoxize* Zionism,” as it sought to organize Jews around two main principles, “national love for our stock and loyalty to our religion.”<sup>367</sup> I. L. Bril stated that “[t]he Mizrachi fully supported the political planks of the Zionist platform, but at the same time it endeavored to prevent violations of the Jewish religion.”<sup>368</sup> Mizrachi called for “[t]he

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1914; “Farvos shehmt zikh zangvil mit zayn toes?” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 5, 1914; “Dos broyt un der ‘alter shteyn,’” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 10, 1914; see, also, Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 137, 157-158, 414.

<sup>363</sup> “Der ‘forverts’ un der arbeyter-parad,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 3, 1914; “Ven a sotsialist hot a klohrer kop,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 7, 1914; “Emancipate Yourself!” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 4, 1922.

<sup>364</sup> “Tishe-bov un zayn aynflus,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 19, 1915; Louis Lipsky, “The Spirit of Chanukah and Zionism,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 5, 1915; I. L. Bril, “A Landless People,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 12, 1916; “Fun mitsraim biz itster,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 2, 1918; “A khanike unter naye umshtenden,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 28, 1918; I. L. Bril, “If I Were Not a Zionist,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 2, 1923; I. L. Bril, “Chanukah,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 11, 1925.

<sup>365</sup> “Di konvenshon fun ‘mizrakhi’ in niu york,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 1, 1915; Sarna, *American Judaism*, 205.

<sup>366</sup> “The Turning of the Wheel,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 29, 1915.

<sup>367</sup> “Di mizrakhi konvenshon in amerika,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 28, 1916.

<sup>368</sup> I. L. Bril, “The Duty of Orthodox Jews,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 11, 1925.



land of Israel for the people of Israel according to the Torah of Israel.”<sup>369</sup> Mizrahi pronouncements did not, however, receive automatic approval by *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. When Mizrahi leader Rabbi Kook announced that women would not be allowed to vote at a Zionist conference in Palestine, the newspaper objected, stating that “[w]e are for suffrage everywhere, in Jerusalem no less than in New York.”<sup>370</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* did not separate belief in Orthodox Judaism from support for Zionism: one implied the other. While the newspaper took a dim view of non-Orthodox Zionists, such as those in the Poale Zion, a party combining Zionism and Socialism, it did not completely reject them.<sup>371</sup>

A contradiction between American and Jewish loyalties did not exist for *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. The front page of the Thanksgiving issue in 1914 displayed the title of the newspaper with four turkeys, two on either side. In back of the birds were crossed banners, one an American flag, the other a Zionist flag. On top of the flagpole was a Star of David.<sup>372</sup> When, in 1915, a Zionist Congress was held in Boston during Fourth of July celebrations, Getzel Zelikowitch noted that the “Star Spangled Banner” would share space with “Hatikvah.”<sup>373</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 205.

<sup>370</sup> Ben-Zion, “Horav kuk tret aroys gegen froyen shtimrekht,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 9, 1919; “Froyenshtimrekht in palestina,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 10, 1919; “Gründungs ferzamlung un froyen-shtimrekht in palestina,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 27, 1920.

<sup>371</sup> “Let Them Resign,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 15, 1916; Isidor Zar, “Zionism and Socialism as Viewed by a Poale Zionist,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 28, 1916.

<sup>372</sup> Masthead. *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 26, 1914.

<sup>373</sup> Getzel Zelikowitch, “Hayntige yontev fun 4ten--un dem iden’s hofnung,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 4, 1915.

*Der tog*, as noted in the last chapter, did not consider itself either a religious or an anti-religious newspaper. It opposed what it considered fanaticism, such as brides shaving their heads or beliefs in the curses of mothers-in-law.<sup>374</sup> As with *Froyen zhurnal* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, *Der tog* printed a number of compilations of religious sayings from holy texts.<sup>375</sup> Most significantly, *Der tog* serialized the Yiddish translation of the Torah by Solomon Bloomgarden, a poet better known under the pseudonym Yehoash.<sup>376</sup> *Der tog* viewed Jewish holidays as aspects of Jewish nationality, not religiosity. Interpreting the religious in nationalist terms led columnist D. M. Hermalin to write that “[b]eard and *peyes* [the sidelocks worn by Orthodox males], circumcision, wearing *tsitsis* [fringes attached to garments worn by Orthodox males], *tefillin* [phylacteries, leather boxes containing prayers and leather straps wrapped around the arm and forehead, utilized by Orthodox males] and similar things, are all customs and laws which distinguish the Jew from all others and hold him in the disciplined circle of his nationality.” Hermalin continued, when Moses Mendelsohn declared Jews to be just members of a religious sect, he opened the doors to assimilation. Jews following the various customs, Hermalin insisted, did so knowing they thereby symbolized their nationality.<sup>377</sup> For the same reason, he

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<sup>374</sup> H., “Der koyekh fun fanatizm lebt nokh,” *Der tog*, May 5, 1917.

<sup>375</sup> “Mayses un khesroynes fun der froy loyt der gemore,” *Der tog*, July 17, 1915; Joseph Margoshes, “Perl fun der gemore un midrash vegen isenshaft un kinder-ertsihung,” *Der tog*, August 7, 1915; S. Goldberg-Cantor, “What Our Sages Thought of the Fair Sex,” *Der tog*, February 8, 1925.

<sup>376</sup> Yehoash’s translation began in the October 19, 1922 issue.

<sup>377</sup> H., “Der emes’er tsiel fun idishkeyt bay iden,” *Der tog*, September 27, 1918; for the meaning of circumcision, *tsitsis*, *tefillin*, wearing beards and *peyes*, see, Ronald L. Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions* (Phila: The Jewish Publication Society, 2004), 7-8, 380-381, 382-385, 590-592.

advocated that even non-religious Jews follow the custom of fasting on Tisha b'Av, mourning the destruction of the first Temple in Jerusalem.<sup>378</sup> Blindly following customs while failing to act in an ethical manner, however, constituted hypocrisy. Hermalin cited the Talmud to the effect that deeds speak louder than pieties.<sup>379</sup>

In accordance with the Ten Commandment's designation of the Sabbath as a Day of Rest upon which no work may be performed, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* was not published on Saturdays. *Der tog*, however, did appear on Saturdays, leading to a protest by a rabbinical organization with editorial support from *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. As to why the rabbis did not protest other papers coming out on the Sabbath, their organization replied:

our will Jewry, not as	We are not protesting against those who have no pretensions about <i>Yidishkayt</i> [Jewishness] and nationalism, which according to opinion is the same thing. Those are Socialist papers and we have nothing to do with them. Certainly they bring shame to but the shame which comes from an open opponent is dangerous as that which comes from a disguised one.
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The editorial further argued that newspapers, as institutions, had a special duty towards the public, because institutions acted as *vegvayzers* ["guides"] to the public.<sup>380</sup>

In an article in the English-language section of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the newspaper reprinted part of a piece from *The Modern View* of St. Louis, Missouri,

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<sup>378</sup> H., "Vegen di nayn-teg un dos alten tische-bov," *Der tog*, July 13, 1918.

<sup>379</sup> H., "A frumer id vos iz kayn id nit," *Der tog*, December 15, 1917.

<sup>380</sup> "Di rabonim un di shabes-tsaytung," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 24, 1914; see, also, "Der kehile-'tog' khilel-hashem," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 19, 1915; "Dr. y. l. magnes, der 'tog' un der groyserkhilel-hashem," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*,

which argued that “[i]nstead of following the example of the better Yiddish dailies, it seems to have taken the cue from the socialist-anarchistic sheet [probably *Forverts*] and appears on Saturdays.” Noting that most Yiddish newspaper editors were not observant, the article concluded “[b]ut, at least, they do not openly offend the sensibilities of their people and their faith as the ‘Day’ has been doing every time it has appeared on our Sabbath.”<sup>381</sup>

*Der tog*’s opposition to Reform Judaism rested on political, not religious grounds. The newspaper supported a national viewpoint, as opposed to the national-religious perspective of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and the religious outlook of *American Jewess*, the Pittsburgh Platform and its adherents. In a 1919 column, D. Hermalin set forth his view of Jewish identity to a Reform rabbi who wondered why Hermalin seemed anti-Reform. Noting that while Reform Jews claimed Judaism as a religion, they rejected belief in miracles and other aspects of the Divine. Further, they rejected Jewish ceremonial laws, such as keeping kosher. “They are no more Jews than Unitarian Christians.” Hermalin accused the “Herr Rabbiner” [German for “Mr. Rabbi,” a mocking reference to Central European Jewish adherents to Reform Judaism] of insensitivity, like all “reformed Jews,” to the suffering of Jews in postwar Eastern Europe. “Does the Herr Rabbiner know that several million Jews have been driven and oppressed, and have nowhere to go?”

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February 25, 1915.

<sup>381</sup> Emes, “Sabbath Violations Denounced,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 26, 1915.

Hermalin noted that Jews had their own nation two thousand years ago. As to the question by the “Herr Rabbiner” of whether those going to Palestine would build a new Temple and make sacrifices to the Fatted Calf, Hermalin replied:

throw                      No, nobody will build a Temple and nobody will make sacrifices to a Fatted Calf. Of that we can be sure. But what if it was otherwise? It is better to make sacrifices to a Fatted Calf for God and people can then eat the sacrifices, than to sacrifice people in pogroms and their bodies to the dogs. Our ancient Jewish primitive religion with sacrifices stood higher than the modern faiths. Jews have never made pogroms, although they gave their blood to God like animals.

Answering the Rabbi’s comment that if readers of *Der tog* were not Yiddish-speaking, they would not be Orthodox but Reform, Hermalin stated:

The readers of *Der tog* are not reformed Jews, but they are far, far from being entirely Orthodox. A small percent comprise the Orthodox. The remainder are freethinkers, Socialists and even some Anarchists. All are acquainted with the great breach among the Jewish people and are united in the concept that Jews must have their own home where they may lay their heads.

There have been times when many of us have more or less adopted the opinion of the reformed *Rabbiner* that Jews are not a nation and that the best thing would be to become good citizens of the peoples with whom they live. The Jews have been ready, but the peoples among whom they live have not.

Hermalin closed with an appeal point to pogrom-soaked Europe: “Not only we alone have recognized this, but also the great civilized nations have come to the same decision. Only the reformed Jews have not yet opened their eyes.”<sup>382</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> H., “Vegen der emune fun di reformirte iden,” *Der tog*, November 19, 1919; on Reform Judaism and intermarriage, see, also, “Reform Jews and Jewish Nationalism,” *Der tog*, May 17, 1923; see, also, H., “Vi azoy iden asimiliren zikh in amerika,” *Der*

*Der tog* did not automatically reject everything connected with those in the Reform wing. Thus, Hermalin commended Rabbi Stephen S. Wise for pushing Reform rabbis to support an amendment granting women equal political rights. A rabbi had urged that rabbis should discuss moral, not political issues. Hermalin agreed with Wise's rejoinder: equal rights for women, while political, constituted a moral question as well.<sup>383</sup> The newspaper carried an article lauding Wise as a present-day Hebrew prophet, singling out his support for Zionism, among other things.<sup>384</sup> Nonetheless, when Wise later stated that the teachings of Jesus were Jewish in spirit, *Der tog* called for Wise's resignation as head of the united Zionist campaign.<sup>385</sup>

Politically, *Der tog's* nationalist stance did not embrace the Orthodox Mizrahi Party. Along with *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, D. Hermalin of *Der tog* denounced the decision by the Mizrahi's Rabbi Kook in 1919 to deny women the right to vote in Palestine.<sup>386</sup> Columnist Adella Kean commented that twelve women were elected to the legislative assembly in Palestine, but none could serve, since "[t]he Orthodox would not sit with sinful wives in their presence!"<sup>387</sup> Six years later, *Der tog's* Dr. K. Fornberg discussed the Mizrahi position in an article entitled "*Di*

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*tog*, May 21, 1917; Dr. K. Fornberg, "Asimilatsie un gemishte hayraten," *Der tog*, November 23, 1925.

<sup>383</sup> H., "Identum un di glakhe reckhte far froyen," *Der tog*, April 26, 1917.

<sup>384</sup> John J. Smertenko, "Dr. Stephen S. Wise--Man and Leader," *Der tog*, March 16, 1924.

<sup>385</sup> "Dr. vayz'es farbrekhen un shtrof," *Der tog*, December 30, 1925.

<sup>386</sup> H., "Froyen bay der idisher natsional-farzamlung," *Der tog*, November 6, 1919.

<sup>387</sup> Adella Kean, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, August 11, 1921.

*moyre far froyen*” [“The Fear of Women”]. He began by noting the morning prayer of *frum* [pious] males thanking God they were not born women, connecting this to the Mizrahi decision. Modern Jews, Fornberg wrote, have long lost interest in this *brokhe* [“blessing”], and, especially for those in nationalist circles, believe in freedom, tolerance and equality.<sup>388</sup>

While *Der tog* opposed Mizrahi, it did not endorse any particular Zionist party or tendency. Indeed, on the occasion of its eleventh anniversary, the newspaper stated that those not wishing to emigrate to Palestine could lead just as valid a Jewish life as those who, along with the newspaper, supported a Jewish national home in Palestine.<sup>389</sup> The newspaper reported on and celebrated the activities of Zionist organizations such as Hadassah,<sup>390</sup> and youth organizations such as Young Judea.<sup>391</sup> When Zionist leader Dr. Chaim Weizman visited New York with his wife Vera, the first woman awarded a medical degree from Manchester University, the newspaper greeted them both.<sup>392</sup>

*Der tog* took notice of prominent people endorsing Zionism, such as Mrs. Joseph Fels, of the Fels soap family, a pacifist who travelled on the Ford Peace Ship,

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<sup>388</sup> Dr. K. Fornberg, “Di moyre far froyen,” *Der tog*, June 23, 1925.

<sup>389</sup> “Elf yohr ‘tog,’” *Der tog*, November 5, 1925.

<sup>390</sup> Ezekiel Rabinovitsh, “Hadasa,” *Der tog*, Jun; 24, 1917; Ezekiel Rabinovitsh, “Hadasa konvenshon,” *Der tog*, June 28, 1917; Ish emes, “Darfen tsionistische froyen maken shabos far zikh?” *Der tog*, January 12, 1918.

<sup>391</sup> Sh. P. Rubin, “Di yugend in der tsionistisher bavegung,” *Der tog*, August 7, 1916; K. Veytman, “Di ‘yong dzshudia,’ an organizatsion fun der idealistisher idisher yugend,” *Der tog*, December 19, 1920; Ben Joseph, “Young Judea,” *Der tog*, November 23, 1924.

<sup>392</sup> See, e.g., J. Foshko, “Der historisher kaboles ponim” (editorial cartoon), *Der tog*, April 5, 1921; Joel Slonim, “Madam vaysman, a doktor fun meditsin, dertsehl ven zi

a follower of Henry George's Single Tax Plan, a Suffragist, and ardent Zionist.<sup>393</sup> Others hailed by *Der tog* for their support of Zionism included Sarah Bernhardt, former American ambassador to Norway Norman Hapgood, President Woodrow Wilson, President Warren G. Harding, and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge.<sup>394</sup> As with *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, *Der tog* commemorated pioneers in Zionist thought who preceded Herzl, including Emma Lazarus, George Eliot and English novelist Laurence Oliphant.<sup>395</sup> The newspaper also noted the support for a Jewish homeland expressed by Dr. Joseph Priestley, the Earl of Shaftsbury, the Earl of Balfour and President John Adams.<sup>396</sup>

*Der tog* readers had the opportunity of reading articles by or about nationalist critics of Herzlian Zionism such as the Yiddishist Chaim Zhitlowsky, the socialist-Zionist Dr. Nachman Syrkin, and pieces on the "Cultural Zionist" Ahad Ha'Am [Asher Ginzberg].<sup>397</sup> Ahad Ha'Am opposed Herzl and his concept of a

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iz gevoren tsiunistin un vi azoy zi helf ihr man," *Der tog*, April 11, 1921.

<sup>393</sup> Marion Weinstein, "Mrs. dzshosef felz vegen singel teks un tsionizm," *Der tog*, March 13, 1916; for Mary Fels, see, Elliott Weinbaum, "Fels, Mary (1863-1953)," in *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore (NY: Routledge, 1997), 406-407.

<sup>394</sup> "Sarah un sore," *Der tog*, August 31, 1922; Norman Hapgood, "The Melting Pot--What May Be Said for and against It," *Der tog*, January 11, 1925; "Mr. hepgud un der 'shmelstop,'" *Der tog*, January 11, 1925; Maxmillian Hurwitz, "Is Zionism Compatible with Americanism?" *Der tog*, May 3, 1925.

<sup>395</sup> Jean Jaffe, "The American Jewish Muse," *Der tog*, August 17, 1924. This article discusses not only Lazarus's "Epistle to the Hebrews," but also "The New Colossus."

<sup>396</sup> Maxmillian Hurwitz, "Is Zionism Compatible with Americanism?" *Der tog*, May 3, 1925.

<sup>397</sup> Chaim Zhitlowsky, "Hertsl-kult," *Der tog*, February 24, 1915; "Idishistisher tsionizm," *Der tog*, March 3, 1918; Dr. N. Syrkin, "Idish oder hebreyish?" *Der tog*, June 3, 1916; Sh. Niger, "The Believer, in Memory of Dr. Nachman Syrkin," *Der tog*, September 21, 1924; Maurice Samuel, "The Birthday of Our Independence," *Der tog*,



Jewish State, asking what was specifically Jewish about this kind of state. Ahad Ha'Am opposed mass emigration to Palestine, preferring to see it as a spiritual and cultural center for world Jewry. His viewpoint was national-cultural, not religious.<sup>398</sup> Rabbi Judah Magnes, one of the founders of *Der tog* and the first Chancellor of Hebrew University, took a position similar to that of Ahad Ha'Am.<sup>399</sup>

*Forverts* differed markedly from the other publications in this study; as a Socialist newspaper, it endorsed neither religious nor nationalist viewpoints. Mentions of Jewish holidays, for example, occurred with much less frequency in *Forverts* (fifteen) than in either *Dos yidishes tageblatt* (forty-three) or *Der tog* (thirty-seven) for the time period 1916 to 1925. Apart from the holidays, discussed in Chapter 7, the newspaper had little to say about religion. In a 1919 advertisement, the newspaper boasted that “The *Forverts* does not wear a *shtraymel* [fur-edged hat worn by very Orthodox rabbis and Hasidic males on holidays] and *tsitsis* to cash in on *Yidishkayt* [religious Jewishness], but the *Forverts* does more for the Jewish masses, both in regard to economic progress and in respect to education, than any Jewish institution in the world.”<sup>400</sup>

Yet in 1917, it urged freethinking men married to *frum* women to act in a

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April 13, 1924; Rabbi Joseph L. Baron, “The Soul of a Nation, An Essay on Ahad Ha'Am,” *Der tog*, August 24, 1924.

<sup>398</sup> Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 96, 162-166.

<sup>399</sup> Arthur Goren, “Spiritual Zionists and Jewish Sovereignty,” in *The Americanization of the Jews*, edited by Robert M. Seltzer and Norman J. Cohen (NY: New York University Press, 1995), 168-169.

<sup>400</sup> “Geshprekhen mit lezer un advertayzer fin ‘forverts,’” *Forverts*, July 29, 1919.

much more tolerant manner regarding their wives' adherence the dietary laws.<sup>401</sup> In 1902, *Forverts* supported women boycotting kosher butcher shops because of rising prices, a boycott supported as well by *Dos yidishes tageblatt*.<sup>402</sup> In 1918, author M. Podalski discussed *frum* wives in America, comparing how they lived in the Old Country. There they wore old-fashioned clothes and a *sheytel* ["wig"]; here, in the New World, they dress according to the latest fashion and do not shave their heads or wear a *sheytel*. The author claimed that they kept Jewish customs, such as the dietary laws, blessing *Shabos* candles, and going to a synagogue for Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur for the sake of their mothers or grandmothers, building a Jewishness not on the basis of principle, but on pleasing their parents.<sup>403</sup>

While no doubt existed as to the *Forverts* being a Socialist publication, the question relevant to this study is how the Socialism of the *Forverts* manifested itself on the woman's page. Primarily through the "*Notitsen fun der froyen-velt*" ["Notes from the Woman's World"] column, readers learned about the activities of women in the Socialist and labor movements. In *Der tog*, Adella Kean wrote about many of the same activities in her columns, "*Fun a froy tsu froyen*" ["From a Woman to Women"] and "*In der froyen velt*" ["In the Woman's World"]. In *Forverts*, the number of mentions about or articles on Socialism or trade unions appearing on the woman's page fluctuated from year to year. The high point for articles or references to Socialism or the Socialist Party on the women's page came in 1923, with twelve mentions for the year, followed by 1920 with eleven; the low point in

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<sup>401</sup> "A bintel brief," *Forverts*, April 4, 1917.

<sup>402</sup> Sorin, *Tradition Transformed*, 79.

1922, with only three mentions. The high point for articles on or references to the labor movement or trade unions on the women's page also occurred in 1923, with fourteen mentions; the low point came in 1920, with two mentions, and 1921, with one mention.<sup>404</sup> Clearly, *Forverts* did not emphasize Socialism on the women's page

One of the more active writers in 1923 was Judith Kopf, who originally penned her articles under the *nom de plume* of "A. Froy" ["A. Woman"]. From December 12, 1920 to December 27, 1925, Kopf wrote one hundred eight-three articles, as "A. Froy," "Judith Kopf (A Froy)," Judith Kopf, "K. Judith," and finally "Y. K." Like Adella Kean Zometkin at *Der tog*, Kopf covered a wide variety of topics, ranging from health to housework, cooking to contraception, corsets to cosmetics, and rearing children to removing spots from clothes. From June 10, 1923 to August 2, 1923, Kopf mentioned Socialism in four articles, before returning to her regular diet of recipes and childcare. The first article defended modern women against accusations of becoming mannish. Declaring that "we Jewish women are Socialists," she noted that in the Old World, Jewish women ran businesses. She invoked the examples of Madame Curie, Sarah Bernhardt and American novelist "Madame [Edith] Wharton," as proof of maternal qualities or abilities not being lessened by their professions. She also asked whether anyone would have read

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<sup>403</sup> M. Podalski, "Haynt-veltige frume vayblakh," *Forverts*, March 10, 1918.

<sup>404</sup> Historian Maxine S. Sellers, in "Defining Socialist Womanhood" and "World of Our Mothers," only used 1919 issues of the *Forverts*. In 1919, the number of mentions of or articles about Socialism ranked seventh, with five mentions, while the number of articles about or mentions of labor unions ranked fifth, with seven mentions.

books by George Sand or George Eliot if they had not taken male pseudonyms.<sup>405</sup>

The other three articles concerned the opposition of “we Socialists” to the Woman’s Party of Alice Paul and “Mrs. Belmont.”

Noting that while the League of Women Voters looked out for working women and understood the difference between labor in an office and a sweatshop, the Woman’s Party was the Party of aristocrats and high society.<sup>406</sup> The League of Women Voters, the Federation of Women’s Clubs, the Consumer’s League, and the Women’s Trade Union League all opposed the Woman’s Party campaign to repeal protective legislation for women and children working in factories and shops.

Declaring that “we Socialists” know the implications of such “equality,” Kopf stated:

The Woman’s Party dances a pretty dance, but how can working women dance with them if their feet have been deformed by machines or by house work 10-12 hours a day? Her feet must be liberated before she will be able to dance the dance of Alice Paul and Mrs. Belmont.<sup>407</sup>

The last article in which Judith Kopf discussed Socialism again attacked the Woman’s Party and its talk of “free contracts,” noting that manufacturers employed this term when fighting unions. Working women, she stated, must use the weapons of legislation and labor organization. They must work towards the final goal--Socialism: “Only a part of class-conscious workers will go with us to the

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<sup>405</sup> Judith Kopf, “Bilbulim vos vern gemakht oyf der itsiger froy,” *Forverts*, June 10, 1923.

<sup>406</sup> Judith Kopf, “Di tsvey froyen-partayen velkhe kempfen far froyen rekhte,” *Forverts*, July 31, 1923.

<sup>407</sup> Judith Kopf, “Der shaden vos ‘glaykhe’ rekhte far froyen vet breyngen der arbeyter-froy,” *Forverts*, July 25, 1923.

end.”<sup>408</sup>

Although the *Forverts* wrote about women voting for Socialists, it did not encourage them to run for office or become involved in Party affairs. Similarly, while the newspaper discussed female workers within the labor movement, it did not encourage them to run for leadership positions. The International Ladies Garment Workers Union, in fact, never had a female president. In 1923, *Forverts* celebrated the election of the Socialist Margaret Bondfield as chairman of the General Council of the British Trade Union Congress after being active in the shop steward movement, and her subsequent position in the cabinet of the Labor Party the following year.<sup>409</sup> Yet, it made no suggestion that Jewish American women in the needle trades could or should follow her example. Beyond voting for the Socialist Party and encouraging their male relatives to do the same, the tone set for the readership remained one of spectator rather than participant.

*Forverts* greeted the overthrow of the Tsar with enthusiasm, as did all Yiddish publications. In 1919, according to historian Tony Michels, “Cahan had all but prohibited anti-Bolshevik articles in *Forverts*.”<sup>410</sup> At the beginning of 1922, *Forverts*

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<sup>408</sup> Judith Kopf, “Vos di arbeyter-froy darf thon um tsu krigen folshtendige rekhte,” *Forverts*, August 2, 1923.

<sup>409</sup> Sadie Vinokur, “Di froy iz itst on der shpitse fun ale yunions in england,” *Forverts*, October 28, 1923; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, November 18, 1923; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, December 23, 1923; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, February 3, 1924; see, also, “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, November 1, 1925.

<sup>410</sup> Tony Michels, “Socialism with a Jewish Face: The Origins of the Yiddish-Speaking Communist Movement in the United States, 1907-1923,” in *Yiddish and the Left: Papers of the Third Mendel Friedman International Conference on Yiddish*, edited by Gennady Estraiikh and Mikhail Krutikov (Oxford: Legenda, 2001), 36.

continued to refer to the Soviet Union as “the heroic defender of the highest human ideals”; this changed by the end of the year due to the activities of Jewish Communists in America and Soviet government repression.<sup>411</sup>

How did changing attitudes towards the Soviet Union manifest themselves on the woman’s page? From September 1 to September 29, 1918, “H. B.,” Hertz Burgin, wrote a series of laudatory articles on women in the New Russia, particularly on the role of women in education and, not surprisingly, the Revolution itself. H. B. wrote about female martyrs for the revolutionary cause, and the new equality present in the land.<sup>412</sup> That same year writer M. Tsipin wrote about the new equality in “*Di froy in nayem rusland*” [“The Woman in the New Russia”].<sup>413</sup> In 1919 and 1920, a few articles appeared on Lenin’s wife, and her views about educating children.<sup>414</sup>

However, none of the twelve articles on the Soviet Union dealt with Jewish women in

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<sup>411</sup> Daniel Soyer, “Abraham Cahan’s Travels in Jewish Homelands: Palestine in 1925 and the Soviet Union in 1927,” in *Yiddish and the Left: Papers of the Third Mendel Friedman International Conference on Yiddish*, edited by Gennady Estraiikh and Mikhail Krutikov (Oxford: Legenda, 2001), 60-61.

<sup>412</sup> H. B., “Tipen fun froyen in befrayungs-kampf fun rusland,” *Forverts*, September 1, 1918; H. B., “Di role fun der rusisher skhul-lehrerin in der befrayungs-bevegung,” *Forverts*, September 8, 1918; H. B., “Di rusishe froy in der revolutsionarer bevegung,” *Forverts*, September 15, 1918; H. B., “Froyen fun hekhere rusishe klasen in der befrayungs-bevegung in rusland,” *Forverts*, September 22, 1918; H. B., “Di rusishe froy nokh der revolutsion 1905-1906,” *Forverts*, September 29, 1918; see, also, “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, April 7, 1918; on Hertz Burgin, see, Zalman Rejzen, “Burgin herts (shmuel),” in *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese un filologye*, compiled by Zalman Rejzen, Vol. 1, 247-250 (Vilna: Kletzkin Ferlag, 1928); “Burgin, herts,” in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, edited by Sh. Niger, Jacob Shatzky and Moshe Starkman, Vol. 1, 270-271 (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1956).

<sup>413</sup> M. Tsipin, “Di froy in nayem rusland,” *Forverts*, November 3, 1918.

<sup>414</sup> M. Nagel, “Lenen’s froy,” *Forverts*, October 12, 1919; “Lenin’s froy erklehrt vi azoy men darf ertsihen kinder,” *Forverts*, August 15, 1920.

the New Russia.

From October 31, 1920 to August 14, 1921, twenty summaries or translations of articles from the Soviet press, both Russian and Yiddish, appeared monthly and sometimes weekly in the woman's section of *Forverts*. All but one of the translated Russian-language articles came from *Pravda*; the reprinted Yiddish articles came from *Royter shtern* [*Red Star*], *Komunistisher fohn* [*Communist Flag*], and *Der komunistisher veg* [*The Communist Way*]. An additional article reprinted from the Yiddish *Der shtern* [*The Star*] came out in January 1923. Of nineteen such articles, only four came from the Soviet Yiddish press. None of the articles, whether from the Russian or Yiddish press in the Soviet Union, discussed Jewish women in the New Russia. In October 1925, the regular column "Notes from the Woman's World" reported on massive female participation in the Soviet government, including a number of prominent women in leadership positions.<sup>415</sup> However, by not narrowing the articles to the treatment of Jewish women in the New Russia, *Forverts* served as reporter rather than advocate.

The approximately seventy-eight mentions of Socialism or the Socialist Party on the women's page, the approximately ninety mentions of labor unions or the labor movement, in addition to the twenty translations from the Soviet press and the twelve articles on the New Russia, can be compared with the coverage of other topics. Between 1917 and 1925, there were one hundred eighty articles or mentions of children and health, sixty-five on housework, eighty-one on fashion, one hundred sixty-six on marriage, and one hundred fifty-six on raising and educating children.

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<sup>415</sup> "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, October 4, 1925.

These comparative figures suggest that *Forverts* advocated a more traditional view of womanhood for its female readers. Thus, the newspaper advocated an active role in the home, but a passive, spectator-role in the Socialist and labor movements.

As a Socialist newspaper, *Forverts* rejected Jewish nationalism as reactionary. In 1917, the newspaper denounced Zionism as a false Messiah. The paper argued that the Jewish masses know that the struggle continues where they presently live, and not in building some future Jewish state.<sup>416</sup> Editor Abraham (Ab.) Cahan asked what Jews would do in Palestine, since it would remain a British protectorate, with Arabs never becoming a minority.<sup>417</sup> Playwright Israel Zangwill declared in 1920 that the Balfour Declaration was a pipe dream.<sup>418</sup> A 1920 editorial, “*A idishe land ohn iden*” [“A Jewish Land without Jews”], attacked Zionism and the Zionists, noting the optimism on the “Jewish Street” with the Balfour Declaration: “Dance, Jews, salvation is already coming.” But with British roadblocks to emigration, there would be no more celebrations; the British would make life difficult for those already there. The editorial accused the Zionists of exploiting Jewish hopes.<sup>419</sup>

By the early and mid-1920s, attitudes towards Jewish settlement in Palestine to change. B. Charney Vladeck, the *Forverts* business manager, wrote that he did not

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<sup>416</sup> “Der ‘zieg’ fun tsionismus un di sotsialistishe oyfklerung fun der masen,” *Forverts*, December 1, 1917.

<sup>417</sup> Ab. Cahan, “Di tsionisten makhen a zehr falshen shrit,” *Forverts*, February 17, 1919.

<sup>418</sup> “Iden zeynen opgenart gevoren fun england un palestina iz nit keyn idish heym--zogt zangvil,” *Forverts*, August 23, 1920.

<sup>419</sup> “A idishe land ohn iden,” *Forverts*, September 24, 1920.



consider Zionism reactionary; Jewish revolutionary awakening began with the Hovevei Zion [Lovers of Zion]. Vladeck saw Zionism as an unsuccessful medicine which could not cure the underlying disease, more of an emotion than a theory. Vladeck held that while Zionism would have Jews living in a Jewish homeland, Socialism would enable Jews to live anywhere in the world.<sup>420</sup> In 1923, Nathaniel Zalowitz, a regular writer for the English section, expressed strong doubts about the Zionist enterprise. He noted a number of problems, such as the complications of Palestine as a British colony, a strong belief that agriculture would fail since Jews came from an urban industrial environment, the lack of natural resources, and inadequate room to house large numbers of new arrivals.<sup>421</sup>

In July and August 1925, *Forverts* joined *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Der tog* in condemning the Orthodox Zionist Mizrachi Party for its opposition to women's suffrage in Palestine.<sup>422</sup> In July 1925, the American Zionist women's organization Hadassah entered the fray by urging the Fourteenth Zionist Congress to support women's suffrage in Palestine. Despite opposition from ultra-Orthodox rabbis claiming that the Torah did not see men and women as equals, women in Palestine finally won the right to vote in 1926.<sup>423</sup>

Meanwhile, in September 1925, Abraham Cahan visited Palestine for three

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<sup>420</sup> B. Charney Vladeck, "Mayne gefihlen tsum tsionizm," *Forverts*, June 4, 1921.

<sup>421</sup> Nathaniel Zalowitz, "The American Jew and Zionism," *Forverts*, August 19, 1923; Nathaniel Zalowitz, "Can Palestine Become the National Homeland of the Jewish People?" *Forverts*, September 2, 1923; Nathaniel Zalowitz, "There Can Be No Security for Jewsih [sic] People in Palestine," *Forverts*, September 9, 1923.

<sup>422</sup> "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, July 26, 1925; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, August 16, 1925.

<sup>423</sup> McCune, "*The Whole Wide World, Without Limits*," 129-130.

and a half weeks, sending back twenty-three cables to the newspaper.<sup>424</sup> Although a Socialist, Cahan was never a member of the Jewish Labor Bund, a fact noted by him more than once in his cables.<sup>425</sup> In Eastern Europe, and in polemics conducted among Socialists and Bundists who had emigrated to America, the Bundist struggle with Zionists for the hearts and minds of the Jewish masses continued unabated. Cahan, while never becoming a Zionist, did admire the work of the Labor Zionists and their idealism.<sup>426</sup> One of the results of his trip was financial support for Histadrut, the Zionist labor organization, by the United Hebrew Trades, a Jewish trade union confederation centered in New York.<sup>427</sup> Historian Yaacov Goldstein summarized Cahan's conclusions following his tour:

Even if Palestine would not solve the Jewish people's problems, it was still necessary to hold a positive attitude toward it, if only on account of three factors. First, Cahan enumerated the historical, religious, and emotional ties of the Jewish people to its ancient homeland would continue to maintain Palestine's significance among the Jewish masses. Second, antisemitism was forcing many to adopt the idea of Palestine as their future home. Third, the magnificent pioneering spirit inherent in the building of the Jewish settlement deserved the support of every Jew, including socialists.<sup>428</sup>

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<sup>424</sup> Ab. Cahan, "Abraham Cahan's Cables from Palestine," *Forverts*, October 10, 1925; Soyer, "Abraham Cahan's Travels in Jewish Homelands: Palestine in 1925 and the Soviet Union in 1927," 62; Yaacov Goldstein, "American Jewish Socialists' Attitude to Zionism and Palestine in the 1920s," *YIVO Annual* 23 (1996): 427.

<sup>425</sup> Goldstein, "American Jewish Socialists' Attitude to Zionism and Palestine in the 1920s," 430.

<sup>426</sup> Abraham Cahan, "What the Jews of the World See in the Zionist Movement," *Forverts*, November 25, 1925; Goldstein, "American Jewish Socialists' Attitude to Zionism and Palestine in the 1920s," 427-428; Soyer, "Abraham Cahan's Travels in Jewish Homelands," 63.

<sup>427</sup> Albert Waldinger, "Abraham Cahan and Palestine," *Jewish Social Studies* 39, 1-2 (Winter-Spring 1977): 76.

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*, 430; see, also, Ruth R. Wisse, "Ups and Downs of Yiddish in America," in

Cahan's views did not go unchallenged in *Forverts*.<sup>429</sup> Full-scale debates over Zionism and Cahan's friendly attitude toward the building of a Jewish homeland occurred in the pages of *Forverts* in 1926.<sup>430</sup>

Whether in Palestine, Poland or Pittsburgh, the publications in this study all concerned themselves with Jewish continuity, particularly with new generations. Their particular ideologies determined what would be taught. The diversity of educational settings reflected the variety of viewpoints concerning religious and political ideology.

*American Jewess* celebrated the accomplishments of Rebecca Gratz (1781-1869), Sir Walter Scott's model for his heroine Rebecca in the novel *Ivanhoe*, and founder of the first Jewish Sunday School movement in Philadelphia in 1838.<sup>431</sup> Both *American Jewess* and the National Council of Jewish Women supported the Sabbath Schools.<sup>432</sup> Following the American Protestant Sunday School model, women taught. The basic curriculum under Rebecca Gratz consisted of learning

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*Yiddish in America: Essays on Yiddish Culture in the Golden Land*, edited by Edward S. Shapiro (Scranton: University of Scranton Press), 8-9.

<sup>429</sup> See, e.g., Zivion, "Di debate iber di artiklen vegen palestina," *Forverts*, December 28, 1925; Zivion, "Di debate iber di artiklen in palestina," *Forverts*, December 29, 1925.

<sup>430</sup> Goldstein, "American Jewish Socialists' Attitude to Zionism and Palestine in the 1920s," 432 et seq.

<sup>431</sup> Bee Dee, "An American Jewess," *American Jewess* (September 1896): 637; Sarna, *American Judaism*, 49-50, 80.

<sup>432</sup> Hannah G. Solomon, "Report of the National Council of Jewish Women," *American Jewess* (April 1895): 27; "National Council of Jewish Women," *American Jewess* (June 1895): 129; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (September 1896): 651; Rosa Sonneschein, "Harken to the Call," *American Jewess* (September 1898): 12.

prayers and Bible stories with a Jewish emphasis.<sup>433</sup> The Sunday or Sabbath Schools championed in the pages of *American Jewess* had much the same curriculum, with the occasional addition of Hebrew.<sup>434</sup>

The lead article in the May 1913 *Di froyen velt* warned of the dangers to future Jewish generations and Jewish daughters in particular because parents, especially mothers, ignored the job of giving their children a Jewish education.<sup>435</sup> Nine years later, in *Froyen zhurnal*, Ella Blum wrote that fathers had minimal impact on their children's education, since the task of raising them and inculcating a Jewish consciousness fell on the shoulders of mothers. "She wishes to raise the child both as a Jew and a human being." A Jewish mother wants her child to become necessary for his people and to the world.<sup>436</sup> In August 1923, the magazine inaugurated "Our Children's Page" by "Cousin Henrietta" and "Heart to Heart Talk," conducted by "Constance." The difference between the audiences of Cousin Henrietta and Constance seemed age-defined. Older readers wrote to Constance, with questions about dating and intermarriage, subjects not covered by Cousin Henrietta. Cousin Henrietta discussed Bible stories and religious customs. In the next to the last issue of *Froyen zhurnal*, English-language writer Lillie Schultz called upon Jewish women

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<sup>433</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 80

<sup>434</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (September 1896): 651; "Hebrew to Be a Living Language," *American Jewess* (May 1898): 60; for examples of little plays built on Bible stories, see Leah Levy, "How to Teach the Infant Class at Sabbath School," *American Jewess* (August 1897): 221-226, *American Jewess* (October 1897): 29-34, *American Jewess* (January 1898): 175-179.

<sup>435</sup> "Unzere tekhter," *Di froyen velt* (May 1913): 3.

<sup>436</sup> Ella Blum, "Di idishe mame," *Froyen zhurnal* (July 1922): 5; see, also, Ella Blum, "Idishe froyen un idishe traditsie," *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1923): 5.

to remember their duties regarding Jewish education.<sup>437</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt*, on the other hand, advocated traditional Jewish education in Talmud Torahs and yeshivas. A Jewish boy in Eastern Europe received his elementary Jewish education either in the privately-run *kheder* or the community-funded Talmud Torah. The latter primarily served the sons of the poor.<sup>438</sup> The newspaper wrote of having “. . . fought from the first day of its existence for the founding of Talmud Torahs and similar institutions where Jewish children can be given the dear Jewish treasury of the past, and be prepared to carry further into the future the flag of Jewry triumphant in all battles and which has never bowed down before an enemy.”<sup>439</sup> *Dos yidishes tageblatt* claimed in 1915 that the greater Jewish concentration in cities, where Jews spoke Yiddish, had traditional synagogues and Talmud Torahs, served as a brake on assimilation, which the Reform Jews seemed incapable of fighting.<sup>440</sup> In 1917, the newspaper called upon its readers for financial support: “The Machzikei Talmud Torah, 225 East Broadway, the oldest institution of its kind in the United States and the parent of all Talmud Torahs in the country, is in imminent danger of closing its doors.” Those establishing Machzikei

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<sup>437</sup> Lillie Schultz, “Womaan--The Aegis Bearer of Her Race,” *Froyen zhurnal* (September 1923); 50.

<sup>438</sup> Elijah Bortniker, “Education (Jewish),” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 6, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1977), 413-414, 423-425; Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, “Heder,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 8, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1977), 241.

<sup>439</sup> “Dos ‘tageblatt’ un uhre idealen un pflightheten,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 2, 1914; see, also, Z. Kotler, “Lehrt men mut unzere kinder vegden der idisher befrayung,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 7, 1918.

<sup>440</sup> L. Rozenherts, “Gemishte hayrathen un idishkeyt in der kuntri,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 23, 1915.

Talmud Torah included the founder of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*.<sup>441</sup>

However, concern went beyond the doors of a particular Talmud Torah. In 1917, Dr. Morris Boros expressed disappointment at the state of Jewish education, writing in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* about a generation without Torah, without religion or a feeling of nationality. The right kind of teacher at the right kind of Talmud Torah, he mused, could serve as a shining example.<sup>442</sup> Five years later, in *Der tog*, S. Dingol similarly lamented fashion in an article claiming that only twenty-three percent of Jews received a Jewish education. Complaining about the “Yahudim,” the Jewish “establishment” deriving from Central Europe who had established number of institutions to help out the new immigrants, Dingol stated that these institutions created “. . . a Jewish atmosphere for Americanized Jewish youth . . .” but were “. . . Jewish in name only,” essentially indistinguishable from their Christian counterparts.<sup>443</sup>

Y. L. Dolidanski, in a 1918 article in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, noted that both in the Old World and America, Jews created institutions such as yeshivas for men and Talmud Torahs and *kheders* for boys, but nothing for women and girls. The only bright spot Dolidanski saw was the National Hebrew School, founded eight years earlier, where five hundred mostly female students learned about Jewish traditions, Jewish history and Hebrew.<sup>444</sup> A. Litvin of *Forverts* distinguished this school, which

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<sup>441</sup> “The Doors Must Be Kept Open,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 15, 1917.

<sup>442</sup> Dr. Morris Boros, “Idishe eltern un idishe ertsihung,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 2, 1917.

<sup>443</sup> S. Dingol, “Bloyz 23 protsent fun der idisher yugend in niu york bakumt a idishe ertsihung,” *Der tog*, September 8, 1922.

<sup>444</sup> Y. L. Dolidanski, “Unzere idishe tekhter,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 5, 1918.

was mostly for girls, from the National Hebrew Folk-Shule, which had a more Zionist emphasis, and the Harlem Talmud Torah, a mixed Hebrew-English institution.<sup>445</sup>

From its inception, *Der tog* supported Yiddish secular education, in particular the Jewish National Radical Schools which emphasized Yiddish language and culture. Children learned about Jewish holidays from a nationalist perspective and these schools served as an alternative to the religious Talmud Torahs.<sup>446</sup> Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky had agitated for such schools since returning from the 1908 Yiddish Language Conference in Czernowitz, Bukovina, as had Joel Entin. Entin, then a journalist with *Wahrheit*, a competitor of *Forverts*, later joined *Der tog*. The Socialist Poale Zion political party and its fraternal order, the National Jewish Workers Alliance, better known as the Farband, sponsored the Jewish National Radical Schools.<sup>447</sup> Jewish nationalists of other factions also supported these schools and their object of building a Socialist and “Yiddish-based Jewish identity.”<sup>448</sup> In 1913, the Sholem Aleichem Schools, another school system with similar aims, would join with the National Radical Schools.<sup>449</sup>

The secular nationalist Yiddish schools faced opposition from both the right and the left. On the right, *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, represented by Gedaliah Bublick, attempted to invoke a decree of excommunication from the Jewish community

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<sup>445</sup> A. Litvin, “Amerikaner meydlekh vos lernen gemore,” *Forverts*, June 24, 1918.

<sup>446</sup> See, e.g., A. Voliner, “Di idish-natsional-radikale shule,” *Der tog*, June 19, 1915.

<sup>447</sup> Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts*, 210; Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 356-357.

<sup>448</sup> Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts*, 208-209.

<sup>449</sup> *Ibid.*, 211.

against those involved in such efforts.<sup>450</sup> In a notable exception, Eliash, in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, referred to the first graduates of these schools as “our little heroes.”<sup>451</sup> On the left, for a long time, *Forverts* responded with silence. Cahan no more approved of the nationalist schools than he did of the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring schools. Originally individual branches of the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring established Socialist Sunday Schools, taught in English. Among those standing with Cahan were *Forverts* veterans Mikhail Zametkin, Phillip Krantz and Benjamin Feigenbaum. In 1916, Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring finally passed resolutions approving of its own Yiddish-based school system. This fact was duly noted by *Der tog* in an article discussing the different kinds of Yiddish schools and the languages each type taught. The author, M. Katz, wrote that the public schools taught children to regard their parents as eternal greenhorns, while the Yiddish afternoon schools would work to end estrangement between the immigrant-born and native-born.<sup>452</sup> *Forverts* did not report the decision to found a Yiddish school system. Two years passed before Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring appropriated money to effectuate the decision.<sup>453</sup>

During the period covered in this study, the Yiddish secular schools, no matter whether sponsored by nationalists or Socialists within Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter

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<sup>450</sup> Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 359-360; on excommunication and its utter lack of effect, see Isaac Levitas, “Herem,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 8, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1977), 344-355.

<sup>451</sup> Eliash, “Unzere kleyne helden,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 30, 1915.

<sup>452</sup> Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 360 M. Katz, “Idish dertsung bay radikale elteren,” *Der tog*, May 4, 1916.

<sup>453</sup> Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts*, 211-212; Chaikin, *Yidishe bleter in amerike*, 360.



Ring received no mention in the *Forverts*. It was not until a May 10, 1921 editorial, “*Der ‘limit’ fun arbeyter ring shulen*” [“The ‘Limits’ of Workmen’s Circle Schools”], congratulating the organization for its Convention resolution on the school system. The resolution declared that the schools would not serve as the location of a “chauvinist-Yiddishist hate-place.” The editorial stated that “Zionists and other chauvinist teachers see the schools as a resource for spreading the Yiddish language as . . . holy . . .” and that “[w]e have openly warned of the danger stemming from having so many of the teachers as Zionists who would lead the *shules* away from the correct Arbeter Ring path into a chauvinist swamp.”<sup>454</sup> About six months earlier, a *Forverts* writer claimed that forcing children to learn Yiddish only served the purposes of nationalism.<sup>455</sup>

In 1923, Abraham Cahan visited Poland, promising a meeting of those involved in Vilna’s Yiddish schools that “. . . the *Forverts* would do everything possible to help insure the existence of the Yiddish schools in Poland.” Likening Cahan to a crooked accountant keeping two sets of books, *Der tog*’s Leon Elbe, in a July 30, 1923 article, “*Kahan’s dopelte bukhalterie*” [“Cahan’s Double Bookkeeping”] referred to Cahan’s English-laced “potato-Yiddish” as he evaluated Cahan’s statement of support for Yiddish schools in Poland: “Perhaps they didn’t know about Cahan’s potato-struggle against the Workmen’s Circle schools. But here we know about all of these things, we know that Cahan is an enemy of the Yiddish language and of Yiddish education.” Elbe continued by stating that for Cahan,

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<sup>454</sup> “*Der ‘limit’ fun arbeyter ring shulen*,” *Forverts*, May 10, 1921.

<sup>455</sup> Sh. Rabinovitsh, “*Loynt tsu lernen hige kinder idish?*” *Forverts*, October 9, 1920.

*Yidishkayt* [“Jewishness”] was the same as religious piety. “But living *Yidishkayt*, *Yidishkayt* built on the living Yiddish word, *Yidishkayt* with an outlook upon the future--such a *Yidshkayt* is *treyf* to him, and here in America he does everything possible to destroy the development and growth of living *Yidishkayt* . . .”<sup>456</sup>

In an overview of secular Jewish education in America, veteran Yiddish educator Leibush Lehrer started by noting the establishment of religious institutions, and then moved on to the Socialist Sunday Schools. He deemed these schools, often named after Karl Marx and Ferdinand Lasalle, as failures. It was only with the founding of the Jewish National Radical Schools in 1910 under the leadership of Joel Entin that the modern Jewish school system became successful. Lehrer noted the differences between schools, differences marked by ideology, expressed in the languages taught. In schools with a pro-Zionist or nationalist cast, students learned both Yiddish and Hebrew. In the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring schools, students learned Yiddish. Even though now there existed the first Yiddish children’s magazine in America, *Di kinder velt* [“The Children’s World”], he noted what remained on the agenda: more teachers and more literature.<sup>457</sup>

Perpetuation of ideology, whether sacred, secular or both, occupied the minds (and pens) of those involved in the Jewish press. Each publication representing a different mix of religious or political ideology seeking to have the next generation carry forth its ideals. The variety of Jewish educational institutions, ranging from Reform Sunday Schools to Orthodox Talmud Torahs, Socialist Sunday Schools, and

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<sup>456</sup> Leon Elbe, “Kahan’s doppelte bukhalterie,” *Der tog*, July 30, 1923.

<sup>457</sup> L. Lehrer, “Di bavegung far a nayer, frayer idisher erstihung in amerike,” *Der tog*, November 23, 1924.

then the nationalist, Zionist, or Socialist schools teaching immigrant children the language of their parents or the language their parents hoped to learn, reflected the diversity of ideologies represented in the pages of the publications under review.

The educational systems discussed herein had the purpose of enabling those so educated to lead Jewish lives, in whatever way each publication defined “Jewish.” The next chapter moves from the specifically Jewish to the generally American, as the perspectives of the various journals towards education, both academic and vocational, undergo examination. How each publication viewed such education had a direct influence on how each publication valued what kinds of work women might do. In addition to asking how each journal valued education, there is an additional question: what jobs, careers or professions did each journal favor? Who did each publication set forth as exemplars for their female readers?

## Chapter 4: Learning and Labor

On a monthly, weekly or daily basis, the Yiddish publications in this study informed their readers not just what Jewish women did in the economic arena, but also concerning the activities of American women in the economic sphere. The value each journal placed on paid employment and the kinds of jobs emphasized depended on the publication's ideology. Jewish education, as discussed in the last chapter, had the purpose of supporting and perpetuating myriad forms of Jewish identity in the American environment for the children of immigrants. As shown in the last chapter, a publication's ideology shaped its attitude toward Jewish education. Ideological considerations also determined how a given journal would approach non-Jewish secular education beyond that required by law. Immigrant women helped shape a new landscape of education, economic and professional participation, and politics. Herein education and labor are addressed in depth; the next chapter discusses suffrage and citizenship.

In the 1890s, adult women made up sixteen per cent of the American labor force; by 1900, that number increased to eighteen per cent, and by 1910 to twenty-one per cent. The economic possibilities for women increased even more by the time women's pages in the Yiddish press began appearing and the Great War began. Although female labor participation fell a percentage point to twenty per cent by 1920, a decade later adult women workers would constitute twenty-two per cent of the work force.<sup>458</sup> The wartime explosion of possibility accompanied the wartime

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<sup>458</sup> Peter Gabriel Filene, *Him/Her/Self: Sex Roles in Modern America* (NY: Harcourt

explosion of carnage as women in Europe filled every sector of the economy. By the war's end, the same process had occurred in the United States. The effects of women working during the war was both to knock out the remaining props against female suffrage which argued that women lacked the capability and intellect for political participation, as well as to supply an argument for female suffrage as an entitlement: when the country called, women answered.

Clerical work represented the largest sector of increase in women working between 1890 and 1920, increasing from four per cent of working women in 1900 to seventeen percent two decades later.<sup>459</sup> This chapter examines how the publications in this study viewed women's employment and education beyond that mandated by law. What the journals advocated in regard to women's roles within the economy had an intimate connection with each publication's ideology and stance on the establishment of new gender roles for women, as well as resistance to these new roles.

This chapter examines the direct and indirect evidence presented in each journal on female activity in the economic sphere and the education necessary for such involvement. Direct evidence includes positive or negative statements about various jobs, careers or professions. Indirect evidence includes noting how much, if at all, particular jobs, careers or professions receive mention. Did the publications under review tend to present practitioners in particular fields as exemplars for their readers? If presence represents one form of indirect evidence, so does absence,

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Brace Jovanovich, 1974, 1975), 241.

<sup>459</sup> Filene, *Him/Her/Self*, 29; Jane Farrell-Beck and Colleen Gau, *Uplift: The Bra in*

especially when compared with similar publications appearing in the same time period, as with the three daily newspapers in this study.

The more a journal adhered to the concept of the Ideal Woman as the “natural” nurturer centered in responsibilities as wife and mother, concepts as much a part of a publication’s ideology as its religious and political affiliations, the more likely that publication looked at female work outside the home, especially when married, with disapproving eyes. As will be demonstrated, the writers in both *American Jewess* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, Reform and Orthodox respectively, felt the same about outside work and secular education issues. Both located women in the domestic sphere where their primary function would concern supporting husbands and raising children. *Froyen zhurnal*’s religious writers, traditionalist in orientation, hewed to a similar line, although other authors in the magazine felt differently. *Di froyen-velt* took a generally pro-labor position, as did the Socialist *Forverts*. *Der tog*’s writers did not take a united stand: D. M. Hermalin, though strongly pro-Suffragist, felt that women should resist working because it went against “nature.” As will be discussed, his support for Suffrage rested on a belief that women’s “natural” moral superiority necessitated allowing them to vote. Other writers for *Der tog*, including Adella Kean, herself a Marxist, did not share Hermalin’s feelings about the “natural” role of women, and celebrated female achievements in education and employment.

During *American Jewess*’s five years of publication, writers took both sides on the question of whether women should work outside the home. In 1895, Dr.

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*America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 27-28.

Henry Berkowitz, a founder of the Jewish Chautauqua Society, a member of the first graduating class of Hebrew Union College, and a Reform rabbi,<sup>460</sup> spoke in favor of the new opportunities for women:

. . . In the schools as teachers, women have the largest part, as they should have. As physicians, preachers, dentists, lawyers, journalists, composers, typewriters, bookkeepers, sales-women, telephone and telegraph operators, in many of the branches of business and the mechanic arts, women are proving themselves efficient. Every day a bolt is wrenched off, some bars are pulled down, and an entrance to some new occupation is being forced open for women. Although competition grows more intense thereby, yet nothing is lost to the world, but a great deal is gained. Nothing is or need be, lost of womanly virtue, of modesty, of true motherly tenderness, but much may be, and is gained by woman of the manly virtues of courage, persistence, of reliance and resoluteness. .

<sup>461</sup>

On the other hand, in August 1895, “The Woman Who Talks,” in an anonymously written article based on assumptions about the innate nurturing capabilities of women and the innate logical abilities of men, stated:

Another much needed reform in education is a more womanly training of our girls. Woman has special cause to be grateful to our nineteenth century, which has secured for her a position in the world superior to any she ever occupied before. The modern woman has retained her natural reign in the household, and added to it rights and privileges heretofore only enjoyed by man. Compelled to become a breadwinner, she has successfully entered industrial and intellectual fields, but her foremost mission will forever be the propagation of the race. Therefore education ought to prepare her to be the best

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<sup>460</sup> On Berkowitz, see, Sefton D. Temkin, “Berkowitz, Henry,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 4, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1977), 634-635.

<sup>461</sup> Dr. Henry Berkowitz, “Woman’s Part in the Drama of Life,” *American Jewess* (May 1895): 64-65.

exclude qualified guardian of her offspring. Man will never replace woman in the home realm, and her physical and mental structure will her from avocations befitting a man.

Woman never will handle heavy freight, nor build railroads and steamers. Neither will she be a gallant soldier, not a good logician and perfect mathematician. Therefore she needs not waste her time wrestling with studies she can not utilize; but instead receive instructions in all branches which will promote the physical condition of future generations.<sup>462</sup>

These views opposed to women working outside the home, however, did not go unchallenged. Sarah T. Drukker, writing in 1897, hailed the new opportunities for women in both education and occupations:

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... All this agitation of woman's rights simply means increased opportunities for women to acquire such special branches of knowledge and such training in arts and industries as may better fit her for independence and self-reliance to earn her own living. new woman is but a delusion; she does not exist at all except in imagination. 'Tis the same woman as she ever was, only with increased opportunities; or, as some bright woman has defined the same woman with "a move on her."<sup>463</sup>

In "An Essay" printed in August 1897, the anonymous author discussed the outstanding achievements of female students in mathematics and medicine, going on to comment that "Prof. Houseman's and Prof. Bishof's theory about the inferior weight of females' brains was dashed to pieces when the Messrs. Houseman's and Bishof's brains came on the scale, and were found to weigh less than a woman's."<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>462</sup> "The Woman Who Talks," *American Jewess* (August 1895): 259-260.

<sup>463</sup> Sarah T. Drukker, "Equality," *American Jewess* (March 1897): 273.

<sup>464</sup> "An Essay," *American Jewess* (August 1897): 204.



Obviously Sara T. Drukker skipped the August 1897 issue, as demonstrated by her comment after stating that once given a chance, women prove themselves capable of academic studies: “. . . despite the fact that woman’s normal brain weighs less than man’s, but the brain of the elephant weighs more than man’s, therefore, the elephant must be man’s superior, mentally.”<sup>465</sup>

Rosa Sonneschein, the editor of *American Jewess*, held that women worked from economic compulsion, not out of desire.<sup>466</sup> Mrs. Henry Meyers emphasized “proper” female roles as she considered “Woman’s Work in the World” in 1898:

. . . Her influence over men is all-powerful as wife and as social leader, but her highest mission is as the mother of the race. To the mother is given a more solemn and far-reaching power than to any other human being whatsoever. It is the mothers of men that make the men. The training of human character, the direction for good or evil influence begins in youth, and the mothers of the race must be held responsible for a great deal that renders men infamous or useful.<sup>467</sup>

Ada Robek spoke the last word on the subject of women working outside the home in the final issue of the magazine in May 1899. Acknowledging equal abilities on the part of men and women, she stated, after noting the difficulties of home-making:

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<sup>465</sup> Sara T. Drukker, “Higher Education,” *American Jewess* (September 1897): 246.

<sup>466</sup> Rosa Sonnechein, “The American Jewess,” *American Jewess* (February 1898): 208; Rosa Sonneschein, “The Woman Who Talks,” *American Jewess* (July-August 1898): 51.

<sup>467</sup> Mrs. Henry Meyers, “Woman’s Work in the World,” *American Jewess* (March 1898): 274.

. . . Therefore, I deplore the growing desire of the average girl to work for a mere pittance in factory or store rather than to make herself useful in the home. I regret to see girls slaving down town from early morn until late in the evening in preference to a few hours' work at home and I maintain at the risk of displeasing my own sex, that if the maidens behind the counter were willing to spend the same amount of labor, time and energy at home as they are compelled to employ in business, they would reduce the respective family expenses more materially, than they swell the income at present.

Either women wished to work, Robek wrote, or were compelled to do so, a circumstance which proved, she said, that “. . . there must be something radically wrong, with the fin de siecle man.” Presumably the “fin de siecle man” forced their wives to work or were too lazy to earn more themselves. Women must make a choice:

. . . To be successful in business, a woman must enter upon her career with the same ambitions as man. She must take her vocation, as she does the veil--renounce her mission in home and family, as wife and mother for one mission is enough for one human being. From the start a woman must choose between business or matrimony, for I regard as utterly impracticable and unprofitable a combination of home duties and business responsibilities. In a short time both will suffer. Home and business is like Church and state, best managed when separated.<sup>468</sup>

Despite a scattering of articles advocating work outside the home, the balance of the direct evidence tipped toward tradition. Most of the married women whose photographs graced the pages of *American Jewess* occupied themselves in various philanthropies. Philanthropic work, especially with women and children, constituted an extension of the domestic sphere and its concerns into the wider

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<sup>468</sup> Ada Robek, “Women as Breadwinners,” *American Jewess* (May 1899): 4-5; Berrol, “Class or Ethnicity,” 27.

world.<sup>469</sup> Those involved in business or otherwise employed were usually single.<sup>470</sup> None of the articles criticized unmarried women for working; the conflict in what constituted the proper role for the modern woman only arose in terms of married women. The indirect photographic evidence served to emphasize this view of womanhood. The direct evidence, as outlined above, argued back and forth on the question of women working outside the home. Nowhere, however, did any article advocate married women doing so.

Those involved in *Di froyen-velt* and *Froyen zhurnal* did not display the kind of ambivalence on issues of learning and labor displayed in *American Jewess*, with its conflicting views on whether should remain in the home or work outside of it. Sonneschein, herself a working journalist, discouraged her sister readers from outside employment. If *American Jewess* represented the nineteenth century, then *Di froyen-velt* and *Froyen zhurnal* spoke for the twentieth century, a new era and a new conception of womanhood.

In its very first issue in April 1913, *Di froyen-velt* noted the changes in women's lives, especially now that they worked in factories. Such work made women aware that a world existed beyond the narrow confines of the kitchen. *Di*

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<sup>469</sup> McCune, "The Whole Wide World Without Limits," 2, 34; Filene, *Him/Her/Self*, 14; Berrol, "Class or Ethnicity," 24

<sup>470</sup> See, e.g., Pauline S. Wise, "Successful Business Women," *American Jewess* (May 1895): 67-70, on three sisters; "Where Woman Reigns Supreme," *American Jewess* (December 1895): 164-166, on a professional nurse; "Frieda Pauline Cohen," *American Jewess* (May 1896): 418, a music composer; "Miss Rosalia Loew," *American Jewess* (June 1896): 474-475, an attorney; Rebecca J. Gradwohl, "The Jewess in San Francisco," *American Jewess* (October 1896): 10-12, two married schoolteachers, one married and two single physicians, and "Miss Ray Frank, the woman rabbi."

*froyen-velt* spoke a language of new possibilities in a new world, where women were in the process of breaking the chains of tradition. The magazine noted that, eager to participate in everything, women no longer were willing to remain the “weaker sex.”<sup>471</sup> As noted in the last chapter, the magazine also fought religious superstition. Almost a decade after this declaration, A. Vohliner, writing as “B. Kalish” in *Froyen zhurnal*, wrote that women were no longer considered the “weaker sex.”<sup>472</sup> The positions apparently had moved from “no longer willing” to “were not,” from the possible to the actual. Vohliner had earlier written for *Forverts*, and would go on to work for *Der tog* and the Yiddish magazine of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, *Gerechtigkayt [Justice]*, among many other publications. His pseudonyms included B. Kalish, Ego, Rokhls Kadish, L. Yosefson and Li-Hung-C\_hing-Fang.<sup>473</sup>

In April 1913, *Di froyen-velt* discussed the struggles of women teachers with New York’s Board of Education over the Board’s ban against employing women with children as teachers, and on New York state legislation limiting the number of working hours for women. The magazine also reported the award of the Legion of

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<sup>471</sup> “Di froyen-velt,” *Di froyen-velt* (April 1913): 4.

<sup>472</sup> B. Kalish, “Likht un shoten fun der froyen-velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (Aug 1923): 6; on the fight of female teachers with children to remain employed as teachers, see, also, “Miss sereh breslau,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 16, 1914. On Vohliner (nee Eliezer Landau), see, Z. Diament, “Vohliner, a.” in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, vol. 3, edited by Ephriam Auerbach, Moshe Starkmann and Isaac Charlish (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1960), 246-247.

<sup>473</sup> On Vohliner (nee Eliezer Landau), see, Z. Diament, “Vohliner, a.” in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, vol. 3, edited by Ephriam Auerbach, Moshe Starkmann and Isaac Charlish (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1960), 246-247.

Honor to a female pilot.<sup>474</sup> In February 1914, when the magazine went from being a monthly to a weekly, an article was published focusing on the entry of women into formerly male trades and professions. With scientists and scholars demonstrating the equality of the sexes, woman, “. . . with the thirst of one who has not drunk for a long time, is suddenly finding a source of tasty fresh water” in the form of new opportunities. Men saw these women as rivals and sought to limit the number of hours women could work, opposing as well equality in pay. The article spoke in general terms, giving only one concrete example, the cigar trade. In Germany and Switzerland, women were barred from some labor unions. Women must organize to improve their working lives, the magazine advised, as it urged women to organize.<sup>475</sup>

*Froyen zhurnal*'s Bertha Broido, in her “*In der froyen velt*” columns appearing from June 1922 to September 1923, presented news of female accomplishments, jobs, careers, and educational attainment. Her reports encompassed female political candidates both in the United States and abroad.<sup>476</sup> Readers learned, for example, about Dr. Amy Kaukkonen, a physician who was elected the first female mayor in Ohio,<sup>477</sup> as well as the second and third women to

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<sup>474</sup> “Fun der froyen-velt,” *Di froyen-velt* (April 1913): 12.

<sup>475</sup> “Froyen besheftigt in mener profesionen,” *Di froyen-velt*, February 15, 1914.

<sup>476</sup> See, e.g., Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (June 1922): 6; “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (September 1922): 7; “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1922): 9; “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (March 1923): 7; “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (September 1923): 8.

<sup>477</sup> Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1922): 7; see, also, Marianne Wargelin, “Finnish Americans,” <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Du-Ha/Finnish-Americans.html> (accessed January 28, 2009).

serve in the House of Representatives, Alice Robertson and Winifred Mason Huck.<sup>478</sup>

She informed readers of the struggles of the women's movement worldwide, including Rumania, Japan, Egypt, Turkey, Cuba, and Afghanistan.<sup>479</sup>

The magazine expressed support for the labor movement, noting that the needle trades represented the most Jewish industry in the United States, both among employers and employees. The magazine hailed the Waist and Dressmakers Union, Local 25 of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union as the most progressive and intelligent organization in the entire labor movement. *Froyen zhurnal* discussed the founding of Local 25's first Unity House in 1915 as a summer destination for garment workers, followed by other Unity Houses.<sup>480</sup> Historian Alice Kessler-Harris noted that in the years between 1910 and 1920 the International Ladies Garment Workers Union membership consisted primarily of young Jewish women.<sup>481</sup> Bertha Broido also noted the victory of women finally being able to enter the printing trades in 1922, the culmination of a two hundred year struggle.<sup>482</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> Bertha Broido, "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 7; on Robertson, see, Mary Fallin, "Celebrating the Legacy of the Honorable Alice Robertson, Member of Congress," <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/record.xpd?id=110-2h20080620-10>; on Huck, see, "Aunt Samantha," <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,880794,00.html>.

<sup>479</sup> Bertha Broido, "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (July 1922): 6; "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1922): 9; "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (November 1922): 9; "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (December 1922): 9; "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 8.

<sup>480</sup> "A monument far idishe arbeyter un meyd lakh," *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1922): 14.

<sup>481</sup> Alice Kessler-Harris, "'Where Are the Organized Women Workers?'" *Feminist Studies*, 3, 1/2 (Autumn 1975): 102, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3518958> (accessed January 22, 2009).

<sup>482</sup> Bertha Broido, "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 7.

Esther Cohen described the changes in attitude towards Jewish women working in an article in the English-language section, “We Girls Who Work”:

. . . Once upon a time a working girl was looked down upon. This was especially true among our own people. For a girl to work in a shop, a factory, or to be a salesgirl, or to work at anything for a living was considered degrading.

Work was not for a 'baale-battish [housewifely] kind,' it was said, and there were even the mother [sic] who would not allow her daughter to go into the kitchen for fear it might soil her white hands and so spoil her for the marriage market. For marriage was the be all and the end all of all Jewish girls.

Conditions are quite different now. To be a drone is a disgrace. To work, to labor, is now regarded as dignity. To earn one's own livelihood, to be a producer, means that one lives a positive life. And so I am really and truly glad to be a wage earner.<sup>483</sup>

In the final issue of *Froyen zhurnal* in October 1923, the magazine's editor, Victor Mirsky, wrote that in the past boys received education and most trades and professions were not open to women. Times have changed; today's girls should learn a profession or trade and not go out into the world with the sole goal of finding a bread-winner. Urging that parents treat sons and daughters the same, he wrote: “New times, new laws. The time when a woman's world was limited to the kitchen is long gone. The woman is now a human equal to all other humans.”<sup>484</sup>

*Forverts* and *Der tog* displayed very positive attitudes towards women working outside the home, with the exception of Sadie Vinokur's “shopgirl” sketches in *Forverts*. Vinokur depicted the hardships faced by “shopgirls.” Both newspapers

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<sup>483</sup> Esther Cohen, “We Girls Who Work,” *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1922): 61.

<sup>484</sup> Victor Mirsky, “Intime geshprekhen,” *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1923): 18.

celebrated the new opportunities for women, seeing not oppression but possibilities. Women mentioned admiringly in *Forverts* included Madame Curie<sup>485</sup> and the first woman elected as governor of Texas, Miriam Ferguson, whose win represented a victory over the Ku Klux Klan as well as her political opponents.<sup>486</sup> Those admired by *Der tog* included Harvard's first woman professor, Dr. Alice Hamilton<sup>487</sup> and the educator Dr. Maria Montessori.<sup>488</sup> Even though *Dos yidishes tageblatt* did not display negative attitudes towards the new jobs being filled by women, it carried much less news on the issue. By not displaying either in pictures or words news about women working to a degree similar to the other publications, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* indirectly downplayed these possibilities.

The women's pages in the three daily newspapers in this study all began around the time hostilities commenced in Europe. Writers for all three publications observed the impact of the war upon women, and how it necessitated the entry of women into the labor force, first in Europe and finally in America. As this occurred, articles in these publications predicted that entry into the political arena would

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<sup>485</sup> "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, May 22, 1921; "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, February 12, 1922; "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, June 25, 1922; Y. A. Berlovitsh, "Di gantse visenshaflikhe velt redt itst vegen dray parizer meyd lakh un zeyere visenshaflikhe erfindungen," *Forverts*, April 18, 1925; see, also, "Madam kurie," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 13, 1921.

<sup>486</sup> "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, September 14, 1924; "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, October 5, 1924; "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, October 26, 1924; "Notitsen fun der froyen velt," *Forverts*, January 25, 1925; see, also, "Froyen baym politishen ruder," *Der tog*, January 6, 1925.

<sup>487</sup> "Di ershte profesorke in harvard," *Der tog*, April 15, 1919; Adella Kean Zametkin, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, April 21, 1919.

<sup>488</sup> "Zi iz berihmt als reformatorin fun ersihungs sistem," *Der tog*, November 19, 1916.



necessarily follow entry into the economic sphere. No longer, these articles argued, could opponents of suffrage claim that women constituted the “weaker sex”; no longer could claims be made as to women’s lack of ability or capability to perform in any field.<sup>489</sup> Thus, the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* predicted in 1916 and 1917 that women would attain suffrage in Europe, as did the Socialist *Forverts* and the liberal *Der tog*.<sup>490</sup>

A 1918 editorial in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* focused on the the war as liberator of women:

The great World War has brought enough trouble and suffering into the world. It has washed Europe in blood. But it has also brought a few good things in its wake. One of them is the liberation of women. They have been made independent, the war has shown them that she can hold her own and need not be helpless.

Rebecca West, the famous English writer and critic, writes in an English journal that hundreds of years of suffragist propaganda, hundreds of years of breaking windows and breaking up meetings could not bring such freedom and independence for women as have the last four years of war. Before this girls were brought up on the

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<sup>489</sup> See, e.g., “Der vumen sofredzsh amendment,” *Der tog*, September 12, 1917; Eliash, “Ver far vemen?” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 31, 1918; “Di konduktokes zeynen ollrayt,” *Forverts*, March 1, 1918; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, November 10, 1918; Ray Malis, “Froyen fardinerins,” *Der tog*, February 12, 1919; Adella Kean Zametkin, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, February 26, 1919; Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, September 7, 1921.

<sup>490</sup> Eliash, “Froyen velen behershen di velt nokh der milkhome,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 17, 1916; “Der froyen vout,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 20, 1916; Eliash, “Di froy tsum nayem yohr,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 1, 1917; S. N., “Di milkhome un di froyen arbeyt,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 4, 1917; “Finf milion froyen arbeyter in england,” *Forverts*, October 7, 1917; B. Albin, “Di froyen-frage in eyropa nokh dem krieg,” *Der tog*, August 25, 1916; Sofia Brandt [Rosa Lebensboym], “Vos kenen froyen gevinen fun krig?” *Der tog*, February 27, 1917; “Di konduktorkes zeynen ollrayt,” *Forverts*, March 1, 1918; Yetta Gold, “Di froy vert a fihrerin in klal-arbeyt,” *Forverts*, August 31, 1919.

theory that they were clumsy, that they could not stand up for themselves in today's society. The only goal for a girl was to please a man who would take her as a servant into his house, a cook to fix his dinner and supper and a nurse for his children. According to this theory, a woman had only one thing to do: adorn herself, to be charming so as to catch a man and lead him to the *khupe* ["wedding canopy," i.e., "to the altar"]. All of a girl's energy was to be used for this goal. An entire literature of fashion was created towards the task of catching a man. Remaining an old maid until her braids were gray was the worst thing which could befall a girl.

In recent years girls began entering factories and offices. They were, however, poorly paid, receiving less than a third of what a man received for the same work. They were confined to narrow workshops and had to work long hours. They found that such work was enough for just a while until they got a husband and could give up working. Girls used to work in department stores for seven dollars a week. They could handle this employment for a while, but not forever.

But the war came and brought an entire revolution in the form of employment of women. It was necessary for all men in England to go into the Army and they had to fill the ammunition factories with women. The work of women became a national necessity. . .

Women became truly free under such conditions, the article continued. Up until now, the relationship of husband and wife resembled that of a white plantation owner to his black slave. Even in the best families there was not a relationship of equality. Now a relationship of equality, of true partnership, exists between man and wife. There can be no return to past conditions: women are now free.<sup>491</sup>

*Der tog*, in a 1918 editorial on the failure of the United States Congress to pass an amendment allowing female suffrage, noted that women were carrying the

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<sup>491</sup> "Di milkhome hot befrayt di froyen," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 6, 1918; see, also, Ray Malis, "Der froy's befrayung," *Der tog*, July 16, 1918;

burdens of the war equally with men. The armies of men, the editorial declared, were supplied with ammunition made by women.<sup>492</sup> In a 1919 article in *Der tog*, L. Borodulin, a factory worker in Europe before emigrating to America in 1915, noted that before the war women worked in professions such as law and medicine; they did not work as mechanics or machinists because of an assumption that women were weaker than men. Their first-class performance in those trades during the war proved they could do anything.<sup>493</sup>

*Froyen zhurnal* wrote about women learning to fix automobiles, although it did not comment upon the possible impact of the automobile on female employment.<sup>494</sup> In *Forverts*, Judith Kopf discussed the Hebrew Technical School for Girls, the Washington Irving High School and Textile High School, all providing vocational training.<sup>495</sup> *Der tog* reported on a New York school for training policewomen.<sup>496</sup> In a 1923 *Forverts* article, Rachel B. Muravchik noted the gap in expectations between boys and girls due to access to higher education. Among Jews, she traced this to the traditional prayer of pious Jewish males, thanking God that they

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<sup>492</sup> “Der kamf far froyen-shtimrekht in kongres,” *Der tog*, July 1, 1918.

<sup>493</sup> L. Borodulin, “Froyen als mashinisten un mekhaniker,” *Der tog*, January 21, 1919; on Borodulin, see “Borodulin, lazar,” in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, Vol. 1, edited by Sh. Niger, Jacob Shatzky and Moshe Starkman (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1956), 232.

<sup>494</sup> Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (June 1922): 6.

<sup>495</sup> Judith Kopf, “A skuhl vu idishe meydlekh kenen zikh lernen fray a treyd,” *Forverts*, May 22, 1923; Judith Kopf, “A hai skuhl vu meydlekh kenen zikh lernen a treyd,” *Forverts*, June 1, 1923; Judith Kopf, “A skuhl vu men lerent di veber [sic] treyd,” *Forverts*, June 7, 1923.

<sup>496</sup> “Di nyu yorker shule vos greyt tsu froyen far politsay-dienst,” *Der tog*, August 6, 1921.

were not born women.<sup>497</sup> Ukrainian-born, *Forverts* author Rachel Muravchik came to the United States in 1905. A student of sociology at Columbia University, she became active in Socialist activities and lectured before audiences at the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring.<sup>498</sup>

In monthly, weekly and daily columns, readers in these publications learned about women attending and excelling in universities and colleges. According to historian Peter Filene, “[i]n 1890 approximately one out of fifty women aged eighteen to twenty-one attended college; in that year, fewer than 3,000 received degrees (as compared to 13,000 men).”<sup>499</sup> By 1920, the number of female college students had jumped to hundreds of thousands.<sup>500</sup> Among the institutions of higher learning mentioned in the publications were Columbia University, Loyola University, Harvard, New York University, University of Arizona, Cornell University, University of Wisconsin, Leland Stanford University, Bellevue Hospital College, University of Chicago, Hebrew Union College, University of California, Brown University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Missouri, Pratt Institute, University of Maryland, and University of Michigan. The achievements of women in these institutions were duly noted as well. *Der tog* lauded, for example, the achievements of a Mrs. Lillian Gilbert, a University of California graduate with a Ph.D. from

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<sup>497</sup> Rachel B. Muravchik, “Zeynen froyen veniger fehig vi mener?” *Forverts*, April 15, 1923.

<sup>498</sup> Z. Diament, “Muravtshik, rokhl,” in *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, Vol. 5, edited by Ephriam Auerbach, Moshe Starkmann and Isaac Charlish (NY: Congress for Jewish Culture, Inc., 1963), 553-554.

<sup>499</sup> Filene, *Him/Her/Self*, 24.

<sup>500</sup> *Ibid.*

Brown University, an honorable member of the Society of Industrial Engineers and mother of ten children.<sup>501</sup>

Bertha Broido, in *Froyen zhurnal*, reported on the findings of a Mount Holyoke psychology professor which held that women were not only as able as men in pursuing academics but in fact were more able than men.<sup>502</sup> In another Mount Holyoke study, she reported, research found that college study did not lead to poor motherhood, although college graduates tended to have fewer children.<sup>503</sup> In August 1923, Broido reported, women received top honors at the law and medical colleges of New York University.<sup>504</sup>

Writers in the Yiddish press duly noted the appointment of women to executive posts, especially in professional organizations and educational institutions. Awards for excellence continually received mention. This category of female recognition included the French Academy (Madame Curie), American Association of University Women, Society of Automotive Engineers, Royal School of Architecture (London), American Library Association, World Brotherhood Association, and the Society of Industrial Engineers. *Forverts* noted the selection of Dr. Florence Sabin to the National Institute of Science, after being elected as president of the American Association of Anatomists.<sup>505</sup> The newspaper also lauded “Edna Ferber, a Jewish

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<sup>501</sup> “Zi shraybt bikher iber hoykhe visenshaftlikhe enyonim un iz fundestvegen a gute ertihenrin fun ihre 10 kinder,” *Der tog*, July 29, 1921.

<sup>502</sup> Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (March 1923): 7.

<sup>503</sup> Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (June-July 1923): 5.

<sup>504</sup> Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1923): 7.

<sup>505</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen velt,” *Forverts*, June 21, 1925.

woman,” for being awarded the Pulitzer Prize for the novel *So Big*.<sup>506</sup> *Dos yidishes tageblatt* singled out two Jewish sisters, both unmarried, noted for their academic and professional accomplishments: Muriel Elsa Landau, the first English Jewish woman elected as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and Miss Annie Landau, principal of Jerusalem’s Evelina de Rothschild School.<sup>507</sup>

The press prominently featured those appointed or elected to government office, whether municipal, state, Federal, or foreign. Those covered included mayors in the United States, United States senators and members of the House of Representatives, ambassadors, the chief of the Woman’s Division of the Department of Labor, Assistant Chief of the College Division of the Federal Employment Bureau, U. S. Civil Service Commissioner, a U. S. Customs Collector, the New York Assembly, New York Board of Education, Kentucky Secretary of State, Colorado assistant attorney general, the governor of Texas, government posts in North Dakota, assistant superintendent of public schools in Cleveland, the Austrian Parliament, Danish Parliament, the English Parliament, Swedish Parliament, Education Minister (Denmark), Education Minister (Sweden), women delegates at the League of Nations (Sweden, Norway, England, Rumania, Australia), fifty thousand women elected to positions in the Soviet Union, including the chairwoman on political education, the chairwoman of the committee to spread culture, posts on the museums commission and Madame Alexandra Kollontai as ambassador to

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<sup>506</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen velt,” *Forverts*, June 7, 1925.

<sup>507</sup> “Eretz Yisroel Atmosphere,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 11, 1920.

Norway.<sup>508</sup> Countess Markewicz was one of five women seated in the Irish Parliament,<sup>509</sup> while the American-born Lady Astor became the first woman to hold a seat in the British Parliament.<sup>510</sup>

Whether in the monthly columns of Esther Broido in *Di froyen-velt*, Bertha Broido in *Froyen zhurnal*, the weekly “*Notitsen fun der froyen velt*” [“Notes from the Woman’s World”] in *Forverts*, or Adella Kean’s daily columns in *Der tog*, the jobs, occupations and careers involving women seemed endless. This work included bookkeeping, typing, journalism, bacteriology, nursing, farm machine mechanics, ammunition factory work, mining, metal work, tramway conducting, police work, farm work, social work, design, baseball umpiring, railroad work, employment as bank executives, physicians, chemists, department store clerks, barbers, stenographers, typographers, laundry workers, automotive engineers, and architects. These examples came from one newspaper alone, *Forverts*. It noted, for example, when Miss Brandeis, the daughter of Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, was admitted to practice before the Supreme Court; she was then a Special Assistant Attorney General for New York.<sup>511</sup> *Der tog*’s listing included just about everything in *Forverts* plus mentions, articles or columns on those working as librarians,

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<sup>508</sup> On Kollontai as ambassador, see, Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (March 1923): 7; “Notitsen fun der froyen velt,” *Forverts*, October 4, 1925.

<sup>509</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen velt,” *Forverts*, October 21, 1923.

<sup>510</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen velt,” *Forverts*, November 26, 1922; Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (March 1923): 7; “Notitsen fun der froyen velt,” *Forverts*, January 27, 1924.

<sup>511</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen velt,” *Forverts*, January 18, 1925; see, also, Dorothy Thomas, “Gilbert, Susan Brandeis (1893-1975),” in *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore,

stevedores, airplane pilots, judges, industrial engineers, road experts, inventors, and in hairdressing, hair preparation and cosmetics, plus boot and shoe workers. Most of these listings occurred as “bullet” items, bits of information and reportage. None of those reporting did so in a disparaging manner, either about the women or the jobs. The male exercise of logic and the female exercise of nurturing emotion received no mention whatever; these lists of jobs effectively did away with such distinctions. The message, even when not explicitly stated, was loud and clear: women not only could perform these jobs, they were performing them. The two newspapers thus presented new possibilities to their readers to a much greater degree than *Dos yidishes tageblatt*.

Of the three papers, the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* carried the smallest number of articles dealing with female learning and labor. While all three newspapers incorporated photography in their pages, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* also carried the least. Unlike *Forverts* and *Der tog*, none of the photographs in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* depicted women smoking cigarettes. Pictures of women wearing the latest fashions likewise did not appear in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*. The absence of such images, together with the lack of fashion coverage and columns, meant that the newspaper did not provide its readers with as many models as the other publications in this study, all of which covered fashion. Historian David Nasaw pointed at the power of observation for women and girls as they gazed upon those around them, saw examples displayed in advertisements and in newspaper photographs, especially the Sunday supplements.<sup>512</sup> *Forverts*, with the onset of its weekly rotogravure section

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311-312 (NY: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>512</sup> David Nasaw, *Children of the City: At Work and at Play* (NY: Oxford University



in 1923, carried the most. *Dos yidishes tageblatt*'s photographs presented occasional fashions and celebrities. Both *Forverts* and *Der tog* carried pictures of fashions, celebrities of stage and screen, and, most importantly for this chapter, photographs of people involved in various jobs, careers and professions. The myriad of work opportunities presented in *Forverts* and *Der tog* compared with the paucity of such mentions and images in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* emphasized how much *Dos yidishes tageblatt* centered women in the domestic sphere.

While the Yiddish press presented examples of the new job opportunities for women, *Der tog* also noted resistance by men to women filling these positions. Tramway and railroad unions conducted strikes to eliminate female workers hired during the Great War, a struggle that the men ultimately won.<sup>513</sup> Adella Kean Zametkin, writing in 1919, called for lifting restrictions on women's work, arguing that they had a right to work, a legacy of their service during the war. "There aren't enough jobs, you say? Make them! Create them!"<sup>514</sup>

While writers in the three daily newspapers had for the most part a positive attitude toward the new position of women in the economic spheres, some writers expressed doubts, misgivings or resistance. In *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, two writers spoke in favor of the new developments in 1918 and 1919. Y. Pfeffer called for parents to raise their daughters to become independent; sons and daughters should

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Press, 1985), 133.

<sup>513</sup> Adella Kean Zametkin, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, December 30, 1918; Adella Kean Zametkin, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, January 13, 1919; Z. Alexander, "Di froy in der industrie nokh'n krieg," *Der tog*, January 27, 1919; Adella Kean Zametkin, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, March 3, 1919.

receive the same education.<sup>515</sup> Oscar S. Caplan went into detail concerning what kinds of preparatory education was needed for careers in medicine, law, home economics, agriculture nursing, teaching and business, although the article did note the an advantage in pursuing a career in economics, namely a lack of competition from “. . . men, who are, in their professions of law, medicine and engineering, more aggressive and competent.”<sup>516</sup> In 1920, I. L. Bril wrote about the conflict between Jewish boys who had entered business and Jewish girls who had received a college education:

<p>sheepskins-otherwise names. They have who are cultured, or At least they know suit that will look parlor in olden days. that the young not appreciate their Jewish business would change their</p>	<p>. . . Immersed in business, striving hard to establish themselves, they naturally have little time left for the niceties of life. Now what happens? The girls come home with their known as diplomas-and a degree tagged to their come into contact with men and with women supposed to be so, and refined, presumably so. how to show a good front and can put on a dress good in the drawing room-we used to call it And the girls are dissatisfied. They are afraid business men will not understand them and will college training. If only they knew how proud the man is because his wife's got a degree they opinions.<sup>517</sup></p>
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Bril expressed both anxiety and ambivalence over the prospect of educated Jewish women: did such education threaten the balance of power within the relationship of a man and woman, or were men proud of the accomplishments of their wives? A

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<sup>514</sup> Adella Kean Zametkin, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, February 26, 1919.

<sup>515</sup> Y. Pfeffer, “Beraytet far ayere tekhter,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 1, 1918;

<sup>516</sup> Oscar S. Caplan, “Prospects for Women in the Professions,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 29, 1919.

<sup>517</sup> I. L. Bril, “Why Girls Leave Home,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 28, 1920.

1922 editorial in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* complained about too much education: where would all the professionals go? The most successful immigrants had little education. Over-education would weaken the entire group.<sup>518</sup> Y. Pfeffer and Oscar S. Caplan notwithstanding, the overall stance of the newspaper combined with the paucity of news and photographs of those involved in work outside the home, pointed towards women remaining in the domestic sphere.

Despite being a staunch supporter of a woman's right to vote, *Der tog's* D. M. Hermalin wrote differently about women working. In 1918, he discussed the "natural" role of women:

A woman was not created to be a carpenter, a blacksmith, or even a typist and receptionist in an office. Nature wants women to be mothers and housewives. Women that deny this do not know what they are saying.

Hermalin's argument rested on the assumption that a woman's entire being revolved around her physiological role in reproduction:

Work for women must be shrunken. They should not have to work more than six hours a day. They should never have to work from sunup to sundown. The work a woman is permitted to pursue must be easy enough so they she does damage her body as a mother.

To be a housewife and mother represented a woman's "natural calling"; they should not work in offices and factories:

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<sup>518</sup> "Tsu fiel bildung bay uunzere kinder," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 9, 1922.

Nobody knows better than a woman what it means for a young girl to work just when nature wants her to rest, when nature decrees she should sit in the house.

The factory, the store and the office have already ruined more than just one future generation of mothers.<sup>519</sup>

Hermalin's views on women working outside the home bore a strong resemblance to biological and physiological arguments employed by physicians in mid- to late-nineteenth century America against higher education for women. Since women, unlike men, constituted creatures governed totally by their reproductive systems and since they had only a finite amount of energy, to waste that energy in arenas not related to reproduction represented waste and a violation of the "natural" order which would result in unhealthy offspring.<sup>520</sup>

When a fifteen year-old girl wrote to Hermalin in 1919 for his opinion concerning her desires to graduate from high school and then go to college to become a nurse, he replied that a high school education was all a poor parent owed a child. More practical than a university degree would be studying how to cook, wash, clean and launder. Every girl has the right to study trigonometry, he wrote, except it

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<sup>519</sup> H., "Froyen vos fargesen az zey zeynen froyen," *Der tog*, December 22, 1918; Hermalin made much the same argument in H., "A froy vos ferdient gute shmits," *Der tog*, May 25, 1916; cf. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal : Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Her Role in Nineteenth Century America," *Journal of American History* 60, 2 (September 1973): 332-356.

<sup>520</sup> See, Smith-Rosenberg and C. Rosenberg, "The Female Animal," 332-336.

would interfere with being a woman.<sup>521</sup> In 1920, he insisted that men thought in scientific terms, while women thought in social terms. A woman does not have a child out of desire, but as part of a demand by nature. “As an equal citizen she must fight to establish true friendship and true motherhood.”<sup>522</sup>

Hermalin’s replacement at *Der tog*, J. Chaikin, felt that young women and young men should get an education and learn a profession before getting married. Chaikin answered the question “Should a girl go for a career?” by stating that if this question was about a son, there would be no question. Women should have careers and professions.<sup>523</sup> The daily columns of Adella Kean [Zametkin] pointed continually towards female achievement and accomplishment in education and in whatever professions, careers and jobs women might pursue. As will be discussed in the next chapter, other writers in *Der tog* did not share Hermalin’s view of women as “naturally” more moral, peaceful and nurturing than men.

By printing articles about women in the workforce or highlighting their professional achievements, the press presented different models of behavior and appropriate roles to its readers. *American Jewess* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt* took a more traditional stance concerning women in the home, while the other publications in this study celebrated female achievements outside the home.

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<sup>521</sup> H., “Vegen di tekhter fun orime arbeyter,” *Der tog*, July 18, 1919.

<sup>522</sup> H., “Der froy’s plats in der gezelschaft,” *Der tog*, April 13, 1920.

<sup>523</sup> Ch., “Zol zi shtudiren oder khasene hoben,” *Der tog*, July 27, 1922; Ch., “Tsi darf a meydel makhen a kariere?” *Der tog*, February 21, 1923; see, also, R., “Khasene-hoben oder a profesie?” *Der tog*, July 29, 1925; I. Sonino, “Zol men meyd lakh lern en profesie oder nit?” *Der tog*, August 12, 1925.

Female performance in all sectors of industry worldwide during the Great War as well as outstanding academic achievement undermined all arguments against suffrage based on female inferiority. Additionally, the wholehearted entry of women into the economy to fill the places of men serving in the military added another argument to the arsenal of those in favor of suffrage: entitlement. When their countries called, women responded. The next chapter discusses women in a different area of the American public sphere, seeking to exercise a prerogative of citizenship, the right to vote.

## Chapter 5: **Suffrage and Citizenship**

The exercise of rights incident to American citizenship marks an important aspect of American identity. Yet, until 1920, with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, most women, no matter what their country of birth, could not exercise one fundamental right, the right to vote, and thus lacked full citizenship. This chapter examines how the publications under review dealt with the issue of women's suffrage as well as citizenship, once women won voting rights in New York in 1917 and then nationwide in 1920. The questions focus on how the various journals framed their arguments concerning a woman's right to vote. Only one, *American Jewess*, did not fully endorse suffrage. *Froyen zhurnal*, founded in 1923, three years after the Nineteenth Amendment was passed, obviously did not take part in that struggle.

Rosa Sonneschein saw full "religious suffrage" as an absolute necessity completely in line with female capabilities, qualities and rights. The *American Jewess* demanded religious education for women and asserted their right to become

rabbis.<sup>524</sup> However, with respect to political suffrage, the magazine was ambivalent.<sup>525</sup> An early editorial took a negative view of women's voting rights:

whose If we conceive, as we justly may, an independent spirit in woman, with a separate and distinct conception of her interests and rights, we will find that the struggle of the majority is not for political emancipation. Especially must this be said of Jewish women, whose aspirations do not lead them to study the science of legislation. As a rule a Jewess is content to leave to her husband and sons the wisdom of election and selection for political office. Her aim is for social and religious equality, with the privilege to become individually and collectively a factor for common good.<sup>526</sup>

Yet, the magazine printed Sara T. Drukker's articles for women's suffrage.<sup>527</sup> In "Higher Education," she attacked arguments related to female ignorance:

Woman Suffragists aim to educate women to nobler ideas of justice. But we must first feel the effects of injustice to give thought to the abstract principle; as abstract principles do not appeal with great force to the average mind, hence the unpopularity of all radical reforms. Educate, agitate, organize. Agitation means the widest field for investigation. Organization is striving after unity; it is law, and law is God. George Eliot has beautifully said: "God couldn't be everywhere and He made woman;" and Tacitus in his German, in the same spirit, says, "In all grave matters they consult their women." So the old symbol that man is a divinely appointed master is no longer sustained. When society compels thousands of women to work they become entitled to rights the same as man enjoys, and we see the restless sweep towards equal personal rights and opportunities. For

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<sup>524</sup> Lichtenstein, *Writing Their Nations*, 150n.4.

<sup>525</sup> Rothstein, "Rosa Sonneschein, the *American Jewess*, and American Jewish Women's Activism in the 1890s," 43-45, 48-49

<sup>526</sup> "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (October 1895): 63.

<sup>527</sup> Sarah T. Drukker, "Equality," *American Jewess* (March 1897): 273-274; Sara T. Drukker, "Voting Mothers," *American Jewess* (April 1897): 27-28; Sarah Drucker, "Woman's Kingdom," *American Jewess* (January 1899): 3-5. Historian Linda Gordon Kuzmack identified "Drukker" and "Drucker" as the same person, see, Kuzmack, *Woman's Cause*, 42, 206n.65.

every  
will  
women  
see how

the clock of time has pealed the woman's hour." The fossils whose eyes can't stand the electric light of the progressive century in which they find themselves and still contend that woman is an inferior creature, forget how inferior has been her opportunities. Let avenue of activity be open to her and these weak arguments disappear. 'Tis scarcely more than a quarter of a century since have been admitted to the higher institutions of learning and nobly they carry off prizes and medals . . . <sup>528</sup>

In "Woman's Kingdom," Drukker drew a comparison between those opposing suffrage and those opposed to higher education for women:

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Over the doors of the Mohammedan Mosque is inscribed the legend: "Hogs, dogs, women and other impure animals forbidden to enter here." Over the doors of our American Colleges for higher education was expressed the same prohibition in these words: "Only men are permitted to enter here," but time has rolled along and wrought changes--that is as far as our American colleges are concerned . . . When higher education for women was first advocated it was stated by a most eminent authority that education in woman must never be allowed to develop into learning as only unwomanly women would try to become learned . . .

Even though, for the time being, Drukker agreed that women physically constituted the "weaker sex," it was a condition likely to change. Their mental abilities did not differ from men.<sup>529</sup>

*American Jewess* also carried photographs of prominent suffragists, noting

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<sup>528</sup> Sara T. Drukker, "Higher Education," *American Jewess* (September 1897): 245-246.

<sup>529</sup> Drukker, "Woman's Kingdom," 4-5; for an excellent overview of how biology served to buttress prevailing gender patterns, especially in regards to women's higher education and birth control, see Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Her Role in Nineteenth Century America," *Journal of American History* 60, 2 (September 1973): 332-356, reprinted in *Women and Health in America*, edited by Judith Walzer Leavitt, 1st edition, 12-27, 2nd edition, 111-130 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984, 1999).



their involvement in the movement, without further comment.<sup>530</sup> The magazine lauded Susan B. Anthony, but did not endorse her cause.<sup>531</sup> Other articles took a negative view of the issue. For example, in July 1896, Rabbi L. Weiss asked “Shall Woman Be Ruled by Man?”

homes, wives  
domestic  
by man! Could  
designed it?

But the good book says (Genesis iii, 16) according to the version of translators, that man was given government over woman. To obey God’s behest, man must be master and autocrat over our and mothers. The mother of our children, the author of felicity, the architect of our home, must be ruled over an all-loving Father, a benignant Providence, have so designed it?

And yet our sages of yore had seen fit to write: NASHIM PETIRIN MIN HAMITSVOTH (“Women are exempt from duties”). But why they entertained such a sentiment is left to conjecture. They doubtless incline to the belief that woman’s highest mission is to train and raise the children, imbuing them with a spirit that makes character, and not enter in the political arena, ‘lectioneering, advocate temperance or preach to the masses--pursuits considered too ignoble for the refined and lofty state of womanhood.<sup>532</sup>

In a piece profiling Carrie Shevelson Benjamin, vice-president of the Colorado National Council of Jewish Women, the magazine noted that “[r]ecently she was enthusiastically endorsed as a candidate on the Denver School Board, but refused to lend her name, mainly because, while she thoroughly believes in women serving on the School Board, she also believes that this should be an appointive and not an

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<sup>530</sup> "Elizabeth Cady Stanton," *American Jewess* (December 1895): 138; Countess Annie de Montague, "Progressive Women," *American Jewess* (May 1896): 404; "Rosalia Loew," *American Jewess* (June 1896): 474-475.

<sup>531</sup> "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (May 1895): 101.

<sup>532</sup> Rabbi L. Weiss, "Shall Woman Be Ruled by Man?" *American Jewess* (July 1896): 522.

elective office, and that it is not a wise arrangement which calls for women to be dragged through a political campaign, with all this implies.”<sup>533</sup> In “Woman and Progress,” regular contributor Rebecca A. Altman purportedly gave an account of a meeting of the “Woman’s Progress Club,” in which the unnamed president urged her “erring sisters” to leave their ideas of “manly ambitions” in the public sphere and return to the home. The article ended with various members of the Club agreeing with their president’s declaration:

“. . . Let us return to our true mission--away with ‘New Womanism!’ Let us strive to be wise mothers, and helpful partners to our husbands, and you will see how rapidly we will regain our lost influence, how the men will again become our heroes and we, their idols!”<sup>534</sup>

With only approximately fourteen references to women’s suffrage in four years of publication, *American Jewess* obviously did not consider the issue of a woman’s right to vote as paramount.<sup>535</sup> The organization the magazine championed, the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), did not officially endorse suffrage until 1917,<sup>536</sup> long after the demise of *American Jewess*.

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<sup>533</sup> “Carrie Shevelson Benjamin,” *American Jewess* (May 1896): 414; see, also, C. A. Danziger, “Ray Frank,” *American Jewess* (April 1898): 21.

<sup>534</sup> Rebecca A. Altman, “Woman and Progress,” *American Jewess* (May 1899): 32, 34.

<sup>535</sup> Cf. Nancy Burkhalter, “Women’s Magazines and the Suffrage Movement: Did They Help or Hinder the Cause?” *Journal of American Culture* 19, 2 (Summer 1996): 13-24.

<sup>536</sup> McCune, “*The Whole Wide World, Without Limits*,” 73, *contra* Kuzmack, *Woman’s Cause*, 148; see, also, Beth S. Wenger, “Jewish Women and Voluntarism: Beyond the Myth of Enablers,” *American Jewish History* (Autumn 1989), reprinted in *East European Jews in America, 1880-1920: Immigration and Adaptation*, edited by Jeffrey S. Gurock (NY: Routledge, 1998), 390.

*Di froyen-velt* covered suffrage extensively, unlike most middle-class English-language women's magazines.<sup>537</sup> Unlike *Good Housekeeping* or the *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Di froyen-velt* took a markedly pro-suffrage stance. Edward W. Bok, whose work as editor built the *Ladies' Home Journal* into a mass circulation magazine, announced his magazine's opposition to women's suffrage in 1912.<sup>538</sup> Not until after the House of Representatives passed the suffrage amendment in 1919 did *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping* start dealing with the issue; for the most part, the two magazines ignored suffrage altogether.<sup>539</sup> From 1918 to 1920, *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Good Housekeeping* each printed eight articles on suffrage.<sup>540</sup> By contrast, in the less than two years of *Di froyen-velt*'s existence, out of fifteen issues, mention of suffrage occurred thirteen times, mostly as part of the "*Fun der froyen velt*" ["From the Women's World"] column, but also in separate articles.

The first instance of *Di froyen-velt*'s position on women's voting rights appeared in the magazine's statement of purpose in its first issue: "And in yet another area, politics, in which the male world, as is the nature of all rulers, does not want women to enter, she conducts a heroic struggle against these violators of her rights . . ." <sup>541</sup> In its last mention, the magazine lambasted President Woodrow Wilson for paying only lip service to "the woman question." Noting that he had sent message

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<sup>537</sup> Burkhalter, "Women's Magazines and the Suffrage Movement," 13, 19-21, 22.

<sup>538</sup> Salme Harju Steinberg, *Reformer in the Marketplace: Edward W. Bok and The Ladies' Home Journal* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 68.

<sup>539</sup> Burkhalter, "Women's Magazines and the Suffrage Movement," 19, 21.

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid.*, 20, 22 (Tables 4 and 5).

after message to Congress all sorts of matters, “. . . about the woman question - not a word!” The struggle would be won, with or without Wilson.<sup>542</sup> In between the two pieces, *Froyen-velt* kept its readers informed about the struggle, hailing the “heroines” of the British suffragist movement: “What these women demand is nothing more and nothing less than recognition that women are also human beings.”<sup>543</sup>

Wilson finally endorsed suffrage in 1915 after becoming engaged to Mrs. Galt, which prompted another journalist, *Der tog*'s A. R. (Avrom Radutski), a man who wrote referring to “we women” and “we suffragettes,” to speculate that Wilson’s announcement was “. . . apparently a kingly gift to his bride.” A. R. maintained that the organizational acumen of the “anti’s” actually proved that they were pro-suffrage, just as the most extreme pro-suffragists were somehow ‘anti,’ because they too wished for a man to love, socks to darn, and children. “This is the fate and also the desire of the majority of girls” supporting suffrage, A. R. wrote.<sup>544</sup> Peace would be made between “anti’s” and “pro’s” after victory, when they would talk like neighbors, shop together and talk about what kinds of china closets they purchased. “But all of this is after the victory! Meanwhile there is war between us!”<sup>545</sup>

The three daily newspapers in this study supported women’s suffrage to

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<sup>541</sup> “Di froyen-velt,” *Di froyen-velt* (April 1913): 4.

<sup>542</sup> “Froyen delegatsion bay prezident vilson,” *Di froyen-velt*, February 14, 1914.

<sup>543</sup> “Der kampf far di rekhte fun froyen,” *Di froyen-velt*, February 8, 1914.

<sup>544</sup> A. R., “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, October 13, 1915.

<sup>545</sup> A. R., “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, October 13, 1915; see, also, Ben Zion, “Di freyd fun di sofradzshetkes mit dem prezident’s erklehrung vegen froyen-rekht,” *Forverts*, June 24, 1918.

varying degrees. The positions held by these newspapers and their writers remained consistent only in terms of the goal. Suffrage received treatment in editorials, columns and reportage. *Dos yidishes tageblatt* printed nineteen editorials and sixty-six articles between February 5, 1914 and August 20, 1920. *Forverts* carried thirteen editorials and fifty-one articles on suffrage, in addition to mentions in eighty of the weekly “*Notitsen fun der froyen velt*” [“Notes from the Woman’s World”] columns between March 10, 1918 and August 29, 1920. *Der tog* published sixteen editorials, fifty articles, thirty of D. M. Hermalin’s columns, and discussion in eighty-one of Adella Kean’s three columns, “*Fun a froy tsu froyen*” [“From a Woman to Women”], “*In der froyen velt*” [“In the Women’s World”], and “*Froyen klobs*” [“Women’s Clubs”], in the period between May 3, 1914 and August 21, 1920. Additionally, all three newspapers noted the race-based hostility towards women’s suffrage among members of Congress from the Southern states.<sup>546</sup>

The Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the Socialist *Forverts* and the liberal *Der tog*, celebrated the election of the first woman to Congress, Montana’s Jeanette Rankin.<sup>547</sup> A November 1916 cartoon in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*’s weekly cartoon

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<sup>546</sup> Ben Zion, “Di emese bedaytung fun dem froyen-zieg in kongres,” *Forverts*, October 2, 1917; Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, July 1, 1918; “Der prezident’s vort far froyen-rekht,” *Der tog*, October 1, 1918; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, August 17, 1919; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, September 21, 1919; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, March 14, 1920; Avigidor Fuchs, “Sofreydzsh, prohibishon un politik,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 24, 1920.

<sup>547</sup> Di Litvishe Khakheymnis, “Froyen vout in der vest un di dame in kongres,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 3, 1916; Eliash, “A froy in kongres,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 10, 1916; “Froy ‘kongresman’ vet fertreten froyen interesen,” *Der tog*, November 12, 1916; “Di ershte kongres-leydi,” *Der tog*, November 14, 1916; Eliash, “Vote for Women Suffrage” [column in Yiddish except for title], *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 6, 1917; B. Geigenbaum, “Oys kongres leydi!”

feature, “*Di vokh in bilder*” [“The Week in Pictures”] depicted Uncle Sam, arms folded, as a woman labeled “Miss Rankin” said “I come to you in the name of 10 million mothers and 40 million children.”<sup>548</sup> A column in *Der tog* extolled the election of the “Lady from Montana,” stating that “[h]er victory is not just a victory for American women, but a victory for the women of the entire world. This is the first time that a women will sit in a great parliament . . .” The columnist went on to state that this woman “. . . will bring into legislation more soul, more heart, more sympathy . . .” She would inspire male legislators to become more serious. Politics is dirty, the writer declared, but women do cleaning, and will clean up politics as well.<sup>549</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* denounced the militant tactics of suffragists, at one point describing English hunger strikers as “female Cossacks.”<sup>550</sup> While the newspaper attacked English suffragists, the “Lithuanian Wise Woman” suggested in its pages that those who thought the London suffragists were acting improperly, by breaking windows and so forth, should consider what men do when struggling for freedom--revolution, killing, murder. Tongue firmly in cheek, “she” dared women to

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*Forverts*, September 3, 1918; Ben Zion, “Tsvey froyen als kandidaten far dem senat fun di yunayted steys,” *Forverts*, October 29, 1918.

<sup>548</sup> “Di ershte froy kongresman,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 19, 1916.

<sup>549</sup> B., “Di ershte kongres-leydi,” *Der tog*, November 11, 1916.

<sup>550</sup> “Vaybershe hunger-strayks in england,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 11, 1914; “A tog skandalen fun sofrazshets,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 8, 1914; “A frage fun gerekhtigkeyt,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 15, 1915; L. Rozenherts, “Shklafins vos vilen nit befrayt veren,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 29, 1915; “Sofreydzsh in milkhome-stayten,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 20, 1917.

do the same.<sup>551</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* held in a 1915 editorial entitled “*Nit beser, nor glaykh*” [“Not Better, but Equal”] that arguments about female inferiority were just as false as those urging female superiority,<sup>552</sup> and that men and women did not constitute separate voting blocs, but groups of individuals.<sup>553</sup> While supporting suffrage, in more than one editorial from 1914 to 1915, the newspaper also pointed out that women could exercise their influence upon society through their role in the domestic sphere.<sup>554</sup> Thus, in a 1914 editorial concerning women in Chicago registering to vote, the newspaper wrote that “Women have a great, powerful rule in a kingdom higher and broader than the States of politics. They have enough power and influence in the sphere of the family, and it is a great conjecture that going into politics will lose them their influence.” But, the editorial warned, “[t]hey will lose part of their charm, their sweetness, and the respect men give them today.” It concluded on a semi-supportive note: “Meanwhile, however, the Chicago wives should be happy and let us wish our wives the same success--if they want it!”<sup>555</sup> After 1915, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* no longer carried the same ambivalent message. In two editorials, the newspaper attacked the “anti’s,” answering the charges of those opposed to

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<sup>551</sup> Di Litvishe khakheymnis, “Di sofradzshetkes in london,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 11, 1914.

<sup>552</sup> “Nit beser, nor glaykh,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 25, 1915.

<sup>553</sup> “Froyen in krieg,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 26, 1917.

<sup>554</sup> “Der vaybersher tog un di ‘voirking goyrl,’” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 4, 1914; “A frage fun gerekhtigkeyt,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 15, 1915; “Di gegner fun shtimrekht fir froyen,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 21, 1915.

<sup>555</sup> “Di vayber vos vouten un di vos velen vouten,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 5, 1914.

suffrage.<sup>556</sup>

A common argument in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* looked to Famous Women in History as proof of feminine capabilities, starting with Biblical figures.<sup>557</sup> Writer A. Sofer asked whether anyone would deny the Jewish prophet Deborah the right to vote. He went on to invoke Queen Elizabeth of England, Joan of Arc, George Eliot and Madame de Stael.<sup>558</sup> The newspaper even reported on the interpretation of hieroglyphics found in Egypt, stating that “[t]he mummy of this princess was dug up not long ago and she was crowned the first suffragette.”<sup>559</sup> Eliash, who wrote no less than twenty-three columns in favor of suffrage for *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, likewise cited the examples of Queen Victoria of England, Queen Wilhemina of Holland and Maria of Luxemburg as proof of the ability of women to rule.<sup>560</sup>

All three newspapers noted the changing and expanded roles of women, especially with the advent of the war, as they entered all branches of industry, business and the professions, as discussed in the last chapter.<sup>561</sup> These changes

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<sup>556</sup> “Falshe tayne gegen froyen-rekht,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 10, 1916; “Di anti’s,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 15, 1918.

<sup>557</sup> “A frage fun gerekhtigkeyt,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 15, 1915; see, also, H., “Identhum un di glaykhe rekhte far froyen,” *Der tog*, April 26, 1917, for an argument based on Jewish religious texts.

<sup>558</sup> A. Sofer, “Der aynflus fun froyen oyf der veltgeshikhte,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 1, 1915.

<sup>559</sup> “Di egyptishe printsesin vos hot mit 4 toyzent yohr tsurik gekempft far froyen-glaykhabarekhtigung,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 11, 1923.

<sup>560</sup> Eliash, “Di froy in regierung,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 2, 1915; Eliash, “A froy als prezident,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 4, 1916; Eliash, “Ven froyen fihren,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 27, 1918.

<sup>561</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, March 24, 1918; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, June 23, 1918; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, December 29, 1918; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, September 21, 1919;



undermined arguments that women lacked the ability to vote or otherwise become involved in governmental affairs. Not only had women proven themselves, their actions during the war made them entitled to the vote.<sup>562</sup>

In *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the writer Eliash drew analogies between the oppression of women by denying them the vote in America and the oppression of Jews in Russia by the Tsar. Eliash attacked those opposed to suffrage by comparing them to the hated Russian Tsar Nikolai, noting that Nikolai too had “arguments,” but now Jews are equal citizens in the new Russia.<sup>563</sup> Eliash added that for every woman, her husband could be a “Nikolai.”<sup>564</sup>

To further the cause and emphasize the seriousness of the issue, Eliash also employed Jewish religious language when writing about an upcoming vote on suffrage in New York. The 1915 column began by stating that “[t]oday is the *yom-hadin* [“Day of Reckoning”] for the women of the State of New York.” Men would vote yes or no on the women’s suffrage amendment. Denying his opening statement, Eliash continued “No, it is the *yom hadin* for the men of the State of New York.” Men would decide whether mothers, sisters and wives should remain right-less; he hoped justice would prevail and “our State . . . be covered with *koved*

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“Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, December 27, 1919; “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, May 23, 1920.

<sup>562</sup> B. Albin, “Di froyen-frage in eyropa nokh dem krieg,” *Der tog*, August 25, 1916; “Der vumen sofrdzsh amendment,” *Der tog*, September 12, 1917; “Finf milion froyen arbeyter in england,” *Forverts*, October 7, 1913; Ray Malis, “Der froy’s befrayung,” *Der tog*, July 16, 1918; “Der froyen-vout,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 20, 1916.

<sup>563</sup> Eliash, “Vote for Women Suffrage,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 6, 1917 (only the column’s title appeared in English).

<sup>564</sup> Eliash, “Froyen-frayheynt nokh’n krieg,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 12, 1917.

["honor"]."<sup>565</sup>

A prime example of Jewish religious references being used for women's suffrage occurred in an article by Yitzhak Isaac ben Aryeh Tsvi Halevy for *Der tog*. In discussing women's suffrage in Utah, he summarized the wanderings of the Mormons, stating that "[i]n the *midber* ["desert," as used in Exodus] of Utah, they established their own *yishuv* [the word used to describe the Jewish community in pre-1948 Israel, i.e. Palestine] , where nobody could destroy them from living according to their *toyre* ["Torah"]." The discovery of gold brought settlers and a ". . . struggle between the Mormons and the '*goyim*' [Gentiles]..." To increase Mormon voting power, Mormon males granted women voting rights.<sup>566</sup> Similarly, in recounting suffrage history, Adella Kean wrote of women who took it upon themselves ". . . to blow the first *Shofar* [the Ram's Horn blown during the High Holy Days] of suffrage."<sup>567</sup> In a 1918 column on the first elections in England in which women would participate, she wrote that "[t]he women already *davens* ["prays"] not by herself in the woman's section of the *shul* [the traditional Jewish synagogue], but shoulder to shoulder with male workers."<sup>568</sup> Employing religious imagery in a column discussing suffrage in Wyoming, *Forverts* noted that this state had its first female Justice of the Peace, not counting Deborah, for Wyoming was then a

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<sup>565</sup> Eliash, "Zieg far froyen, ehre far mener," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 2, 1915.

<sup>566</sup> Yitzhak Isaac ben Aryeh Tsvi Halevy, "Shtim-rekht far froyen," *Der tog*, September 7, 1915.

<sup>567</sup> Adella Kean, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, May 24, 1922.

<sup>568</sup> Adella Kean Zametkin, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, September 23, 1918.

wilderness just like Eretz Yisroel in Deborah's time . . . <sup>569</sup>

Lena Rozenherts of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* also employed religious references in framing the argument for suffrage in terms of gender attributes, writing that woman were associated with the *yeytser-toyv* [the inclination to do good], while men were associated with the *yeytser-hore* [the inclination to do evil]:

The one for whom the feelings of justice and humanity have not been extinguished during the present war epidemic is the *woman*.

The woman is the one who has not forgotten the horrible results of war.

The woman is the only one who feels with her heart and soul that war is unjust and a misfortune . . .

Continuing in the same vein, she uses "*lehavdil*," a Yiddish word best translated as "you should pardon the comparison," when writing that "In Paris, in Petersburg, in Vienna and Berlin, in the churches and *lehavdil* the *shuls* are the women, young and old, who raise their hands to God in a fervid prayer and ask, with tears in their eyes: 'God protect us from a war!'" Turning to men, Rozenherts wrote:

Men do not feel the horror and misfortune of war as women do.

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family

For them the war is something of a sport, an opportunity to demonstrate heroism. Women - the mothers, sisters, the wives, watchers and protectors of house and family, cannot forget for a minute that war brings devastation and death on the beautiful nest, on the quiet and peaceful family life.

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<sup>569</sup> "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, December 21, 1919.

The woman can not for one minute forget that every battle means thousands of widows and every victory or defeat means thousands of orphans.

She concludes by writing that “. . . with the victory of women in their fight for voting rights will bring an end to war.”<sup>570</sup>

Rozenherts, of course, was not the only person to argue that women were inherently more moral, peaceful, nurturing and caring than men. Getzel Zelikowitch stated that “[m]en have better heads? We women have better hearts.”<sup>571</sup>

D. M. Hermalin of *Der tog* continually maintained that reforms in government, morality and family life would only occur with women’s suffrage.<sup>572</sup> Female ballots would end prostitution, drunkenness, gambling and political corruption.<sup>573</sup> Hermalin combined a traditionalist belief in the role of women with a fervent desire for them to vote. In 1915, he wrote:

We will note, however, that the woman’s main occupation for the future and for all time, will always be womanliness and motherhood. Nature created and decreed it . . .

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<sup>570</sup> L. Rozenherts, “Di froy un milkhome,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 3, 1914.

<sup>571</sup> Di Litvishe Khakhheymnis, “Vos men ken ervarten fun nekhsten froyen vout,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 11, 1917; see, also, Di Litvishe Khakhheymnis, “Ven froyen volten gehot politishe glaykheyt vi zey,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 27, 1915; “Froyen zukhen zeyer pltas in di felker lieg,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 7, 1919.

<sup>572</sup> H., “Religion un visenshaft vegen froyen-rekht,” *Der tog*, June 30, 1915; H., “Farvos dzsherzi hot geshtimt gegen froyen,” *Der tog*, October 21, 1915; H., “Di khesroynes un di mayles fun der froy,” *Der tog*, October 26, 1915; H., “Di froy mit glaykhe politishe rekhte,” *Der tog*, October 29, 1916; H., “Unzere patriotishe froyen fun amerika,” *Der tog*, February 11, 1917; H., “Der emes vegen kinder-arbet un froyen-arbet,” *Der tog*, March 26, 1917; H., “Di emese bedaytung fun froyen-shtimrekht,” *Der tog*, November 13, 1917.

<sup>573</sup> H., “Der aynflus fun der broy-birgerin,” *Der tog*, June 21, 1918.

The woman will never engage in war. Nature did not create her for it. Still more, nature created her against it. Her heart is more loving, better and more inclined to peace than that of a man.

As a woman with power, with a vote, with a voice in political life, she will, in the future, prevent much blood-spilling. No woman can, with indifference, send her son to war as a father does. One need be a soldier to demand war, and a woman can't be a soldier.

We noted earlier that in New Jersey, women have been made overseers of foods. The woman is fit to do this. From always she has been the mistress of the house and best understands her tasks.<sup>574</sup>

According to Hermalin, a woman's place and her primary role were preordained, as he set forth in a 1916 column:

still A woman must be a man's wife, one man's wife. She must be mother, child-raiser, and housekeeper. That is her main function. She can be a political leader, a professor in a university and the president of a banking business. In all her wheeling and dealing, however, she must remain a woman. From this she may not deviate.<sup>575</sup>

Hermalin's fervor was so strong that he argued that without equal rights, women, like children, must be exempt from the death penalty.<sup>576</sup> In "*An algemayner strayk fun di froyen*" ["A General Strike of the Women"], Hermalin wrote about the subjugation of women and suggested a method of protest: a general strike by women until men vote to grant women suffrage.<sup>577</sup>

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<sup>574</sup> H., "Vos di froy vet thon far der tsukunft," *Der tog*, December 5, 1915.

<sup>575</sup> H., "A froy vos ferdient gute shmits," *Der tog*, May 25, 1916.

<sup>576</sup> H., "Di feranvortlikhkeyt fun der froy farn gezets," *Der tog*, July 22, 1915; see, also, "Der senat un froyen-shtimrekht," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 3, 1918.

<sup>577</sup> H., "An algemayner strayk fun di froyen," *Der tog*, August 22, 1915.

In Aileen S. Kraditor's intellectual history of the suffrage movement, she traced the changes in arguments among mainstream suffragists. Initially there was a belief in universal rights and inclusiveness, emphasizing the commonalities between men and women. This shifted to a movement based on exclusiveness and an emphasis on the differences not only between men and women, but between those deemed fit and those deemed unfit to vote.<sup>578</sup> Even though Kraditor specifically omitted the activities of the foreign-born from her account, the changes she traced also appeared within the pages of the Yiddish press. Hermalin's columns in the liberal *Der tog* shadowed these changes in the principles of the suffrage movement. He articulated a set of attributes for women and argued against the "unfit," not by suggesting they be denied a vote, but by pointing out that granting women suffrage would enable women to outvote the unfit. Women had a predestined role as wives and mothers and apparently fell into the "fit" category by definition.<sup>579</sup> Hermalin expressed the exclusionary side of suffrage arguments with statements such as "[t]he time approaches when the mother, woman and daughter will have the same rights as the beer-drinkers of the Bowery, to cast votes."<sup>580</sup> In another column he quoted a prominent suffragist who stated that "[i]f Negroes, drunks, bums, gamblers, pimps and other loose creatures" have voting rights, so should the mothers, daughters and

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<sup>578</sup> Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920* (NY: W. W. Norton & Company, 1965, 1981), 29-31, 66-67, 110-111, 137.

<sup>579</sup> H., "Di khesroynes un di mayles fun der froy," *Der tog*, October 26, 1915; H., "Vos froyen kenen lernen fun heti grin," *Der tog*, July 6, 1916; H., "Vi gebildete froyebn makhen zikh narish," *Der tog*, December 14, 1916; H., "Mener vos vilen nit keyn gebildete froyen," *Der tog*, January 1, 1918; H., "Froyen vos fargesen az zey zeynen froyen," *Der tog*, December 22, 1918.

<sup>580</sup> H., "Religion un visenshaft vegen froyen-rekht," *Der tog*, June 30, 1915.

sisters of upstanding citizens. Hermalin did not quibble with her presentation of the “morally unfit.”<sup>581</sup>

Hermalin firmly believed in the innate peacefulness of women. Writing in *Der tog*, he argued that in ancient times, when women ruled and children took their mother’s name, men hunted and engaged in war. Women needed male protection when incapacitated by pregnancy and birth, and thus men substituted themselves as rulers: “This was the beginning of warlike men, from which descended today’s murder-patriots.” Claiming that female suffrage would result in revolutionizing humanity, Hermalin declared “Women do not have such [warlike] inclinations. The family, the raising of children, the wholeness of the society and the calm genius of life stand highest above all.” Summarizing male opposition to women’s suffrage, he wrote that “[m]en, who want bloody war, brutal rule, prostitution and the slavery of women, fight the demands of their mothers and sisters to have an equal voice in politics.”<sup>582</sup>

In a column concerned with women who wished to enter the war, Hermalin faced a fundamental challenge to his basic beliefs about the attributes of men and women:

Men, it is said, are soldiers, warriors, bloodthirsty, because their great-great-grandfathers were the same. But what about women?  
Is a woman also bloodthirsty?

If we were to follow the history of women, we will find that she was always loving, tender, the healer of wounds and the comforter of the

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<sup>581</sup> H., “Di froy mit glaykhe politishe rekhte,” *Der tog*, November 6, 1916.

<sup>582</sup> H., “Di khesroynes un di mayles fun der froy,” *Der tog*, October 26, 1915.

sorrowful. According to all rules and rights, all her sisters would also have to be, her sisters and daughters and granddaughters, would also have to meet cruelty with horror everywhere.

He told of Maria Solloviov, a Russian Jewish woman involved in a battle who ended up killing Germans herself, adding that “[t]he English suffragists also share this opinion. They say that women ought to defend their Fatherland, just like the men.” He continued: “Our opinion is that women such as Maria Solloviov are just an exception. The proper, the true woman, has a million other reasons for living.” Arguing that in antiquity a woman “. . . never murdered, conducted war or spilled human blood,” Hermalin concluded that “[t]he activities of today’s women in war are wild, brutal and against the nature of a woman.”<sup>583</sup>

In a 1915 column, the demands of English suffragists to join the war effort and American suffragists to behave like men led Hermalin to question the wisdom of granting women the right to vote altogether.<sup>584</sup> Nevertheless, five days later, quoting Thomas Edison, Hermalin’s doubts had disappeared:

The [Catholic] Church and the barracks have always been against equal rights for women. The Church long ago determined and decided that a woman was a lesser person than a man; that woman is the source of sins; that the woman in general came into this world to make innocent men, alas, play with the evil spirit . . . The Church trembles for the moment when people will come to their senses and declare these devout men as swindlers and *hombogs* [“humbugs”]. Better women should remain enslaved as in the past.

The barracks also knows that the woman is against soldiery, against war, against bloodshed. Krupp, the cannon maker is strongly against women’s rights, because that would destroy his business.

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<sup>583</sup> H., “Froyen als soldaten in itsigen krieg,” *Der tog*, June 25, 1915.

<sup>584</sup> H., “Froyen vos fershtehen nit zikh arayn,” *Der tog*, October 15, 1915.



We agree with Edison that if women in Germany, Austria, France, England and Russia would have a voice, they certainly would not permit the present bloody war.<sup>585</sup>

Rosa Lebensboym, writing at the same time and in the same newspaper as Hermalin, did not share his views concerning female attributes. In “*Di froyen un der kreig*,” [“The Woman and the War”], Lebensboym used Jewish religious terminology as she discussed resolutions for suffrage and peace passed by the Women’s Trade Union League (WTUL) Convention. “The *minhag* [“custom,” “rite”] was a marriage of both ideals.” Using the word for a woman’s question to a rabbi concerning an issue of ritual purity, Lebensboym wrote that the *shayle* was “Why is suffrage paired with peace? Why will a liberated woman stop the war more than a free man?” Lebensboym turned to Rabbi Stephen S. Wise’s discussion of the subject:

Rev. Stephen Wise writes in the “New York Tribune” about war and women, and his speech acquaints us with the thought of those who will connect suffrage with peace. He also means the women’s vote lead us into the kingdom of eternal peace. He then portrays for us the great suffering of women in war countries: with tears she looks upon her man, how he goes into battle, and meets every piece of news about him with horror. On her weak shoulders she takes the yoke of work upon herself, for her little children, for her country . . .

WTUL delegate Rose Schneiderman stated that “the women of the warring countries demand peace.” But, Lebensboym continued, all we have to do is examine the words of English suffragist Mrs. Pankhurst complaining about the shameful “babbling for peace,” and how the entire country applauded Mrs. Pankhurst.

Lebensboym also quoted, to similar effect, women from Belgium and France. She concluded that the innate desire for peace on the part of woman was a mere phrase, that women were “less doves than eagles.”<sup>586</sup> Two years later, writing as “Anna Weiss,” she wrote about American women demonstrating for preparedness, a small women’s regiment, and organizations such as the International Order of Military Women, the Girl’s National Honor Guard, and others.<sup>587</sup> As “Sofia Brandt,” Lebensboym also discussed the American Women’s League of Self-Defense and its plan to organize a woman’s regiment to go to the Eastern Front and fight alongside the Tsarist Women’s Battalion of Death.<sup>588</sup>

For its part, *Forverts* argued not so much for suffrage as for Socialism: suffrage was the means, Socialism the end. Thus, a 1918 editorial stated that with women’s suffrage won in New York State, “[t]he working women and all who sympathize with the labor struggle and wish to support it should hold as their holy duty to come to the polling places Saturday and sign their names as supporters of the Socialist Party.”<sup>589</sup> It continually noted that the Socialist Party placed women’s suffrage in its platform before any other American political party.<sup>590</sup> The paper went

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<sup>585</sup> H., “Religion un visnshaft vegen froyen-rekht,” *Der tog*, June 30, 1915.

<sup>586</sup> Rosa Lebensboym, “Di froy un der krieg,” *Der tog*, June 25, 1915; see, also, Rosa Lebensboym, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, May 7, 1915.

<sup>587</sup> Anna Weiss, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, February 20, 1917.

<sup>588</sup> Sofia Brandt, “A ‘toyten-legion’ fun amerikaner froyen,” *Der tog*, August 28, 1917; for a comparison of women as the “weaker sex” and the existence of the Women’s Battalion of Death, see, also, Rosa Goldshteyn, “Dos shvakhe geshlekt,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 14, 1922.

<sup>589</sup> “Di politishe un sotsialistishe flikht fun di arbeyter-froyen,” *Forverts*, May 23, 1918.

<sup>590</sup> Shakhne Epstein, “Di arbeyter-froy un der sotsialistisher kampeyn,” *Forverts*,

so far as to claim that “[t]he women’s victory [in winning suffrage in New York State] is a victory of the Socialist movement.”<sup>591</sup> In reality, unlike *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Der tog*, *Forverts* did not invest a great deal of time or printer’s ink in arguments for suffrage or in countering those made by the “anti’s.” As noted in Chapter Two, Adella Kean had attacked the Socialist Party prior to the war for only paying lip service to suffrage. In March 1920, she wrote in *Der tog* that although Socialist platforms called for suffrage, the movement for voting rights was in reality a bourgeois movement filled with high-minded, well-educated, wonderful people, despite their stylish clothes and jewelry. Working women, she noted, acted as participants in the movement.<sup>592</sup>

In examining the three newspapers and their stances vis-à-vis suffrage, it is the small number of *Forverts* editorials (thirteen) and articles (forty) as compared to *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, with nineteen editorials and sixty-six articles, or *Der tog*’s sixteen editorials and eighty-nine articles, which stands out. These figures do not include mentions in eighty-one of Adella Kean’s *Der tog* columns or in the eighty “*Notitsen fun der froyen-velt*” columns in *Forverts*. For the most part these columns gave running reports rather than made arguments.

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November 5, 1916; Ben Zion, “Di emese bedaytung fun dem froyen-zieg in kongres,” *Forverts*, October 2, 1917; “Agitirt far froyen-shtimrekht,” *Forverts*, October 26, 1917; “Tsu velkhe politisher partey velen di naye froyen-vouters tsushtehn?” *Forverts*, December 4, 1917; “Froyen! Di sotsialistische partay iz ayer partay! Enrolt zikh,” *Forverts*, May 19, 1918; “Der bill vegen froyen shtimrekht morgen in senat,” *Forverts*, August 14, 1918; “Di froyen in dem itsigen vahl-kampf,” *Forverts*, October 17, 1918.

<sup>591</sup> “Di froyen-zieg iz a zieg fun der sotsialistisher bevegung,” *Forverts*, November 15, 1917.

<sup>592</sup> Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, March 10, 1920; see, also, Adella

The explanation for the disparity in coverage among the daily papers lay in the fact that the publishers and editors of both *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Der tog* considered themselves papers published for the benefit of the Jewish community, regardless of class and party. *Dos yidishes tageblatt* emblazoned that goal on its masthead as the “organ for *kol yisroel*” [“organ of the Jewish community”]. Mordecai Dantzis of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* summed up the advantages of women’s suffrage:

The Jewish vote is one of our strongest and most effective weapons we possess. Every political party reckons with our vote and respects our will, knowing that we are a great political factor, and if, to the Jewish male vote, was added Jewish female votes, it would double our power and strengthen our position in every sphere of public life.<sup>593</sup>

American

*Forverts*, as previously stated, represented the Socialist position.

Nineteenth-century American Socialists derived mainly from two groups: native-born Americans who came out of the Abolitionist, suffrage and allied movements; and immigrants, primarily German-speaking. The activities of American-born Socialist women in the women’s movement and the example it would set for others bothered Karl Marx so much that in 1872 he suggested expulsion of the American section from the First International Working Man’s Association, to which all Socialist parties belonged.<sup>594</sup> Male German-American Socialists, with a traditional romantic view of

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Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, April 12, 1920.

<sup>593</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, “Di role fun froyen in itsigen kempein,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 25, 1922.

<sup>594</sup> Mari Jo Buhle, *Women and American Socialism, 1870-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), xiv.

women's role in the family, had opposed women's suffrage in the 1870s.<sup>595</sup> In 1876, with the end of the First International, the various German Socialist groups joined together as the Workingmen's Party of the U.S.A., and changed its name to the Socialist Labor Party a year later. The Party publications and general language of agitation was German. In the 1890s, the Socialist Labor Party split, and those leaving the Socialist Labor Party combined with Eugene V. Debs's Social Democratic Federation to form the Socialist Party of America (SP) in 1900.<sup>596</sup> *Forverts* allied itself with the SP. In accordance with decisions of the Second International Working Man's Association in 1889, the Socialist Party of America, as a member of the Second International, placed suffrage in its platform.<sup>597</sup> Although SP leaders such as Debs supported suffrage, the SP generally never took this platform plank seriously.<sup>598</sup> The veteran Jewish Socialist Morris Hillquit likewise championed suffrage, pushing for female equality in all areas, political, economic and social.

Within the Socialist Party, it was not Jewish, but Finnish-American, Socialists who constituted the most pro-suffrage element.<sup>599</sup> As with race, Socialists subordinated the "woman question" to the class struggle.<sup>600</sup> As if to flaunt male

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<sup>595</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>596</sup> Connolly-Smith, *Translating America*, 40.

<sup>597</sup> Sally M. Miller, "For White Men Only: The Socialist Party of America and Issues of Gender, Ethnicity and Race," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 2, 3 (July 2003): 283.

<sup>598</sup> Buhle, *Women and American Socialism*, 216.

<sup>599</sup> *Ibid.*, 302-303.

<sup>600</sup> Ira Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement: 1897-1912* (NY: Monthly Review Press, 1952, 1972), 260; see, also, Kuzmack, *Woman's Cause*, 121, 122; Elinor Lerner, "Jewish Involvement in the New York City Woman Suffrage Movement," *American Jewish History* 70, 4 (June 1981): 453.

superiority, male-dominated Socialist locals often held their meetings in all-male enclaves such as saloons.<sup>601</sup>

Efforts by John Spargo led to the formation of the SP's National Woman's Committee in 1908, not only to increase female membership in the Socialist Party but to fight male attitudes towards women within the Party as well.<sup>602</sup> Long-time Socialist Theresa Malkiel, originally a member of the Socialist Labor Party, founded the Woman's Infant Cloak Maker's Union in 1892. In 1899, she left the Socialist Labor Party, joining the newly-formed Socialist Party. Saying that women were no longer content to be the "official cake-bakers and money collectors" of the Party, she became active within the National Woman's Committee. In 1910, a convention fight erupted over participation in the suffrage struggle.<sup>603</sup> Women were told they could do so only under the auspices of the Socialist Party; there could be no class collaboration with the mainstream bourgeois women's movement.<sup>604</sup> Historian Mari Jo Buhle noted that young Jewish women comprised a part of those supporting the position against class collaboration.<sup>605</sup>

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<sup>601</sup> Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement*, 262; Sally M. Miller, "Other Socialists: Native-Born and Immigrant Women in the Socialist Party of America, 1901-1917," *Labor History* 24, 1 (Winter 1983): 85.

<sup>602</sup> Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement*, 263.

<sup>603</sup> For Theresa Malkiel, see, Emily Taitz, "Malkiel, Theresa Serber (1874-1949)," in *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia*, edited by Paula E. Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore (NY: Routledge, 1997), 885; Kuzmack, *Woman's Cause*, 122.

<sup>604</sup> Buhle, *Women and American Socialism*, 171, 300, 308-310; Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement*, 263-264; Miller, "For White Men Only," 287; McCune, "*The Whole Wide World, Without Limits*," 73; see, also, Miller, "Other Socialists: Native-Born and Immigrant Women," 85.

<sup>605</sup> Buhle, *Women and American Socialism*, 171.

Historian Ira Kipnis wrote that after the formation of the Woman's National Committee, ". . . there was a marked decrease in the Socialist press of references to the 'inferior' sex, women Socialists seem to have carried on the fight for equal rights with little aid from the male members of the party."<sup>606</sup> With withdrawal of support by the SP's National Executive Committee in 1914, the Women's National Committee ceased activity in 1915.<sup>607</sup> *Forverts* noted Malkiel's resignation in April 1918.<sup>608</sup> After losing an election for a seat in the New York State Assembly on the Socialist Party ticket in 1920, her political activities ceased and she devoted the rest of her life to adult education.<sup>609</sup>

Despite the backseat status afforded women's suffrage in *Forverts*, in 1925, the newspaper would criticize Belgian Socialists for their opposition to women's suffrage based on a fear of Catholic clerical influence over women. The *Forverts* labeled this opposition a "false path."<sup>610</sup>

Another area of difference between *Forverts* and the other newspapers concerned how they dealt with the terms of the arguments of those opposed to women's suffrage (the "anti's"). *Dos yidishes taublatt* and *Der tog* argued for suffrage and grappled with the assertions of the "anti's."<sup>611</sup> Thus, in A. Sofer's 1915

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<sup>606</sup> Kipnis, *The American Socialist Movement*, 265.

<sup>607</sup> Miller, "For White Men Only," 289.

<sup>608</sup> "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, April 28, 1918.

<sup>609</sup> Taitz, "Malkiel, Theresa Serber," 885.

<sup>610</sup> "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, October 11, 1925.

<sup>611</sup> See, e.g., I. M. Budish, "Froyen shtimrekht," *Der tog*, February 17, 1915; M. Katz, "Iden un froyen-vohlrkht," *Der tog*, October 9, 1915; Eliash, "Far froyen frayheyt," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 10, 1917; Dr. I. Vartsman, "Vegen froyen rekht in amerika," *Der tog*, July 25, 1917; Eliash, "Gegen froyen-glaykhheyt," *Dos*

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* article, “Naye ‘gefahr’ fir der gezelschaft” [“New ‘Danger’ for Society”], he wrote that “True, nature has laid upon women a duty to bring children into the world.” But nature, he argued, also gave woman a prior right, namely to live her own life. Subtitled “Laughable opinions of the opponents of women’s rights,” he attacked the argument that suffrage would destroy the duties of women as mothers and wives and lead to “race suicide.”<sup>612</sup> Likewise, writing in the English section of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* in 1915, Morris Kramer stated:

This is the day of Co-operation [sic]; men and women working together, not man working out his own so-called peculiar destiny and woman hers. A number of questions raised against Woman Suffrage, the breaking up of the home, the loss of womanly dignity, the fact that a number of women do not want the vote and other questions of this nature, are mostly based on a theoretical premise. There is nothing to prevent women, if they are thus disposed, to break up their homes to-day [sic]; the loss of womanly dignity is not dependent upon the fact whether women vote or do not vote, and because some women do not want the vote does not prove that women, as a body, should be denied the right to vote.<sup>613</sup>

Two years later, Kramer would again argue for a “yes” vote on suffrage, noting that women had shown themselves to be capable in all fields. This being so, having “those other fine, moral qualities which tend to elevate the entire business atmosphere,” why not let her vote? Furthermore, it would give women something useful to do:

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*yidishes tageblatt*, September 20, 1917; Ray Malis, “Di froyen mit layb un leben in politik,” *Der tog*, December 23, 1917; Eliash, “Ver far vemen?” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 31, 1918.

<sup>612</sup> A. Sofer, “Naye ‘gefahr’ fir der gezelschaft,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 31, 1915.

<sup>613</sup> Morris Kramer, “Woman Suffrage,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 1, 1915.



...[It] will also open up a green field for usefulness for those women who have a great deal of time to spend and who waste their energies in superficial pleasurable, social duties. When these women get the vote, they will be able to divert their minds to matters which will not only serve a constructive purpose for the benefit of society, but will also help to awaken and inspire themselves and indirectly prove a blessing to their children who many need this guidance and inspiration.<sup>614</sup>

*Forverts*, however, continued to merely rely on reminding readers about which party placed suffrage in its platform first. Historian Rachel Rojanski describes coverage of the suffrage issue in *Forverts* as “frequent and constant.”<sup>615</sup> She writes that *Forverts* and *Di tsayt*, the short-lived Labor Zionist daily, “. . . probably understood that focusing on the struggle over suffrage would enable them to deal with the issue of women’s place in the Jewish sphere in a subtle way, without overtly challenging the values of traditional Jewish society.”<sup>616</sup> Later she writes that “[w]hile they conspicuously did not call on female readers to take an active part in the suffragist movement themselves, their goal *seems to have been* to encourage their female readers to start exercising their rights to participate in the public sphere in less radical ways, such as voting, and *perhaps* to subtly spur them on to greater involvement in the public life of their own immigrant community.”<sup>617</sup> The use of “probably,” “perhaps,” and “seems to have been” indicates speculation, not proof.

As noted in this chapter, writers in both the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*

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<sup>614</sup> Morris Kramer, “Raising the Standard,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 5, 1917.

<sup>615</sup> Rojanski, “Images of Women in American Yiddish Socialist Dailies,” 333.

<sup>616</sup> *Ibid.*, 336 (emphasis added).

<sup>617</sup> *Ibid.* (emphasis added).

and the liberal non-religious *Der tog* challenged their readers, whether male or female, on the arguments surrounding suffrage. They chastised those who opposed suffrage, and dealt with the objections of the “anti’s.” In so doing, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Der tog* did not “probably” or “perhaps” challenge a woman’s place in the public sphere: they openly called for such participation, if only to the extent of voting. Eliash of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* commented on Israel Zangwill’s speculation of the possibility of a woman becoming president in his book *Dreamer of the Ghetto* by asking why not?<sup>618</sup> With women active in all phases of the war, Eliash felt they should participate in government as well.<sup>619</sup> Hermalin’s columns in *Der tog* emphasized, as has been shown, the improvements that would occur in society once women had the vote.

Historian Maxine S. Sellers referred to the large number of “*Notitsen fun der froyen-velt*” columns discussing suffrage in 1919, citing five of them.<sup>620</sup> In fact, “*Notitsen*” appeared fifty-two times in 1919; thirty of those columns discussed suffrage to some extent. But the frequency of mentions has less importance than another question: what did the articles say? Did they merely report events, or did they make particular arguments? After all, *Forverts* was not alone in reporting suffrage events. During that same year, *Der tog*’s Adella Kean discussed suffrage thirty-three times in her columns “*Fun a froy tsu froyen*” and “*In der froyen velt.*” The big difference between *Der tog* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, on the one hand, and *Forverts* on the other, lay in the fact that the two non-Socialist newspapers actually

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<sup>618</sup> Eliash, “A froy als prezident,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 4, 1916.

<sup>619</sup> Eliash, “Di froy tsum nayem yohr,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 1, 1917.

dealt with the issues, arguments and controversies surrounding women's suffrage, the consequences of the changing roles of women, especially during the War, and the anxieties surrounding those changes. *Forverts* reported on suffrage while the other papers argued for it. In "World of Our Mothers: The Women's Page of the *Jewish Daily Forward*," another article based on the 1919 *Forverts*, Sellers writes "[e]ven in 1919, a peak year for socialist and feminist activism, it did not urge readers to make radical changes in their values or lifestyles, nor did it emphasize conflict either between the classes or the sexes."<sup>621</sup>

The ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 did not mean that all women obtained full citizenship. Those married to men not yet citizens would have to wait for passage of the Cable Act in 1922, which allowed women to regain American citizenship lost because a 1907 statute mandated those married to non-Americans would take the citizenship of their husbands.<sup>622</sup> *Froyen zhurnal* noted that those losing their American citizenship included the dancer Isadora Duncan, after she married a Russian poet.<sup>623</sup> The journals in this study followed this

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<sup>620</sup> Sellers, "Defining Socialist Womanhood," 423, 423n.22.

<sup>621</sup> Sellers, "World of Our Mothers," 97.

<sup>622</sup> Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 14, 123, 124; see, also, "Nit ale froyen velen hoben shtim-rekht in niu-york," *Forverts*, February 3, 1918; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, January 23, 1921; Adella Kean, "In der froyen velt," *Der tog*, February 23, 1921; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, March 7, 1920; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, December 25, 1921; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, January 16, 1922; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, July 9, 1922.

<sup>623</sup> Bertha Broido, "In der froyen velt," *Froyen zhurnal* (April 1923): 6.

situation closely.<sup>624</sup> The new law effectively uncoupled marital from citizenship status.<sup>625</sup>

The granting of suffrage, whether at the State or Federal level, led to direct appeals to immigrant women to get naturalized and become citizens, so that they could participate in public life.<sup>626</sup> *Forverts* encouraged women to do so by registering as Socialists.<sup>627</sup> Winning suffrage was not enough: “Enroll as a voter in the Socialist Party!”<sup>628</sup> In 1920, *Forverts* asked “And how will Jewish women vote this year?” and answered “Oh, certainly like their husbands, for the Socialist ticket . . .”<sup>629</sup> At an International Socialist Congress in 1925, *Forverts* reported that

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<sup>624</sup> Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (July 1922): 6.

<sup>625</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, October 8, 1922; Adella Kean, “Khasene hoben mit a fremden vet shoyn di amerikaner froy nit makhen oys,” *Der tog*, October 25, 1922; Bertha Broido, “In der froyen velt,” *Froyen zhurnal* (November 1922): 9; Jacob Podalier, “Der nayer gezets vegen sitizenship fun froyen in amerika,” *Forverts*, November 5, 1922; S. P. Kremer, “Toyzende froyen in amerika zeynen itster ‘ohn a land,’” *Forverts*, January 10, 1924; Dr. Herman Frank, “Vos froyen darfen visen vegen birger-rekht,” *Forverts*, September 6, 1925.

<sup>626</sup> Hillel Rogoff, “Der zieg fun di froyen in niu york steyt,” *Forverts*, November 9, 1917; Hillel Rogoff, “Di naye froyen vouters un di politishe parteyen,” *Forverts*, November 18, 1917; “Tsu froyen un meydelekh,” *Forverts*, March 18, 1918; “Froyen, kumt tsu dize mitingen! Men vet aykh dort erklehren vegen ayer spetsielen froyen-enrolment tog,” *Forverts*, May 21, 1918; B. Levitan, “Farvos diezer shabos iz azoy vikhtig far froyen,” *Forverts*, May 23, 1918; “Di froy in dem itsigen vahl-kampf,” *Forverts*, October 17, 1918; “Vert birger!” *Forverts*, April 15, 1919; “Di froyen heren nit oyf tsu arbeyten in di interesen fun zeyer geshlekht,” *Der tog*, May 16, 1921; Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, November 2, 1921; Mordecai Dantzis, “Di idishe froy als birgerin,” *Froyen zhurnal* (September 1922): 51.

<sup>627</sup> “‘Damen-rekht’ un froyen rekht,” *Forverts*, November 11, 1917; “Froyen, diezen shabos iz ayer enrolment tog,” *Forverts*, May 23, 1918; Sadie Vinokur, “Di idishe froyen vuterins velen entshayden dem speshel elekshon,” *Forverts*, August 22, 1920.

<sup>628</sup> “Froyen, nehmt zikh ernst!” *Forverts*, May 17, 1918.

<sup>629</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, October 31, 1920.

“Comrade Hillquit understands very well the great role which women must play in the Socialist movement . . .”<sup>630</sup>

Turning from Party to country, in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, V. Grinberg wrote that voting demonstrated loyalty to the land, and not to vote was a crime against the country and your fellow citizens.<sup>631</sup> Grinburg stated that Jews had a particular duty to vote:

There is certainly a debt and a duty for us Jews to go to the polls, because we Jews have, in addition to the general interests of the country, to worry about our own interests. The immigration *gzeyre* [“evil decree”] with its total severity upon the Jewish population of the land and which can be changed by another administration; the Ku Klux Klan which can be a danger for us if they attain power and raise their heads; the antisemitic voices and the agitation of [Henry] Ford which rings across the land--all of these things demand of us that we go to the polls to fulfill our debt and duty to the land and to our people at least as far as it is within our capacity to create a free, liberal administration in the country, in agreement with the old traditions of the United States.<sup>632</sup>

Adella Kean in the liberal *Der tog* encouraged the formation of Jewish women’s clubs in thirty-one “*Froyen klobs*” [“Women’s Clubs”] columns which would, among other things, inform women about public issues in the interests of making intelligent voting decisions.<sup>633</sup> Rae Malis, also in *Der tog*, sought to educate

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<sup>630</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, November 29, 1925.

<sup>631</sup> V. Grinberg, “Dos ferbrekhen fun nit vouten,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 9, 1924.

<sup>632</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>633</sup> Out of thirty-one “*Froyen klobs*” columns in *Der tog*, Adella Kean wrote about the advantages of such clubs for the exercise of suffrage in five: February 4, 1920, February 18, 1920, March 12, 1920, March 19, 1920 and April 29, 1920; Adella Kean, “Farvos froyen nemen zeyere naye birger flikhten a sakh ernster vi di mener,” *Der tog*, October 4, 1922.

women in basic civics.<sup>634</sup> These columns dealt with everything from age and residential qualifications to the importance of understanding parliamentary rules and newspaper reports. Malis, writing as “Rae Raskin” (artist and illustrator Saul Raskin was her husband) in *Froyen zshurnal*, announced that similar articles for the magazine would be nonpartisan in tone, not recommending particular political parties or candidates. Instead, by giving instructions in civics she would also demonstrate how governing related “. . . to the woman, her home economics, her and her family’s health, raising her children, etc.”<sup>635</sup> Subsequent articles dealt with the organization of the Federal and State governments, how to set up a woman’s club, and the basic parliamentary organization of such a club.<sup>636</sup> *Forverts* noted in 1921 that even “in such conservative women’s magazines as the *Ladies’ Home Journal*,” the most important item of discussion was education.<sup>637</sup> The publications in this study reminded readers of their duty to obtain citizenship and vote, giving basic

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<sup>634</sup> Rae Malis, “Tsu vos darf men vouten?” *Der tog*, January 30, 1918; Rae Malis, “Vi unzer regirung iz tsusamengeshtelt,” *Der tog*, February 7, 1918; Rae Malis, “Sonim fun di froyen-vouters,” *Der tog*, February 13, 1918; Rae Malis, “Ken yeder sitizen vouten?” *Der tog*, February 20, 1918; Ray Malis, “Di noytikeyt far froyen tsu farshtehn vos iz azoyns organizatsion,” *Der tog*, March 1, 1918; Rae Malis, “Froyen-morgen iz praymeris,” *Der tog*, September 2, 1918; see, also, “Ver, ven un vi azoy men shtimt bay di elekshons,” *Forverts*, July 14, 1918; Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, December 6, 1920.

<sup>635</sup> Rae Raskin, “Tsu vos darfen froyen politik?” *Froyen zhurnal* (December 1922): 16.

<sup>636</sup> Rae Raskin, “Dos gezets un di froy,” *Froyen zhurnal* (January 1923): 11; Rae Raskin, “Di organizirte froy,” *Froyen zhurnal* (February 1923): 11; Rae Raskin, “Vi azoy men grindet an organizatsie,” *Froyen zhurnal* (March 1923): 8. Additional promised articles on parliamentary procedure did not appear.

<sup>637</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, January 23, 1921.

information in addition to civics lessons.<sup>638</sup>

In conclusion, with the exception of *Froyen zhuurnal*, which began publication after the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, and *American Jewess* with its ambivalent stance concerning women's suffrage, all three daily papers and the short-lived *Di froyen-velt* supported the campaign for a woman's right to vote. Where the various publications differed lay in the extent to which they supported suffrage, and the arguments for such support.

*Di froyen-velt* stated that “[w]hat women demand is nothing more and nothing less than recognition that women are also human beings.”<sup>639</sup> The Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* simultaneously held that no differences existed between women and men, and that woman's “essential nature” would make a huge difference. Thus, in November of 1916, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* writer Ezra wrote that he hoped women's votes would bring a finer, cleaner side to politics and had no doubt that women would play a decisive role for world peace.<sup>640</sup> The liberal, non-religious *Der tog* simultaneously held opposite positions on the issue of the essential characteristics of men and women. D. M. Hermalin maintained a view of women as innately nurturing and peaceful, while Rosa Lebensboym pointed to contrary evidence. Both

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<sup>638</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, March 31, 1918; “Froyen birgerins fun nyu york vos vilen shtimen in di praymeris darfen zikh unbedingt enrolen morgen,” *Der tog*, May 24, 1918; “Sotsialisten arranzshiren klasen far froyen,” *Forverts*, June 22, 1918; Adella Kean, “In der froyen velt,” *Der tog*, September 6, 1920; “Velkhe froyen kenen veren amerikaner birgerins?” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 5, 1924; “Citizenship and Jewish Education,” *Der tog*, June 19, 1924; I. L. Brill, “Getting Out the Vote,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 3, 1924.

<sup>639</sup> “Der kampf far di rekhte fun froyen,” *Di froyen-velt*, February 8, 1914.

<sup>640</sup> Ezra, “Der froyen-vout in dem kampein,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 5, 1916.

nevertheless supported suffrage.

Suffrage and citizenship, the former enabling the latter, allowed women to participate in political parties, lawmaking, political choosing leadership and representation. The struggle for women's suffrage meant fighting for an individual right of citizenship. As noted earlier in the chapter, women's suffrage served to increase the size of ethnic voting blocs, strengthening claims for rights and privileges attendant to citizenship. An immigrant could also show allegiance to America and American ideals through the celebration of American civic holidays. Such commemorations could enable immigrants not only to participate, but to participate in ways which legitimized their presence in the country as "true Americans." The next chapter discusses American secular holidays, the ways in which the publications under review sought to observe these American events, and employ them in a way that demonstrated not only their right to be in the United States, but asserted legitimacy based on various claims, ranging from being present at the discovery of the country to a congruence of beliefs.

## Chapter 6: **Holidays and Homemaking Myths**



This chapter examines the role civic holidays played in the arenas of acculturation and identity development. Jewish holidays celebrated Jewish religious or national themes; publishers, writers, editors and others often expressed their beliefs in Americanization through celebration of American secular holidays. This was a manifestation of what the scholar Lawrence H. Fuchs referred to as the “civic religion.”<sup>641</sup> Whether native-born or an immigrant, all could embrace the “civic religion” to demonstrate their belief in America and Americanism. Embracing the civic religion went beyond celebrating holidays. Writers often did so in ways designed to highlight how truly American they were. Historian Jonathan Sarna noted that after the American Revolution, new synagogues began organizing themselves with written “constitutions,” often containing “bills of rights,” led by elected “presidents,” rather than by the pre-Revolutionary *parnas*. The writers of these “Constitutions” employed the phraseology of the new Republic: “The new documents contained large dollops of republican rhetoric and permitted more democracy within the synagogue than before.”<sup>642</sup> Fuchs, giving scholar Robert N. Bellah credit for developing the concept, noted Bellah’s observation that “all of the major biblical archetypes and symbols lay behind the civil religion of the U. S.: the Exodus, chosen people, promised land, New Jerusalem, sacrificial death and rebirth. The Americans evolved their own prophets, martyrs, sacred events and places, rituals and symbols.”<sup>643</sup>

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<sup>641</sup> Lawrence H. Fuchs, *The American Kaleidoscope: Race, Ethnicity, and the Civic Culture* (Middleton, CN: Wesleyan University Press, 1990, 1995), 5.

<sup>642</sup> Sarna, “The Evolution of the American Synagogue,” 218.

<sup>643</sup> Fuchs, *The American Kaleidoscope*, 499n.99.

The editors and writers of the newspapers in this study participated in spreading this civic religion by the way they celebrated American civic holidays in their pages. Among the magazines, *Di froyen-velt* and *Froyen zhurnal* did not mention these holidays at all; *American Jewess* had only one reference to the Fourth of July, comparing it with Passover, and two references to Thanksgiving.<sup>644</sup> The three newspapers in this study emphasized the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington, the Fourth of July, Columbus Day, and Thanksgiving, whereas other holidays received less comment. Discussions about these holidays and how immigrants should relate to them usually appeared on the editorial pages,<sup>645</sup> throughout the papers, often in the women's section as well.<sup>646</sup> Thus, even though the article may not have mentioned women, the placement of that article in the section designated for women signaled to readers that the publishers and editors

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<sup>644</sup> "The Woman Who Talks," *American Jewess* (August 1895): 256; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (April 1897): 47-48; "November," *American Jewess* (November 1895): 66; "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (December 1895): 174.

<sup>645</sup> See, e.g., "Der idisher thenksgiving," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 27, 1914; "Amerikaner frayheynt un di iden," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 4, 1915; "Vert birger!" *Der tog*, July 4, 1915; "Loyalti," *Forverts*, June 18, 1918; "Amerika's frayheyts-tog," *Forverts*, July 4, 1918; "Amerikanizeyshon dei," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 11, 1915; "Dekoreyshon," *Der tog*, May 30, 1919; J. Chaikin, "Linkoln der vanderer," *Der tog*, February 12, 1922; "Der leson fun dem ferten dzshulai," *Forverts*, July 4, 1923; "1776-1922," *Der tog*, July 4, 1922; J. Chaikin, "Der ferter yuli als yontef far eyngvanderte," *Der tog*, July 4, 1922; "Eybrehem Linkoln," *Forverts*, February 12, 1924.

<sup>646</sup> See, e.g., "Jews as Patriots," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 8, 1914; "Americanization Day," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 17, 1915; H., "Di bedaytung fun unzer hayntiken thenksgiving," *Der tog*, November 25, 1915; Sadie Vinokur, "Oyb ihr zayt a mame, zayt ihr haynt a kenigin," *Forverts*, May 8, 1921; R., "Der yon-tef fun 'deklareyshon ov independens,'" *Der tog*, July 4, 1921; Ch. "Tsum hayntigen 'ferten dzshulai,'" *Der tog*, July 4, 1922; Ch. "Tsum yontef fun ferten dzshulai," *Der tog*, July 4, 1923; I. L. Bril, "The Living Lincoln," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1925.

deemed the topic to be of female interest. As demonstrated in the next chapter, the role of women became explicit when Jewish holidays were the subject of discussion.

Articles and editorials on American civic holidays employed one or more of the following elements: (1) treatment of the holidays without any reference to Jews or Jewish culture, similar to the manner in which non-immigrant publications dealt with the holidays; (2) drawing a connection to the Jewish past or present; (3) discussions using Jewish cultural or religious terminology; and (4) in ways designed to assert Jewish citizenship or belonging.

The February 1918 editorial “*Eybraham linkoln*” [“Abraham Lincoln”] in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* demonstrated the treatment of a civic holiday and an American hero without express reference to Jews or Jewish culture, the first category, as it wrote about Lincoln, “[o]ne of the greatest Americans, if not the greatest”:

The land that destroyed slavery, the land which opened wide her doors for the oppressed of all nations, the land which is the home of all who come here fleeing despotism and tyranny, will now, let us be certain, be successful in showing the way for all of humanity how to establish an eternal peace to make impossible a catastrophe such as that which is presently occurring.<sup>647</sup>

All three newspapers, whether the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the Socialist *Forverts*, or the liberal *Der tog* featured similar laudatory editorials and articles about Lincoln and George Washington with the only thing “Jewish” about them being the language in which they appeared or, if in English, that the newspaper

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<sup>647</sup> “*Eybraham linkoln*,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1918.

was part of the Jewish press.<sup>648</sup> *Forverts* and *Der tog* also displayed familiar icons, sacred symbols, of the two presidents, such as Gilbert Stuart's portrait of Washington and Alexander Gardner's photographs of Lincoln, as well as pictures of Lincoln's log cabin.<sup>649</sup> Like non-Jewish publications, the Yiddish newspapers often presented the past through the eyes of the present, as in a 1924 Lincoln Day editorial appearing in the Socialist *Forverts* which attacked the Republican Party which today, it said, ". . . would declare Abraham Lincoln an undesirable citizen and the Ku Klux Klan would smear him with tar and feathers."<sup>650</sup> The newspaper compared Republican pride in the Lincoln of the past with its politicians of the present:

The Republican Party is proud that Lincoln was a Republican president. Certainly they may be proud, Abraham Lincoln was a great

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<sup>648</sup> "Der gayst fun linkoln," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1919; Ben Zion, "Eybrehem linkoln's geburt-tog," *Forverts*, February 12, 1919; "Eybraham linkoln," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1920; "Linkoln hot gemakht di emes'e amerika," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 13, 1922; Hillel Rogoff, "Eybrehem linkoln," *Forverts*, February 11, 1923; Hillel Rogoff, "Dzshordzsh vashington," *Forverts*, February 18, 1923, B. Ts. Goldberg, "Dzordzsh vashington," *Der tog*, February 22, 1923; "Groyse menshen belangen tsu der velt," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1924; "Eyb linkoln," *Der tog*, February 12, 1925; "The Heritage of Abraham Lincoln," *Der tog*, February 12, 1925; see, also, Lauren B. Strauss, "Images with Teeth: The Political Influence of Artwork in American Yiddish Periodicals, 1910s-1930s," in *Yiddish in America: Essays on Yiddish Culture in the Golden Land*, edited by Edward S. Shapiro (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 2008), 37, on the idolization of Washington and Lincoln in the Yiddish press.

<sup>649</sup> "Der foter fun di fareynigte shtaten," *Der tog*, February 22, 1918; "Dzshordzsh vashington, der foter fun amerikaner republik," *Der tog*, February 22, 1920; "Kunst baylage," *Forverts*, February 11, 1923; "Kunst baylage," *Forverts*, February 18, 1923; "Dzshordzsh vashington, zayn froy martu un zeyer hoyz in mount vernon," *Der tog*, February 22, 1923; on sacredness of symbols to emphasize group solidarity, see, Rebecca E. Klatch, "Of Means & Masters: Political Symbolism & Symbolic Action," *Polity* 21, 1 (Autumn 1988): 139-142.

<sup>650</sup> "Eybrehem linkoln," *Forverts*, February 12, 1924.

*yikhes* [“pedigree” for the Republicans], but would the Republican Party of today, the party of [Henry Cabot] Lodge, [Calvin] Coolidge, of [Albert Baird] Cummins - the party of Great Capital, and Wall Street, nominate a man such as Abraham Lincoln? Would it even nominate him for the post of Congressman?

The editorial stated that the Democrats were less hypocritical than the Republicans, stating that “[t]he Democrats in the South, who in their hearts remain the same slave-drivers as during the time of Abraham Lincoln, to this day still oppose remembering the liberator of the black slaves without a curse on their lips.” In concluding, the editorial reminded readers of Lincoln’s ideals:

Abraham Lincoln was certainly one of the greatest men America has brought forth. In truth, to celebrate his birthday is something which can be done by those who fight for the liberation of the oppressed, for the destruction of every form of slavery, those who fight against the slavery of class rule, in whose name the Republican Party rules today.<sup>651</sup>

The Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* sounded more like its arch-enemy, the Socialist *Forverts*, in a 1923 English-language article by I. L. Brill, who wrote how Lincoln typified America:

O, for Abraham Lincoln today! Just for four brief years and what a difference there would be in our America!

Abraham Lincoln was a hundred percent American. The present narrow-minded, bigoted, faction-creating, union-destroying, so-called one hundred percent pseudo-American patriots who generally make a good living out of their “patriotism” need not quote Lincoln. He

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<sup>651</sup> “Eybrehem linkoln,” *Forverts*, February 12, 1924; see, also, “Vi linkoln’s andenken iz farshvekht gevoren,” *Forverts*, February 14, 1920; “Nokh a linkoln noytig,” *Der tog*, February 12, 1923; “Linkoln tog,” *Forverts*, February 12, 1925.

would have disowned them.<sup>652</sup>

In *Der tog*, Hermalin drew a connection to the Jewish past and future, the second category, in “*Tsvey pasende yomim tovim hoben zikh bagegent*” [“Two Fitting Holidays Meet Each Other”]. In 1918, Thanksgiving occurred on the first night of Chanuka, and Hermalin wrote about the Jewish army of the Maccabees battling to victory. Jews in the future would have their own land. With regard to America, Hermalin demonstrated an imaginative flair as he wrote:

Today is Thanksgiving. A pure, original American holiday. It was conducted by English colonists after much suffering from need, hunger, want, sickness, cold and wild Indians. When they were victorious over all of these bad elements, they called together Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Mohammedans and what were then called Agnostics, and all together thanked God for the favors He had done them.<sup>653</sup>

In “*Memorial dei*” [“Memorial Day”] of 1915 *Dos yidishes tageblatt* drew a connection between the American past and the Jewish present:

It is a beautiful *minhag* [“custom, rite”] conducted in America to have one day of the year in which to remember the souls of those who fell in the war for freedom, in the Civil War. As citizens of this land we remember like our neighbors the heroes who fell in every great American war.

But the American Memorial Day reminds us of our own fresh pain this year, our great national misfortune: it reminds us of our

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<sup>652</sup> I. L. Bril, “Lincoln,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1923; see, also, “*Dos groyse vort*,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1923.

<sup>653</sup> H., “*Tsvey pasende yomim tovim hoben zikh bagegent*,” *Der tog*, November 28, 1918.

brothers--  
all of

Jewish sons, Jewish fathers who have littered with their bodies  
the battlefields of Europe.

It reminds us of our *kdoyshim* ["martyrs"] who fell not with rifles in their hands, but were murdered by their own neighbors for whom our brothers are fighting, they were murdered by Russian hands, on Russian shores in the "Fatherland" in which they, the victims, were born.

For all horrible deeds in a war one can find something similar in the past, but it is impossible to find in the past an example of a country which *murders her own subjects* who are fighting for her with courage and resolution.

The Memorial Day of the great American nation reminds us that the "*kehiles hakodesh shamasro nefashes al kidesh hashem*" ["the community of souls who handed themselves over for the Sanctification of the Name," i.e., the martyred dead] stand before our eyes, the three-fourths of a million Jews fighting in all the armies, and our hearts, every Jewish heart, melts for the Jewish murder victims and for the widows and orphans who remain in misery and need.

It would not do to make a comparison between the American Memorial Day and the situation of the Jewish dead in this war. The Americans have fought for freedom, but what have the Russian Jews fought for? Their blood has been spilled in vain.

The Americans fought for their country, but for whom have the four hundred thousand Jewish soldiers in Russia fought for? For a country which persecutes them, and gives them no human rights.<sup>654</sup>

The manner in which *Dos yidishes tageblatt* wrote about the sacrifice of American soldiers on the battlefields and the murder of Jewish soldiers and civilians emphasized both a commitment to American values and a rejection of Russian values. To die for the ideal of human rights was positive; to be killed by those or for those opposed to human rights represented waste.

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<sup>654</sup> "Memorial dei," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 31, 1915.

In explaining the significance of the various American holidays to immigrant readers, authors very often used Jewish ethnic-religious terminology, the third category. Using Jewish cultural, religious or historical references served either to strengthen or subvert the significance of whatever was being discussed. The Socialist *Forverts* carried the photograph of a turkey with a caption referring to the bird as an “American *kapores*,” a reference to a pre-Yom Kippur custom [*shlogn kapores*] whereby a man would symbolically transfer his sins to a chicken, which would then be whirled about his head three times with a prayer making the unlucky fowl his “scape-chicken.”<sup>655</sup> The caption went on to note that “Thanksgiving is *Yom Kippur* [“Day of Atonement”] for turkeys.”<sup>656</sup>

Chaim Lieberman in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, referred to Abraham Lincoln as “a *neyrtomed* [the Eternal Light in a synagogue] for all generations in all times.”<sup>657</sup> A 1920 Independence Day editorial in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* stated that it was not only a day for celebration, but one for *khashbon-hanefesh* [“spiritual stocktaking”] as well.<sup>658</sup> A. Sofer used Passover references in regard to the Fourth of July: “It is the ‘*pesakh*’ [Passover] of the American people, its ‘*yetsies-mitsraim*’ [the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt] . . .”<sup>659</sup>

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<sup>655</sup> Ronald L. Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2004), 223.

<sup>656</sup> “Interesante naves in bilder,” *Forverts*, November 27, 1924.

<sup>657</sup> Chaim Lieberman, “Eybrahem linkoln,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 12, 1917.

<sup>658</sup> “Lomir zikh erklehren independent,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 5, 1920.

<sup>659</sup> A. Sofer, ““Di deklereyshon ov independens’ un ihr bedaytung in der geshikhte,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 3, 1917; see, also, “Thenksgiving dei,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 26, 1925.



J. Chaikin in *Der tog* noted that on the Fourth of July, the American people “. . . received their *toyre* [Torah], known as the Declaration of Independence.”<sup>660</sup> The first Thanksgiving, Chaikin wrote, occurred *far mayse breyshes* [“before the story of ‘in the beginning, i.e. Genesis”]<sup>661</sup>

“*Vashington’s geburtstog*” [“Washington’s Birthday”] demonstrates the use of Jewish sacred terminology in writing about a secular holiday, as Jews indulged in the “. . . worship of ‘god-like Washington.”<sup>662</sup> The author of the editorial in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* invoked the destruction of the Temple and the Exodus:

Our simple and honest great grandfathers [living in Russia and Poland 182 years earlier] concerned themselves very little with American politics and probably did not imagine that a new home was being created for Jews, a home better than all homes which we had had since the *khurbn beys ha-medresh* [“the destruction of the Temple” in Jerusalem].

The birthday of George Washington is just as dear to us as to the grandchildren of every American who helped Washington in his war against England. He was not just the liberator of the American colonists, he was also *our* liberator, he freed us before we were born and took us out before we were in this world.

What would Jews do if not for America? What would we do without this place which saved us from persecution and poverty? This is hard to imagine. But it is fortunate for the unfortunate Jewish people that America became free and the home where we fled from our “homes.”

But Washington’s birthday is a *simkhe* [“a festive occasion”] not just because we are Jews and not because we are Americans, but because

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<sup>660</sup> Ch., “Tsum yontef fun ferten dzshulay,” *Der tog*, July 4, 1923.

<sup>661</sup> Ch., “Thenksiving, der yon-tef fun arbeyt,” *Der tog*, November 30, 1922.

<sup>662</sup> Fuchs, *The American Kaleidoscope*, 20.

we are *human beings*. and as human beings we ought to celebrate when progress grows. Washington helped cause the growth of progress. The founding of the American Republic was the strongest celebration for freedom, for brotherhood and for popular rule. It was the severest blow to despotism and without a doubt was one of the most important events in world history, immediately after *yetsies-mitsraim* [“the Exodus from Egypt”].

The editorial continued with praise of Washington’s humility in not remaining president and called upon the country to forever remain a haven for the oppressed.<sup>663</sup>

The editorial made the claim “. . . he freed us before we were born . . .”; Lawrence Fuchs noted Abraham Lincoln’s 1860 comment that even immigrants whose ancestors had not been in America at the time of the Revolution “felt a part of us” because of identification with the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Fuchs continues:

Passover  
birth. . . . Lincoln understood that generations of newcomers from all parts of the globe spoke of “our forefathers who brought forth this nation” as if they were truly related to the heroes of the Revolution and the early republic, just as Jews and non-Jewish guests speak on of coming out of Egypt from slavery as if they were physically there in the desert about fifteen hundred years before Christ’s American ideals and principles were universal and could be claimed by anyone, as could the symbols, rituals, and heroes connected to those ideals.<sup>664</sup>

The origins of Flag Day represented an example of the fourth category, the assertion of belongingness to America. I. L. Bril, writing for the English-language department on the woman’s page of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* in 1924, discussed the allegedly Jewish origins of Flag Day:

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<sup>663</sup> “Vashington’s geburtstog,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 23, 1914.

<sup>664</sup> Fuchs, *The American Kaleidoscope*, 67. As concerns Fuch’s reference to

Flag Day as a means of fostering love and devotion to country owes its inception to the efforts of Mr. Ben Alheimer, banker and philanthropist, formerly of St. Louis, Mo. and now president of Temple Beth El of New York. We open our consideration of the day to be observed tomorrow by this statement because Mr. Alheimer is an immigrant Jew, though he has been here for half a century or perhaps more. The fact remains though that Mr. Alheimer came from foreign shores and this bears out the contention that Americans by adoption, by choice, love their country not a whit less, and often even more than the native-born.<sup>665</sup>

This article, appearing in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, and Alheimer's role in proposing a patriotic American holiday to President Woodrow Wilson, trumped the fact that he was a prominent Reform Jew. In addition to serving as president of Temple Beth El, he also held a high leadership post in the Reform Union of American Hebrew Congregations.<sup>666</sup> Flag Day had as many contenders for founders of the holiday as Columbus Day had ethnic group claimants. Mrs. Laura B. Prisk claimed to be the "Mother of National Flag Day," while Dr. Bernard J. Cirkand, William T. Kerr and Ben Alheimer were among those claiming to be the "Father of Flag Day." Other names in the running for official parent are \_Colonel James A. Moss, Dwight Braman, George Balch, and Leroy Van Horn.<sup>667</sup> Whatever the truth may have been about a Jewish founder of an American holiday, the claim's importance lies in how it

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"Christ's birth," *lehavdil* ["you should pardon the comparison . . ."]

<sup>665</sup> I. L. Bril, "Hail the Flag!" *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 13, 1924.

<sup>666</sup> Sefton D. Temkin, "Alheimer, Benjamin," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 2, edited by \_Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 776.

<sup>667</sup> The Lincoln Highway National Museum & Archives, [www.lincoln-highway-museum.org/PFDP/PD230-Index.html](http://www.lincoln-highway-museum.org/PFDP/PD230-Index.html) (accessed February 14, 2009); see, also, "The History of Flag Day," [www.usflag.org/history/flagday.html](http://www.usflag.org/history/flagday.html) (accessed February 14, 2009).

sought to legitimate an Jewish presence in America.

Immigrants asserted a sense of belonging to America through the use of what American Studies scholar Ørm Øverland, in *Immigrant Minds, American Identities*, termed “homemaking myths,” the stories immigrant groups tell to establish their bona fides as “true” Americans, rather than foreigners.<sup>668</sup> These myths often come into play in the course of celebrating or even originating civic holidays. These myths fall into at least four categories: (1) foundational, (2) sacrificial, (3) ideological, and (4) heroic.<sup>669</sup>

*Foundational* myths, Øverland’s first category, place the immigrant group at the beginning of the nation’s history, for example being here with or before the Pilgrims, discovering America, or having an integral part in Colonial society.<sup>670</sup> Those claiming Columbus as one of their own included Americans of Italian, Hispanic, Greek, Jewish and Armenian origin.<sup>671</sup> The liberal *Der tog*, in a 1915 lead editorial, “*Kolombus tog*” [“Columbus Day”], combined a foundational myth with other elements of dealing with civic holidays when it called upon the “American people . . . [to] celebrate the day of the discoverer of America with the greatest parade and luster . . .” It went on to note that only a few states celebrated Columbus Day, and that in New York it was “reckoned more as an Italian *yontif* [“holiday”] than as a

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<sup>668</sup> Ørm Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities: Making the United States Home, 1870-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

<sup>669</sup> Ibid., 7, 8, 19; see, also, Amy Adamczyk, “On Thanksgiving and Collective Memory: Constructing the American Tradition,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 15, 3 (September 2002): 343-365.

<sup>670</sup> See, e.g., “The Jewish Spirit in the American Revolution,” *Der tog*, July 4, 1925.

<sup>671</sup> Øverland, *Immigrant Minds, American Identities*, 9-10, 63-66.

general one . . .” The editorial speculated as to why this was the case: “Perhaps the American Yankees don’t want to give so much *koved* [“honor”] to a ‘foreigner,’ perhaps they’re smiling that at the strong likelihood that this ‘immigrant,’ the discoverer of America, was a Jew.”

The editorial continued:

It makes no difference if Columbus was a Spaniard, a pure Italian or even a Jew, he still discovered a land which over time has become the land of freedom for all oppressed and persecuted peoples, and especially for the Jewish people, which has been more oppressed and persecuted than any other.

where In America, the Jews, after their long, bitter *goles* [the Diaspora] has finally found a free and peaceful home. America is the only land the Jew feels fully at home. And not just the Jew naturalized here, who has officially and legally acquired citizenship rights, but even the immigrant right off the boat last night, who feels he has come to a land where he can feel *heimish* [“comfortable,” in an “at-home” way] and already feels that way.<sup>672</sup>

This editorial employed Jewish cultural language--*koved*, *heimish*, *goles*--with references to the Jewish past and present plus the foundational myth. In “The Cornerstone,” a 1920 English-language editorial in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the author considered Columbus Day, ethnicity and Americanism:

. . . The institution of Columbus Day as a legal holiday was due to the wish to placate voters of Italian descent, to appease their demand for special recognition. Be that as it may, the fact now remains that Columbus Day is an American holiday. Aside from the parades and the unfurling of flags, there is deeper significance to this Columbus Day. American citizens of Italian extraction wanted to have permanent evidence of their particular contribution to America-- Christopher Columbus was an Italian--and other races too have given

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<sup>672</sup> “Kolombus tog,” *Der tog*, October 12, 1915.

much of value to this land. What is called Americanism is an amalgam, the greatest part of which has been idealism and must always remain idealism.<sup>673</sup>

While rejecting the notion that Columbus himself was Jewish, various articles in this study noted that Jews financed his journey and that a Jewish doctor, translator, and five other Jews were on board his vessels. In 1915, the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, for example, reprinted an editorial from New York's *Evening Journal*, "Was Columbus a Jew?" After claiming that two of his uncles had died for being Jewish, and that the financier of the expedition who refused interest on his money, was likewise Jewish, the editorial's writer claimed that Columbus's mother belonged to the "well-known Jewish family-the Ponti Rossi." After talking about the "husky Christian sailors," the editorial continued:

The chief navigator was a Jew. And the surgeon whom Columbus took along was a Jew. And his translator was a Jew--not that the translator did any good among the Indians, for nobody could translate their speech. Columbus took this Jewish translator and other Jews because he was bound for the East, as he thought, going to land in Asia, and he wanted men with Oriental knowledge.<sup>674</sup>

Several days later Getzel Zelikowitch wrote about the furor in the Italian-American press concerning the editorial quoted above. "The *khutspe* [“nerve,” “gall,” “impudence”] of the editor’ thundered the Italian papers - to take away from us the great and wonderful Italian and give him to the Jews.” Noting that such claims were hardly news in the Yiddish press, but they were “like a bombshell in

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<sup>673</sup> “The Cornerstone,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 12, 1920.

<sup>674</sup> “Was Colombus a Jew?” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 14, 1915; see, also, “Di

the Italian quarter.” In dismissing Italian-American furor, Zelikowitch wrote:

We Jews are not concerned with the entire debate, because our people are so chock-full of wonderful *gdoylim* [“prominent men”], from the *nevim* [“Prophets”] to the latest Jewish *geoynim* [“geniuses”], philosophers and artists, to the point that we are quite easy-going about whether the *mezumen* [the number of men present which determines the type of after-meal prayer] of great people or not. There have been so many Jewish geniuses in history that we are highly pleased with those about whom we know already, and Jews are the last people on God’s earth who ought to go looking for fame in foreign gardens and foreign *kvorim* [“graves”]! <sup>675</sup>

In 1925, a writer in the Socialist *Forverts*, had a somewhat different view on claims of Jewish ancestry for Columbus, labeling obsession with ethnic ancestry as proof of an inferiority complex. “If any Jew considers it a credit to belong to the same race as Benny Leonard, Georg Brandes, Sid Terris, Lord Reading, Morris Hillquit, Sam Gompers, Irving Berlin, Karl Marx and Franklin P. Adams, he must by the same token assume responsibility for belonging to the same race as Joe and Morris Diamond, Lefty Looie, and every crook, gangster, exploiter of labor, gambler and general low down character who likewise sports Jewish blood.”<sup>676</sup> Two years earlier, *Forverts* had placed side-by-side, in a Passover editorial, Moses and “. . . the second great Jew--Karl Marx. . .”<sup>677</sup> Karl Marx presented a problem for Jewish Socialists: not only had he converted to Christianity as a teenager, his writings

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idishe hilf tsu kolumbus’en,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 13, 1919.

<sup>675</sup> G. Zelikowitch, “Di ‘ideshkeyt’ fun kolombus un der italianisher brugz,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 17, 1915.

<sup>676</sup> W. M. F., “Was Columbus a Jew?” *Forverts*, September 6, 1925.

<sup>677</sup> “Pesakh,” *Forverts*, April 1, 1923.

contained outright antisemitic accusations.<sup>678</sup>

In *American Jewess*, Countess Annie de Montagu recalled Jewish antiquity in America in an article entitled “The Old Hebrew Cemeteries of New York.”<sup>679</sup>

Dating back to the time when New York was New Amsterdam, most of the gravestones she observed bore dates ranging from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. A janitor, she wrote, claimed the existence of one gravestone dated 1476 which she did not see, a gravestone which would have predated the arrival of Columbus.<sup>680</sup>

*Sacrificial* myths, Øverland’s second category, claimed belonging based on blood spilled for America and its ideals.<sup>681</sup> In the midst of World War One, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* wrote “It has often been said--and the truth of the assertion was never more apparent, that the immigrant understands America and Americanism far better than the native born of native, way back [sic] stock. He is certainly more willing and much readier to labor and suffer for the preservation of the principles and ideals for which the Republic stands than the multi-millionaire or social climber who goes to Europe in search of a title.”<sup>682</sup> In a 1918 piece entitled “Loyalty,” *Forverts*,

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<sup>678</sup> Schneier Zalman Levenberg, “Marx, Karl Heinrich,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 11, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 1074.

<sup>679</sup> Countess Annie de Montague, “The Old Hebrew Cemeteries of New York,” *American Jewess* (November 1896): 58-61.

<sup>680</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>681</sup> “Jews as Patriots,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 6, 1914; H., “Iden thuen nit zeyer flikht in dekoreysheon dey,” *Der tog*, May 30, 1916; Ch., “Tsum hayntigen ‘ferten dzshulai’,” *Der tog*, July 4, 1922; “The Jewish Spirit in the American Revolution,” *Der tog*, July 4, 1925.

<sup>682</sup> “Who Are True Americans,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 9, 1917.



the ideological arch-enemy of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, made the same point, as it referred to the large numbers of Jews in the ranks of the fighting and the fallen. As to those within that group who were Socialists, the paper stated that “[f]ighting against a Kaiser, despotism and robbery from outside and true to making the land free of capitalist despotism and robbery inside, makes the world safer for democracy in the economic and political sense--this is the socialist struggle; to be true to this struggle--this is the best loyalty to the American people and humanity in its entirety.”<sup>683</sup>

Øverland’s third category, *ideological* myths, claim a congruence of American ideals and the ideals of the immigrant group.<sup>684</sup> *American Jewess*, a supporter of Reform Judaism, reported on a lecture to the Hebrew Technical Alliance in which the speaker called not only for his listeners to conform in their “manners, habits and customs” to those of Americans, “...but physically, as far as possible, should we assimilate with the people among whom we live.” The speaker went on to say that “[t]he Ten Commandments and Americanism run parallel with each other. He who follows the former closely will not run counter to the latter.”<sup>685</sup>

The Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* seemed to have specialized in this kind of argument. Chaim Lieberman wrote that “The *tanakh* [Torah] is the *cornerstone* upon which was erected the entire structure of the *American Republic*.”<sup>686</sup> Ray Brill

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<sup>683</sup> “Loyalti,” *Forverts*, June 18, 1918.

<sup>684</sup> See, also, Jonathan D. Sarna, “The Cult of Synthesis in American Jewish Culture,” *Jewish Social Studies* (N.S.) 5, 1-2 (Fall 1998/Winter 1999): 52-79.

<sup>685</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (June 1896): 493.

<sup>686</sup> Chaim Lieberman, “Di virkung fun tanakh oyf der amerikaner republik,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 28, 1917.

claimed that when Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, "...he, too, was actuated by the Passover thought that all men were created to be free."<sup>687</sup> In 1915, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* connected Independence Day with the ongoing struggle for women's suffrage in its editorial "*Amerikaner frayheynt un di iden*" ["American Freedom and the Jews"], noting that "[w]e remember the principles of the Declaration are the principles of the *tanakh* from Judaism."<sup>688</sup> The Socialist *Forverts* likewise referred to the Declaration of Independence as America's holy Torah.<sup>689</sup>

A 1921 editorial, "*A idisher thenksgiving*" ["A Jewish Thanksgiving"] in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* combined a number of elements to commemorate the holiday: the use of Jewish religious and ethnic terms, reference to the Jewish past and present, and ideological similarity:

Among all of the beautiful things America has taken from the old Jewish *minhag* *tanakh*, the wonder-book of the world, is the sublime ["custom," "rite"] of Thanksgiving.

It is written in the *khumesh* ["Pentateuch"] that the Jews, when they come to *Eretz Yisroel* ["the land of Israel"], they should take the fruits of the land, that they should come to Jerusalem and go to the *kohan* ["High Priest"] to give thanks to God...

The Jew coming to Jerusalem remembered the troubles he had in *mitsraim* [Egypt] and afterwards ought to give thanks to "the One who brought us to this place and gave us this place flowing with milk and honey."

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<sup>687</sup> Ray Bril, "Passover and the Spirit of America," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 30, 1923.

<sup>688</sup> "Amerikaner frayheynt un di iden," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 4, 1915; see, also, Morris Kramer, "Independence Day," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 4, 1916.

<sup>689</sup> "Der hayntiger yom-tov," *Forverts*, July 4, 1921.

These *psukim* [“verses from a Jewish holy book,” plural of *posek*] from the *tanakh* the Pilgrims kept in mind when they came to America from the European lands and made a home for themselves. They remembered the troubles they had suffered in the *mitsraim*-lands from which they came and and showed their thanks for coming to a land of milk and honey--America.

That which the Pilgrims felt, all immigrants feel who come here and celebrate their first Thanksgiving. Everyone no matter where they were born, now on American shores he says with a full mouth the ancient *posek*:

“And He brought us to this place and He gave us this land.”

After talking about America as the land of peace, freedom, milk and honey, the editorial writer concluded with heartfelt thanks to America as a country providing freedom, opportunity and refuge from persecution.<sup>690</sup>

In 1925, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* wrote in much the same vein in its editorial, “*Thanksgiving dei*” [“Thanksgiving Day”]. Incorporating Jewish religious and ethnic terminology, the editorial asserted that Jewish immigrants, more than any other American inhabitants, understood the true meaning of the holiday, for the Pilgrims took the idea of Thanksgiving from the *tanakh* [Torah]:

In the *khumesh* [“the Pentateuch’] we read: ”And you will come into the land--and you will settle there, and take from her the first fruits of the land--and put them into a basket and you should say--they treated us badly in *mitstraim* [“Egypt”], they tortured us--and God took us from *mitsraim*--and He brought us to this place and he gave us land, a land of milk and honey--and you should be satisfied with the good things which He has given you---” The first colonists who came here from England where they suffered persecution for their religious convictions loved to compare themselves to the Jews of yesteryear and imitated them by adopting Thanksgiving Day according to the form

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<sup>690</sup> “A idisher thenksiving,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 24, 1921.

found in the Bible.<sup>691</sup>

*Heroic* myths, Øverland's fourth and final category, placed immigrants in the center of American historical events.<sup>692</sup> The financial assistance of the Polish Jew Haym Solomon to the American Revolution received much attention when the Federation of Polish Jews started to raise funds for a monument to his memory in 1924.<sup>693</sup> Born in Poland in 1740, Solomon came to the American colonies in 1775. A supplier to the American army, he was imprisoned by the British for the first time in 1776. Arrested a second time, he was sentenced to death by the British. He escaped and went to Philadelphia, seat of the Continental Congress. Robert Morris, in charge of the new government's finances, made Solomon his assistant, or as *Dos yidishes tageblatt* put it, "Solomon the 'green' Jew, the Polish Jew, *khas vekholile* ["God perish the thought!"] not a Nordic, was appointed by Robert Morris to conduct the fund," rather than entering the American Army. Speaking several languages, Solomon brought in financial resources from Holland, France and Spain to fund the Revolution. He incurred large personal debts in the course of his dealings on behalf of the new government; in addition to helping the government, he supplied funds to individuals such as James Monroe, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson, among

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<sup>691</sup> "Thenksgiving dei," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 26, 1925; see, also, "Der idisher thenksgiving," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 27, 1914.

<sup>692</sup> See, e.g., "Jews as Patriots," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 6, 1914; "The Jewish Spirit in the American Revolution," *Der tog*, July 4, 1925.

<sup>693</sup> On Solomon, see, Leo Hershkowitz, "Salomon (Solomon), Haym (1740-1785)," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 14 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 695-696; Jacob Rader Marcus, "United States of America," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 15 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 1591.

others. He was never repaid and died in 1785.<sup>694</sup>

An anonymous writer combined all four categories of these myths (foundational, sacrificial, ideological, heroic) in an English-language Fourth of July article in 1925 *Der tog*, “The Jewish Spirit in the American Revolution,” citing the roles of the “large number of Jewish officers and men in the American army; of the Franks, David and Isaac, of the Pintos, and the de la Mottas who have given their all to the cause of American freedom; of Hayim Solomon, the Jew from Poland, who sacrificed his entire fortune to provide the necessary sinews of war to save the struggling American democracy.” The piece continued:

“at least Protestant chiefly from New. history

President Coolidge, quoting the historian Lecky, with full approval, said that “the Hebraic mortar cemented the foundations of American democracy,” and he instanced the Bible as a potent infusion in drawing together the feeling of the widely scattered and divergent American communities. But the President might also have quoted Lecky on another and perhaps more vital point. “It is,” says Leck [sic], an historical fact that in the great majority of instances the defenders of civil liberty derived their political principles the Old Testament, and the defenders of despotism, from the The tradition of freedom that was strong throughout Jewish history formed a favorite topic of the one, the unreserved submission inculcated by St. Paul, of the other.”

After discussing the wide influence of Scripture among those living in Colonial and Revolutionary America, the article turned to Washington:

But George Washington himself bore the best testimony to the

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<sup>694</sup> Sh. Erdberg, “Der monument fun khaym solomon,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 20, 1924; “A denkmal far khaym solomon,” *Der tog*, April 4, 1925; “A monument far khaym solomon,” *Der tog*, May 8, 1925; Z. Tigel, “Der poylishe id vos hot geholfen amerike in noyt,” *Der tog*, May 17, 1925.

influence of the Jewish spirit on the American Revolution when, in a letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Savannah, Georgia, and couched in beautiful Biblical terms, he gave utterance to these sentiments.

“May the same wonder-working Deity who long since delivered the Hebrews from their Egyptian oppressors, planted them in the promised land, whose providential agency has lately been conspicuous in establishing these United States as an independent nation, still continue to water them with the dews of Heaven, and make the inhabitants of every denomination participate in the temporal and spiritual blessings of that people whose God is Jehovah.”<sup>695</sup>

One major American holiday, Christmas, attracted relatively little attention in this study’s publications in the period under review: three mentions in *American Jewess*; one in *Di froyen-velt*; none, outside of fiction, in *Froyen zhurnal*<sup>696</sup>; seven mentions in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* from 1914 to 1921; five in *Forverts*, one a cartoon<sup>697</sup>; and sixteen in *Der tog* from 1915 to 1925, one an editorial cartoon depicting a baby with a globe-head looking into a Christmas stocking stuffed with a cannon, bayonets and a sword.<sup>698</sup> Christmas articles and editorials did not even appear annually. By way of contrast, to name but three holidays, Abraham Lincoln’s birthday and Passover received no fewer than forty-three articles and editorials for each holiday; Chanuka received thirty-six. Historian Jonathan D. Sarna noted that “[s]ubstantial Jewish opposition to public celebrations of Christmas arose only in more recent decades,” particularly in the wake of the Holocaust and the establishment

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<sup>695</sup> “The Jewish Spirit in the American Revolution,” *Der tog*, July 4, 1925.

<sup>696</sup> For treatment of Christmas in a serialized novel in *Froyen zhurnal* by L. Bertenson, see, Shapiro, “Another Guest at the Wedding,” 69-73.

<sup>697</sup> Zagat, “Ot iz er!” *Forverts*, December 25, 1919 (cartoon).

<sup>698</sup> J. Foshko, “Fun di alte kristmes matones...,” *Der tog*, December 25, 1924 (cartoon).

of Israel as a Jewish State in 1948.<sup>699</sup>

The very factors that served as the “pull” for Jewish immigration to America--the development of a consumer economy, mass production, an integrated transportation system, all in the wake of the Civil War--had served to secularize and commercialize Christmas by the early 1920s, largely detaching it from its religious moorings.<sup>700</sup> Jews approached Christmas with very divided feelings. Between the 1870s and the late 1890s, many Jews, including Emma Lazarus in 1877 and Reform Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch in 1897, approached the holiday in universal, non-religious terms.<sup>701</sup> Ideology affected how various publications viewed Christmas. In 1898, the Reform *American Jewess* commented on what apparently was an annual occurrence: “We wonder what sensational pulpit-pounders will this time agitate for a union of Christmas and Chanuka; of the Menorah and the Christmas-tree.”<sup>702</sup> In 1904, the Socialist *Forverts*, with its opposition to all forms of nationalism, asked “Who says we haven’t Americanized?” and answered that purchasing Christmas gifts

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<sup>699</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, “Is Judaism Compatible with American Civil Religion? The Problem of Christmas and the ‘National Faith,’” in *Religion and the Life of the Nation: American Recoveries*, edited by Rowland A. Sherrill (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 164.

<sup>700</sup> Russell W. Belk, “Materialism and the Making of the Modern American Christmas,” in *Unwrapping Christmas*, edited by Daniel Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 89-90; Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance*, 72-73; William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (NY: Random House, Inc., 1993), 88; ; see, also, Jenna Weissman Joselit, “‘Merry Chanuka’: The Changing Holiday Practices of American Jews, 1880-1950,” in *The Uses of Tradition: Jewish Continuity in the Modern Era*, edited by Jack Wertheimer (NY: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 304-305.

<sup>701</sup> Sarna, “Is Judaism Compatible,” 158-159.

<sup>702</sup> “Editorials,” *American Jewess* (December 1898): 40.

proved “one is not a greenhorn.”<sup>703</sup> In 1917, the *Forverts* carried an advertisement for Ab. Cahan’s novel decrying assimilation, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, as “. . . the best Christmas or New Year’s present,”<sup>704</sup> an advertisement the other newspapers did not repeat. But Jewish acceptance had its limits. In 1906, Jewish parents kept 25,000 students out of school to protest the actions of an elementary school principal in Brownsville who sought to inject Christian religiosity into school celebrations.<sup>705</sup> A decade later, Chaim Lieberman recalled that battle in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*:

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It seems as if the Jews of America have given up in the struggle against Christmas songs and Christmas festivities and Christmas literature in the public schools. We remember some years ago how things raged in New York when it became known that in the schools of this great city where over a quarter of the inhabitants are Jews, they were decorating Christmas trees and giving Christmas a warm home. The entire Jewish community rose up in a mighty protest which also had an effect on the Jews in other cities.

Lieberman argued that Jewish parents, educators and community leaders had forgotten something very important: that Jewish children did not wish to become Christians. We should be with, not against, our children:

. . . in reality our Jewish children are *martyrs*. They struggle with all of their might against the non-Jewish influences in the schools and in the environment. Nobody has portrayed the difficult spiritual pain

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<sup>703</sup> Quoted in Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance*, 77, and Jenna Weissman Joselit, *The Wonders of America : Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950* (NY: Hill and Wang, 1994), 232.

<sup>704</sup> Advertisement, *The Rise of David Levinsky*, *Forverts*, December 13, 1917.

<sup>705</sup> Leonard Bloom, “A Successful Jewish Boycott of the New York City Public Schools,” *American Jewish History* 80, 2 (December 1980): 180-188.



through the                      which our children live through during the time they go  
melting pot. . .

Lieberman ended his piece by calling upon parents to use the home to bolster Jewishness and act against Christian influence all throughout the year.<sup>706</sup>

Interestingly, a number of articles pointed to the pagan origins of Christmas. In 1921, Dr. A. Vald wrote two articles to this effect in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, noting in the second that very pious Christians decry Christmas trees because of paganism.<sup>707</sup> Other articles pointed to Christian hypocrisy. A number of pieces denounced Jewish celebration of Christmas as a sign of assimilation to Christian ways, especially when compared to the anti-assimilationist message of Chanuka. Many writers mixed elements of all these themes in dealing with Christmas.

I. L. Bril, in “What the Observance of Christmas Entails,” a 1915 article in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, attacked Jewish members of New York’s Board of Education for their arguments that the celebration of Christmas in the public schools marked a “Winter Festival” rather than Christmas, and that Christmas had lost its religious significance:

All arguments that Christmas is the season of “peace on earth and goodwill to all men” and therefore is a universal festival, carrying a message to all mankind, is mere quibbling. A Jewish prophet

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<sup>706</sup> Chaim Lieberman, “Dos idishe hoyz un kristmas,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 18, 1916.

<sup>707</sup> Dr. A. Vald, “Fun vanen nehmt zikh kristmes?” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 22, 1921; Dr. A. Vald, “Frume kristen gegen kristmes boym,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 23, 1921.

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before the [sic] Christianity taught the doctrines of universal and of the “fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.” To put it plainly and simply and emphatically, the observance of Christmas by Jews entails the denial of Judaism. Let there be no mistake about that. Christmas has NOT “lost a great deal of its religious significance.” Any Christian child on the street, any Christian man or woman you meet will tell you that it is a Holy day, sacred in the Church calendar. The robbing of its sacred character by some de-Judaized Jews does not make it less holy to the believing Christian. As to its being the “Winter Festival,” let us dismiss that excuse.

Bril concluded by saying that “[t]he observance of Christmas by Jews is tantamount to disloyalty to the Jewish religion.”<sup>708</sup>

In a bitterly antiwar lead editorial, “*Frieden oyf der erd?*” [“Peace on Earth?”], in 1915, *Der tog* noted that in this war of Christians, Christian people were shooting Christian cannons with Christian bullets and making Christian orphans of Christian families. “On the holy *yontif* of the Christian people, the holy *yontif* Christmas, on which peace is promised for the world, the Christian people murdered and slaughtered one another as in the rest of the days of this year.”<sup>709</sup> Denunciations of Christian hypocrisy did not end with the cessation of the Great War. In *Der tog*’s English-language editorial of 1922, “Peace and Goodwill to All,” the paper asked “How much Christmas is left when the Ku Klux Klan had its say?”<sup>710</sup>

In 1920, *Der tog*’s Hermalin tackled the question of whether Jews should join

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<sup>708</sup> I. L. Bril, “What the Observance of Christmas Entails,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 16, 1915; “The Candles or the Tree,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 16, 1914; “Gegen dem kristmas-aynflus,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 22, 1915.

<sup>709</sup> “Frieden oyf der erd?” *Der tog*, December 26, 1915; see, also, H., “Der grester hombog in der velt,” *Der tog*, January 1, 1917; “Kristmes-’der yom-tov fun frieden’,” *Forverts*, December 25, 1918; Ch., “Amolige kristen vegen kristmes,” *Der tog*, December 24, 1923; “Sholem oyf der erd,” *Der tog*, December 25, 1924.

<sup>710</sup> “Peace and Goodwill to All,” *Der tog*, December 25, 1922.

in Christmas celebrations. Arguing that if this meant that Jews would be celebrating the birth of Jesus, the answer was “no.” After all, Zarathustra, Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed and their followers never did the Jews any harm. How can people with self-respect celebrate when the source of their wounds have not healed? Yet, this is America, and American Christians had nothing to do with pogroms in the Old World. Further, Christmas need not have any particular spiritual connotations. Hermalin advanced a view of Christmas as non-harmful as long as religion did not intrude:

You understand, an American Christian, our good neighbor, can obviously not comprehend why a Jew shouldn't honor even the legend of a Santa Claus--a kind of *Elyahu hanovi, lehavdil* [“the Prophet Elijah,” (believed to miraculously save Jews from distress) you should pardon the comparison]--for children.

And what's with the Christmas tree? Our children visit their Christian friends, see the Christmas trees with the beautiful lights, colorful blossoms and so forth. And they are shaking with joy. How can we rob innocent children of such innocent pleasures?

Our children certainly should not have to sing Christian religious songs in the public schools in honor of Christmas. We must respect religions that are against our convictions. But when the entire country declares Christmas as a *yontif*, a day of “*gud tshir*” [“good cheer”]; when our Christian neighbors greet us with “*meri kristmes*” [“Merry Christmas”] and smile in a good spirit, then it is our holy duty to answer and also smile in a good spirit, because our neighbors don't understand in their innocence, why a Jew should feel anger.

The Jew, who doesn't work on Christmas because the factory is closed anyway, who doesn't go to business, because the offices aren't open, ought not be so “particular” if his wife makes a special “Christmas dinner.”

The practice of sending presents, it seems to us, as between Jew and Jew, is not pretty and tactful ... But receiving a present from a Christian friend and also sending the Christian friend a Christmas

present is entirely proper.

Noting that a New York preacher spoke out against both Santa Claus and Christmas trees because of their pagan origin, Jews ought not have Christmas trees in their homes; Hermalin suggested Chanuka gifts as a method of offsetting the influence of Christmas. “And so,” Hermalin continued, “the Jew lives with troubles in *goles* [“exile,” i.e. the Diaspora]...” The end of the article invoked the newspaper’s nationalist ideology: “The entire question can only be solved when Jews live in a Jewish land where they will have their own holidays, religious and national, and not be afraid of hurting the next one’s feelings.”<sup>711</sup> *Forverts*, in 1925, would also refer to Santa Claus as “the *eliyahu hanovi* [Prophet Elijah] of American children,” in an article about department store Santas.<sup>712</sup>

In Jewish folklore, the prophet Elijah did not play a “Santa Claus” role, although, during the Passover service, it reads that God, before the final redemption of the Jewish people, would send Elijah back to “turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.”<sup>713</sup> The Elijah of folklore wandered the earth fighting for social justice.<sup>714</sup>

This chapter has examined how the publications in this study approached the secular holidays which constituted America’s “civic religion.” Acculturation was

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<sup>711</sup> H., “Iden un kristmes in amerika,” *Der tog*, December 13, 1920.

<sup>712</sup> Bernard Brand, “Santa kloz, der eliyahu hanovi fun di amerikaner kinder,” *Forverts*, December 13, 1925.

<sup>713</sup> Moses Aberbach, “Elijah--In the Aggadah,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 6 (Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 635.

<sup>714</sup> Dov Noy, “Elijah--In Jewish Folklore,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 6 (Jerusalem, Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 638.

not contingent upon citizenship, and even those not yet citizens could engage in celebrating these holidays, demonstrating how “American” they were. The journals examined herein sought to interpret America and Americanism through their own ideological frameworks. Writers employed various methods of connection between the two cultures, Jewish and American, often employing a congruence of the two. Whether by using Jewish religious terminology, or claiming Jewish presence or that Jewish and “American” beliefs and values had an interchangeable quality, the message remained the same: Jews belonged in America.

While setting forth a Jewish-American approach to American holidays, they did not set forth a Jewish role in those holidays beyond allegiance and belief, either for women or men. Beyond Hermalin’s example of the Jewish wife preparing a Christmas dinner for her husband, Jewish women remain conspicuously absent from discussions of American civic holidays. The next chapter deals with Jewish holidays and for these holidays, the publications went from passive observance to active participation. In doing so, writers set forth specific roles for women and often sought to redefine the holidays along woman-centered lines. The role of women in the religious arena in America made such reinterpretations possible and plausible.

## Chapter 7: Holy Days and Home-making

The last chapter concerned the American holiday half of the hyphenated Jewish-American identity; this chapter examines the Jewish holiday half of that hyphenated identity. In moving from secular American holidays to Jewish holidays, whether defined as religious, ethnic or national, most of the publications in this study switched the tone concerning female participation from passive observation to active participation or even a redefinition of the holidays in question, often making them women-centered. Writers for the journals under review, whether standing for Socialism or Zionism, Reform or Orthodox Judaism, all took for granted that a woman's primary duties should concern home and family. But, as noted in the chapter concerning ideology, women played a greater role in America than in Eastern Europe. Here the "feminization of religion" served as the context for Rebecca Gratz's pioneering educational efforts in 1819. The "feminization of religion" began after the American Revolution within Protestant churches where women took a larger and larger role, although not within the hierarchy of the churches. They acted as volunteers and supporters.<sup>715</sup> In an article dealing with women's writing, historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese stated that "[i]n practice, the feminization of religion meant the growing dominance of women among church members and hence a growing

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<sup>715</sup> Barbara Welter, "The Feminization of American Religion: 1800-1860," in *Insights and Parallels: Problems and Issues of American Social History*, edited by William L. O'Neill (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1973), 307-309.

pressure upon ministers to appeal to their sensibilities.”<sup>716</sup>

Jewish holidays, in this study, will be discussed as they occur in the Western secular calendar, according to “American time.” In Eastern Europe, where the immigrants, or most of them, lived in majority-Jewish enclaves, they experienced these holidays in “Jewish time,” that is, according to the lunar calendar.<sup>717</sup> Thus holidays celebrated between January and September will receive treatment before dealing with the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, which occurs in September-October. Jewish holidays appear within the Western calendar in the following order: Purim in March-April, Passover in March-April, Shevuos in May-June, Tisha b’Av in July-August, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkos and Simchas Torah in September-October, and finally, Chanuka in November-December.<sup>718</sup> A 1925 article by I. L. Brill, a rabbi and writer for the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, illustrates the extent to which “American time” predominated, when he wrote of Passover “. . . the first of the three great holy days in the Jewish calendar. . .”<sup>719</sup>

Purim celebrates Jewish deliverance from destruction by thwarting the plans of Haman, the grand vizier of Persia’s King Ahasuerus sometime before the 2nd century C.E. At Haman’s urging, the King issued a decree which would have led to

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<sup>716</sup> Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, “Religion, Meaning, and Identity in Women’s Writing,” *Common Knowledge* 14, 1 (2008): 21, <http://commonknowledge.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/14/1/16.pdf> (accessed February 14, 2009).

<sup>717</sup> Kassow, “Introduction,” 12.

<sup>718</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 165.

<sup>719</sup> I. L. Brill, “The Ascent of Man,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 8, 1925.

the massacre of all Jews throughout Persia in retaliation, the story goes, for the refusal of the Jew Mordecai to bow to Haman. Mordecai, the cousin and foster father of Esther, who replaced Queen Vashti at Ahasuerus's court, convinced Esther to intercede with the king who, until that moment, did not know that his new Queen was Jewish. The plan worked, and the tables turned, as Haman ended his life dangling from the gallows he had erected for the Jews. The Purim story, or *megile* ["the Scroll" of Esther] while celebrating victory, also pointed to the precarious position of Jews in the Diaspora.<sup>720</sup>

Most writers placed Queen Esther, and by extension Jewish women, at the center of the Purim story. D. M. Hermalin represented an exception; in a 1919 article in *Der tog*, he asserted that Purim celebrated victory over the Haman's of the world.<sup>721</sup> The Socialist *Forverts* carried no Purim articles in the period under review.

Purim, however, presented a problem for Jewish writers, since Queen Esther's ability to convince the King not to follow through with the plans of his grand vizier rested on her marital relationship to the King. Intermarriage, otherwise frowned upon, served, in the Purim context, as the means by which the Jewish community was saved from destruction. *American Jewess* dealt with this issue in 1898 by stating that "[t]he history of Queen Esther is a sweet and lovely illustration of Jewish loyalty even after she had ceased to be a daughter of Juda [sic]. Intermarriage did not have the power to destroy her love for her people."<sup>722</sup>

Writing in 1914, *Di froyen-velt* declared "Her sacrifice was--marriage with

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<sup>720</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 254-255, 256.

<sup>721</sup> H., "A natsionaler yontif ohn religion," *Der tog*, March 16, 1919.



King Ahasuerus.” The article noted that the Jews of Persia lived in a very tolerant environment, to the point that both national and religious feelings had disappeared, a lesson, the article states, of history. Her uncle remained true to his people. The author notes the irony of Esther, the “true Jewish daughter” being King Ahasuerus’s choice to replace the murdered Vashti. Unlike others brought before Ahasuerus, Esther had no desire to wear the crown. Who could know the pain in the soul of this “bird in a gilded cage”? Once Mordecai told her of Haman’s plans, she knew what she had to do to save her people. “And she did this because--she was a Jewish daughter!”<sup>723</sup>

Ella Blum, *Froyen zhurnal*’s regular writer on religious topics, argued that Jewish women were fundamentally different from non-Jews, being more pious and responsible than others. Esther serves as Blum’s example, a simple Jewish orphan who rose to become Queen of Persia. Comparing her to non-Jewish women who also rose from simple backgrounds, such as Madame Dubarry or Catherine the Great, Blum notes that Esther felt no need to indulge in the “love scandals” prevalent in “harem lands” such as Persia, or in the court of Catherine the Great in Russia; nor did she feel any need to engage in the political intrigues of a Madame Dubarry. Esther remained as quiet and calm as when she lived in her uncle Mordecai’s home, exercising no influence and avoiding the temptation to mix into political matters. Not until approached by her uncle about Haman’s plans did she act. Blum ends by stating that as long as Jews remain an *am oylom* [“eternal people”], Jewish women

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<sup>722</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (March 1898): 296.

<sup>723</sup> “Ester hamalke-di idishe tokhter,” *Di froyen-velt*, March 15, 1914.

will continue to possess Jewish modesty, character and restraint.<sup>724</sup> Blum thus avoided dealing with the assimilation issue.

A number of English-language articles and editorials in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* placed Esther in the context of Jewish nationalism and female sacrifice. In 1917, I. L. Bril, ignoring the assimilation question, wrote:

To-day is the fast of Esther. It is Jewish Woman's Day. For out of the story of Purim there stands forth this Jewish Queen who at the critical moment stepped to the fore and saved her people.

Esther, or to call her by her other name, Hadassah, was a heroine if ever there was one . . .

After a long quote from Jessie E. Sampter's poem "Hadassah," Bril extolled Jewish women for their faith and nobility, stating:

Jewish women are builders. Notice the work of that great organization of the Jewish women of this country, the Hadassah. They understand the soul of our people and they are interpreting the innermost thought of the Jew . . .<sup>725</sup>

Seven years later he faced the assimilation issue head-on in a 1924 piece, "Purim and Assimilation," in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*:

The Feast of Purim is the protest against assimilation. The commentaries on the Book of Esther, read on Purim in the synagogues, tell us that Jews living under the sway of King Ahasuerus were subjected to the danger of a mass-massacre because they so

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<sup>724</sup> Ella Blum, "Purim un di idishe froy," *Froyen zhurnal* (March 1923): 5.

<sup>725</sup> I. L. Bril, "Jewish Womanhood," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 7, 1917; see, also, "The Jewish Woman," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 25, 1918; "Ester lebt nokh," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, February 26, 1918; "To Every Jewess," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 2, 1920.

readily accepted the invitation to the king's feast which lasted in Shushan, the capital city, for seven days and that they ate of forbidden food and yielded to the spirit of assimilation. The one great notable exception was Mordecai, the Jew, who refused to bow before Haman. Only when the decree that the Jews were to be killed had gone forth, did the Jews realize their insecurity and come to know that it is always hazardous to place one's confidence in princes.

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There is nothing new in the story as told in the Book of Esther. Before the advent of Haman there were Jews who played at assimilation only to learn that they were paying a bitter and heavy price for their backslidings [sic]. In the days of Haman there were such Jews and ever since there have been Jews of that caliber. venture the suggestion that the Book of Esther, which cannot be classed as a religious work since it does not mention even once the name of God, was included in the books of the Bible in order that succeeding generations of Jews might take to heart the futility of even dreaming of assimilation.

After continuing the discussion on the evils of assimilation, namely the continuing hatred of Christians for a poseur and the derision of Jews for an apostate, convert and traitor, Brill returns to the theme of the "Book of Esther," ignoring the fact that she was married to Ahasuerus; intermarriage, like the name of God in the Book of Esther, nowhere appears in his account. "The Book is named after Esther because she became the instrument of the salvation of her people."<sup>726</sup>

Most writers tied Purim to female sacrifice.<sup>727</sup> In 1914, an editorial in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* turned from female sacrifice in the past to persecution in the present when it asked "Vu iz der hamen far frenk's tlied?" ["Where Is the Haman for Frank's Gallows?"], referring to the lynch mob atmosphere surrounding the trial of Jewish pencil manufacturer Leo Frank for the murder of a factory worker, Mary

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<sup>726</sup> I. L. Brill, "Purim and Assimilation," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 20, 1924.

<sup>727</sup> Rabbi David, Philipson, "The Ideal Jewess," *American Jewess* (March 1897): 257; Blum, "Purim un di idische froy," 5.

Phagan, in Georgia.<sup>728</sup> In 1915, atmosphere became actuality when a mob lynched Frank in Augusta, Georgia.<sup>729</sup>

At least one author tied the Purim story to the struggle for women's rights. Eliash, in "*Ester un vashti*" ["Esther and Vashti"], evaluated not only Esther's role, but that of Vashti's, writing in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* in March 1917, that the "... caprice of the drunken, foolish despot of Persia" caused Vashti's star to fall and Esther's star to rise. Eliash turns to Vashti, even though "[a] bad word about Vashti cannot be found anywhere." According to the Purim story, a drunken King Ahasuerus had ordered Vashti to appear before a crowd to see her beauty, a demand Vashti refused:

Wits called Vashti a "suffragette." She certainly wasn't a suffragette, in the modern sense of the word. But according to the conceptions of those times she was a dangerous representative of women's rights. Ahasuerus's people really frightened him concerning this, that Vashti's deeds would be a bad example for the wives of the country not to follow their husbands.<sup>730</sup>

Most writers interpreted Purim in terms of female sacrifice on behalf of a Jewish population in danger. Whether from a persecutor or from assimilation, the "Jewish daughter" did her duty upon receiving the call. Most authors ignored the

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<sup>728</sup> "Vu iz der hamen far frenk's tliēs?" *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 11, 1914.

<sup>729</sup> Harry Golden, "Frank, Leo Max," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 7, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder, 73-74 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971).

<sup>730</sup> Eliash, "Ester un vashti," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 7, 1917; see, also, "Di megile ester," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 11, 1915; Albert I. Baumgarten, "Scroll of Esther," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 14, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder, 1047 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971).

uncomfortable implications of intermarriage as being the means by which Esther could act effectively.

The next holiday, Passover, or Pesakh, is the most celebrated of all Jewish holidays. It commemorates the Exodus under the leadership of Moses from Egyptian bondage by the Pharaoh and resulted in receiving the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai: thus the birth of the Jewish people, the Jewish nation, and the Jewish religion. After the Jews crossed the Red Sea, Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, led the other women in dancing and playing musical instruments. Passover also serves as the Spring agricultural holiday.<sup>731</sup>

The Passover story is told especially for the benefit of children, and as such has a particularly home-centered character. “The seder is more than a mere narration of the historical account of the Exodus. Instead, ‘in every generation one is obligated to look upon oneself as if he or she personally had gone forth out of Egypt’ (Pes. 10:5).”<sup>732</sup> The Passover Seder features not only the story of the Exodus, but particular foods bearing ceremonial significance. Thus, the unleavened bread, *matzo*, symbolizes the kind of bread (which did not have time to rise) at the time of the Exodus. Horseradish as a *maror* [bitter herb] symbolizes the bitterness of Jewish slavery. These are but two of the special Passover dishes consumed at the seder table. The home-centered and family nature of Passover placed special duties upon women as those responsible for the ceremonial food preparation. This particular responsibility represented a continuity between Old and New World Jewish life, for

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<sup>731</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 264-265.

<sup>732</sup> *Ibid.*, 274.

there as well as here, Jewish women had the responsibility of making the special foods for the holiday.

Attitudes towards Passover presented a great diversity in the periodicals under study, dependent on their ideologies. A large number of articles and editorials interpreted the holiday as generally celebrating the birth of the Jewish religion, people, or nation.<sup>733</sup> Others saw Passover as a universal celebration of freedom.<sup>734</sup> Often writers combined these various perspectives. Not surprisingly, *Forverts* conceived of the holiday in non-religious, Socialist terms.<sup>735</sup>

The Reform magazine *American Jewess*, in an 1898 editorial, extolled the lessening of ritual observance in Jewish festivals, because an understanding has grown concerning the “true” Jewish mission, which is its faith:

strict . . . Such a faith, for which Israel is even to-day persecuted, can not be an illusion or a phantom of the imagination. Such a faith is innate conviction, consciousness of a sublime truth, a truth which could not be undermined, either by scientific research or by sophistic philosophy. For that reason Judaism does not depend upon the observation of religious forms. This is manifested by the fact that in spite of the laxity with which ceremonies are kept by the present generation of Jews, Judaism is to-day more vigorous, more active, more magnificent than it has been since prophets and priests ceased to guard its spiritual treasures.

The editorial considered the changes in Jewish ritual observance:

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<sup>733</sup> "Fun mitsraim biz itster," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 2, 1918; H., "Der yontef far der gantser menshheyt," *Der tog*, April 15, 1919; "Pesakh," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 18, 1924.

<sup>734</sup> H. L. Shternfeld, "Pesakh oyf der elter," *Der tog*, April 6, 1917; "Kum du der groyser yontef," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 22, 1921; "Der yontef fun bafrayung," *Forverts*, April 20, 1924.

<sup>735</sup> Litvak, "Der yontef fun frayheyt," *Forverts*, April 7, 1917.

If we listen to the Masoos [sic] bakers we hear that the sale of unleavened bread is diminishing from year to year. Pessach [sic] was, therefore, we presume, less observed by the eating of Masoos than by the recognition and proclamation that the all-powerful Ruler of the universe had shattered the chains of a people destined to glory among the nations of the earth.<sup>736</sup>

proclaim His

In the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, I. L. Brill combined a religious view of Passover with an attack on Charles Darwin's theory of evolution in "The Ascent of Man" in 1925:

That is why we call the Festival of Pesach, the first of the three great holy days in the Jewish calendar, the Festival of the Ascent of Man. Beginning with the going out from Egypt of the Children of Israel a new era had its inception in the history of mankind. Man was not pulled down, the word went forth. Man was to go up. Man was not to be degraded.

And this thought is triumphing. There has come a revulsion of feeling against the animalization of man, against the hateful philosophy of the survival of the fittest, meaning thereby the subjugation of the weak, the enthronement of brute force.<sup>737</sup>

Some authors concentrated on the woman's role in Passover preparation. In 1897, Rebecca A. Altman, in the Reform *American Jewess*, wrote about Passover preparation, the meaning of the holiday, and indirectly the role of gender:

. . . Like the typical 'Ashas chail' ["Woman of Valor"] she considers it her duty to give her home an appearance suitable for so great an occasion, an act which, during the year she partly neglected, of course, but which is absolutely a necessity in a case where the Passover feast is observed strictly according to the ancient rituals. As

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<sup>736</sup> "Editorial," *American Jewess* (April 1898): 44-45.

<sup>737</sup> I. L. Brill, "The Ascent of Man," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 8, 1925.

regards work, the Jewish woman is not easily surrendered to fatigue, or exhaustion, but toils and works notwithstanding her feebleness. The Jewish husband, as man of business and bread winner, naturally, is not expected to offer any assistance excepting in a pecuniary way; here again he is neither candid nor liberal, and trusts only that his wife's methods of economy will render the affair a success. The wife, with the gentleness and leniency of her sex, strives to make the best of it; endures all possible hardship in order that she may obtain her victory. Thus, thanks only to the heroism of the Jewish woman, the laborious and onerous task of making the Passover Feast an enjoyable event is bravely mastered, and overcome, without the expenditure of any great amount of the hard earned wealth.<sup>738</sup>

The reference to the Jewish husband as breadwinner ties in with the “feminization of religion”: in the period after the American Revolution, the increased prominence of women within Protestant churches while their husbands focused on business, led as well to another division of roles. Men involved themselves in the world of commerce, with “filthy lucre,” while women, clean and pure, stayed on pedestals of purity.<sup>739</sup> Such a view also connected with concepts of an ideal middle class life-style.

In a 1916 article celebrating the connections between Passover hygiene as “a Jewish science” based on the Talmud, Eliash, in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, ends by invoking the double miracle for 1916: “. . . the miracle of *yetsies mitsraim* [the Exodus from Egypt] again, and the miracle again that we are not feeling the blazing fire of the annihilating war.”<sup>740</sup>

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<sup>738</sup> Rebecca A. Altman, “The Feast of Freedom,” *American Jewess* (May 1897): 85; see, also, “Tsurik tsum seder,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 17, 1916; Ch., “Ven men greyt zikh tsum yom tov pesakh,” *Der tog*, April 11, 1924; R., “Pesakh--der yom tov fun der familie,” *Der tog*, April 9, 1925; see, also, Hyman, “Gender and the Shaping of Modern Jewish Identities,” 155.

<sup>739</sup> Cf. Welter, “The Feminization of American Religion.” 308.

<sup>740</sup> Eliash, “Pesakh un raynlikhkeyt,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 13, 1916; see,



*Forverts*, hardly a religious or nationalist publication, sought to reinterpret Passover along Socialist lines.<sup>741</sup> In a 1923 editorial written while Prohibition ruled the land, it began by reducing the holiday to its culinary aspects, although the particular foods mentioned--dumplings and potato pancakes--did not constitute customary Passover dishes, perhaps a measure of how far those involved with *Forverts* had strayed from Jewish religious and cultural tradition:

The best of all Jewish holidays. A minimum of *davnen* [praying] and a maximum of eating and drinking.

The best of all holidays in America--since America has become "dry." All the Irish, Italians, Spaniards and ordinary Americans now agree. And if the number of Jews in America grows more quickly which can be explained by natural circumstances, this will be thanks to our Pesakh, our Friday night *kidush* [blessing over the Shabos wine] and our Shabos night *havdole* [ceremony marking the movement from the sacred Shabos to the secular weekday].

A holiday in which every Jew *must* drink up 4 cups of wine on every one of the first two nights . . . Not that he *may*, but he *must*. And when he does his holy duty, not only does he derive joy from it, but it is inscribed to his credit as a *mitsve* ["commandment," "good deed"].

A holiday in which every Jew must eat *latkes* [potato pancakes] and *kneydlakh* [dumplings]. Not only *may* he eat fine dishes, he *must* eat them. And if he does his holy duty, not only does he derive joy from it, but it is again inscribed to his credit as a *mitsve*.

Go find a more liberal, humanitarian religion than the Jewish! And the wonder is not how few Jews convert, but that how few Christians

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also, Eliash, "Der bale-bostes yontef," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 27, 1918; Yetta Gold, "Di idishe froy iz bizi mit'n pesakh," *Forverts*, April 1, 1920.

<sup>741</sup> A. Litvak, "Der yontef fun frayheyty," *Forverts*, April 7, 1917; "Pesakh," *Forverts*, April 1, 1923.

do not become Jews.

The newspaper then switched from foods to philosophies:

A holiday for all kinds of Jews in the world, for all Jewish “-ists,” outside of the Jewish Communists in Russia.

A beautiful holiday for *frum* [pious] Jews, because the Jewish God played a leading role in the *yetsies mitsraim*.

A fine holiday for Jewish apostates, because one can tell the story how the Jews came out of *mitsraim*, even if God is omitted from the *mayse* [story]. The Four Cups [of wine] remain, the *latkes* and *kneydlakh* remain, and in the same time not used to read the *hagode* and commit a sin against free thought.

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Jew--Karl

A lovely holiday for all class-conscious Jewish proletarians, because the Jews in *mitsraim* were all proletarians, and Moses was their first Union President. And from the ten plagues Pharaoh received from Jewish God, we can understand ten Jewish general strikes, which the Jewish proletarians led against the capitalists of *mitsraim*. And the flight from *mitsraim* can be explained as the first attempt to social question in a nonscientific way. What would be the was three-four thousand years away, when the second great Marx--would be born.

After talking about the hundreds of Pharaohs and Hamans who persecuted the Jews, this *goles* [“Exile,” the Diaspora] and that *goles*, the editorial noted that if one Pharaoh or Haman dies, hope lives, and many have done so. It concluded by noting:

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Enough gloomy philosophy on such a happy holiday. We live, and must drink Four Cups and we *must* eat *latkes* and *kneydlakh*. And all the *goyim* [Gentiles] are jealous of us. And the new Pharaohs and Hamans will lie underneath the earth, just as do the old ones. perhaps today’s thick darkness signifies that something new has

already begun to dawn.<sup>742</sup>

In a 1924 editorial, *Forverts* concentrated on Passover as both a holiday of freedom and as a festival welcoming Spring, again turning away from religious significance. The editorial condemned the Jewish Section of Russia's Communist Party for its repression of religious freedom, before returning to American Jews:

Pesakh is one of the few holidays celebrated even by Americanized Jews. Fortunately, Jews can celebrate with the entire American people many of the important American national events. The celebration of American independence is as dear to the American Jewish worker and all enlightened workers as it is to all Americans. For organized Jewish workers there are also other American national holidays. Jews even celebrate Christmas which is also built on religion. Pesakh is for all Jews, no matter how Americanized they might be, has a much greater meaning than Christmas. Pesakh is the holiday of Spring, the holiday connected with sweet, beautiful events.

The piece concludes with the wish from the start of the Passover Haggadah, "Now we are slaves, next year may we all be free."<sup>743</sup> The piece omitted the last line of the Haggadah, "Next year in Jerusalem!"

If *Forverts* saw Moses as the first labor union president in 1924, the Orthodox and Zionist *Dos yidishes tageblatt* would refer to Moses as Israel's first national leader in 1923:

Pesakh is the cornerstone of Jewish history. All was built on this holiday, because with Pesakh the Jews appear for the first time in the

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<sup>742</sup> "Pesakh," *Forverts*, April 1, 1923.

<sup>743</sup> "Der yontef fun frayheynt un frihling," *Forverts*, April 19, 1924; see, also, A. Litvak, "Der yontef fun frayheynt," *Forverts*, April 7, 1917; "Der yom-tov fun frayheynt," *Forverts*, March 28, 1918.

world. It is the holiday of Jewish birth.

Until Pesakh the Jews were a family, after Pesakh, a people. Everything which happened until the *yetsies mitsraim* was an introduction, a foretoken of the truly great deed--the creation of the Jewish nation.

The birth of the Jewish people began in a great fight for freedom. This laid its stamp forever upon the Jews: a people of freedom-seekers, a people of fighters, a people of democracy in whose soul is rooted the idea of equality.

Torah                       The Torah of equality, of protest against the strong, could go to no other people than those who began their history with a fight for freedom. Not for nothing, according to the Talmud, had the been taken around to other peoples who would not take it . . .

They would also not take it today. They were not born in freedom.

After describing the hardships of the Jews in the desert, and how in every generation another Pharaoh seeks to destroy the Jewish people, only to be saved by God, the editorial continued by saying that “ Pesakh gave us our first national leader.”<sup>744</sup> This editorial, unlike those in *Forverts*, removes class from the equation, making Moses the leader of all Jews, not just the proletarians of *mitsraim*.

J. Chaikin, writing in the liberal, pro-Zionist *Der tog* in 1924, without mentioning God, religion or miracles once, interpreted Pesakh in Jewish nationalist terms:

Pesakh is the beginning of Jewish history, it is the symbol of Jewish life in history, is is also the symbol of the Jewish future--through a desert, with people who do not want us to go to our own home,

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<sup>744</sup> “Pesakh,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 30, 1923; see, also, “Der yomtov fun der tsukunft,” *Dos yidishes tagelbatt*, April 17, 1916; “Kum du der groyser yom-tov,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 22, 1921

to the home of our parents.

Just as then, we wander now, now as then, wanting to or not, the nationally conscious Jews, back to the land of our parents. Then the Jews went through Canaan, to the land of their parents, which we today call Palestine . . .

Then as now, Chaikin wrote, we live in *mitsraim*, and the story must be told and re-told.<sup>745</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt*, Zionist and Orthodox, interpreted Pesakh both in national and religious terms in 1916:

The Jewish holidays serve a double purpose. They remind us of the time of Jewish youth and infancy and they signify the main points of the Jewish religion. The meaning of all Jewish holidays is religious-national and in the same sense a Jewish holiday influences the Jewish home. The two concepts are so closely connected to each other that it is impossible to separate them. Therefore the Jewish holidays are different than those of other peoples. There they have *historical* *national* celebrations and religious ones; among us, they are continually together.

Pesakh is the greatest holiday of historical remembrance. It is the holiday of the beginning of Jewish history. However it is also the holiday in which the true history of Judaism begins . . .<sup>746</sup>

Ray Bril Americanized Passover in a 1923 piece appearing in the English-language section of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, "Passover and the Spirit of America." After discussing the march from Egypt as an effort to establish ". . . Passover thought--the idea that all men were to be free, free in body as well in spirit . . ." Bril turned to America:

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<sup>745</sup> Ch., "Der yontef fun idisher befrayung," *Der tog*, April 19, 1924.

<sup>746</sup> "Der yomtov fun der tsukunft," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 17, 1916;

And it was this craving for freedom and the right of a people to worship God in its own way which called America into being. And on American soil the Passover thought flourished. It formed the very woof and warp of the Constitution of the land. It has become indigenous to the soul of America. The first Passover in Egypt marked a decided development in the history of mankind. It sent forth to the world at large the edict that man was not to be enslaved.

After discussing Thomas Jefferson and his bill for religious liberty in Virginia, Brill skipped over to the Civil War:

And 85 years later when Abraham Lincoln signed on January 1, 1863 his famous Proclamation of Emancipation he, too, was actuated by the Passover thought that all men were created to be free. Thus by a single stroke of the great man's pen over three millions of negroes [sic] received the most precious of all rights--the ownership of themselves. After the expiration of almost a century America at last made good, without exception, the words of the Declaration of Independence, which declare that "all men are created equal," that is, with equal natural rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Thus it can be seen that in America the Passover thought is no exotic flower. Americanism and Judaism are utterly in harmony and compatible with one another. Young Jews calling themselves intense Americans can have no conflict with Judaism. For the basis of Americanism is the Jewish ideal. The better Jews they are, the more loyal Americans they become.<sup>747</sup>

Ray Brill interpreted Passover as an *ideological* homemaking myth, Ørm Overland's third category, discussed in the last chapter, positing a total connection between Jewish and American ideals, connecting religious liberty, Americanism, and the fight against slavery, whether in Egypt or America.

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"Hayntiger pesakh," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 6, 1917;

<sup>747</sup> Ray Brill, "Passover and the Spirit of America," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 30, 1923; for another argument along ideological homemaking myth lines, see, H., "Der

A number of writers sought to redefine Passover as a woman's holiday. In 1916, Eliash, in *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, extolled Miriam the Prophetess, the sister of Moses and Aaron:

A liberated people marches, yesterday's slaves and today's free men.  
All so quickly, the exit so swift, the souls' doubts still go forth. The  
reality, the truth looks like a legend, a sweet dream, a poem.

The people march and some don't believe it; has Pharaoh's yoke truly  
been lifted from their tired shoulders, will they never again hear over  
them the sound of the whips of the Egyptian overseers?

And--where are they going? What will they do?

Now they hear Miriam's drum. Miriam the Prophetess, the sister of  
Moses and Aaron, the spirited, noble Jewish daughter; and with her  
optimism, her sweet voice and song, her dazzling dance, belief came  
into their hearts, doubts disappeared under her music, hearts filled  
with joy--

No, it was not a dream, a legend--it was reality, the truth!

Miriam, for Eliash, epitomized the role of women in Jewish history, inspiring people in times of danger.<sup>748</sup>

In *Froyen zhurnal*, Ella Blum and Harold Berman, writing a year apart in the Yiddish and English sections respectively, redefined Passover as a woman's holiday. Ella Blum sets forth an entire historical narrative which effectively displaces men from any leading role in the Passover story, as she asks ". . . do you want to know why Pesakh is the most beautiful, happiest holiday?"

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ershter emeser begrif fun frayheyt," *Der tog*, March 29, 1915.

<sup>748</sup> Eliash, "Miriam nevie," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 14, 1916.

Because in no other holiday did the Jewish woman demonstrate her greatness, her nobility, and touching loyalty to her Jewish people than she did in Pesakh.

Men, Blum writes, had totally lost the will to freedom:

The men had already so deeply sunk into their slavish condition that they were already satisfied with their fate as Pharaoh's slaves. Not one murmur of protest was heard from them, they dared not cry out their discontentment and didn't even demand their human rights.

Thus, Blum writes, Jewish women played the "most meaningful role in the history of Jewish liberation," especially when confronted with the "merciless decree of Pharaoh to drown all Jewish newborn boys":

Certainly it was the women who took revenge upon the Egyptian tyrants; the women who created the grounds for every revolution of an enslaved people.

Or was it his own mother who provided her rescued son, her little one, with the seeds of hate against the mighty tyrant? Did a woman then teach the young Moses in princely pride the consciousness of human rights and self worth?

And while the men in their slavish smiling revolted against Moses, supporting their own tyrants, the women continued to carry out revenge and empty *mitsraim* of gold and silver and expensive things.

And with what spirit, with the holy ecstasy of people knowing how to esteem freedom, did Miriam the Prophetess and the other women dance and sing seeing their victory.

Blum turns to a standard part of the Passover Seder, the reading of the *Shir HaShirim*



[“Song of Songs”], as “. . . the highest expression of family ties.”<sup>749</sup>

Harold Berman even more explicitly placed women at the center of Jewish history:

The woman in Israel has ever played her part in the history of her people. She was ever the inspiration of her mate, and her brother; the prompter of their deeds in time of national danger and religious persecution. Frequently she was not only the invisible power behind their acts of bravery and martyrdom, the instiller of courage into faint hearts and the giver of a firm will to the irresolute and the wavering, but was the actual participant in the deeds of valor, the one to furnish an example in bravery and in the ready sacrifice of her own weal on the altar of her nation’s welfare.<sup>750</sup>

Passover’s meaning, whether viewed in religious, nationalist or political terms, depended on the ideological bent of a given publication. Moving women from the periphery where they served as a supporting cast of cooks and cleaners to the center of the holiday, where some writers saw them as the main actors in the Biblical drama, represented a major shift of belief in line with the “feminization of religion,” referred to at the beginning of this chapter.

Shevuos marked another agricultural holiday from Biblical Israel, “the end of the barley harvest and beginning of the wheat crop,” as well as the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. It also commemorated Ruth the Moabite, a convert to Judaism, whose great-grandson would be King David. She became Jewish, i.e., accepted the Torah, during a harvest time, just as other Jews “became Jewish” through their acceptance of the Decalogue at Mount Sinai during a harvest

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<sup>749</sup> Ella Blum, “Pesakh un di idishe froy,” *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922).

<sup>750</sup> Harold Berman, “Passover and the Woman,” *Froyen zhurnal* (April 1923): 49.

time. This led to the custom of reading the Book of Ruth at Shevuos.<sup>751</sup>

*American Jewess* called for making Shevuos, referred to in the magazine as “Shebuoth,” a “universal holy day,” since it celebrated the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai.<sup>752</sup> *American Jewess* did not comment on the other aspects of Shevuos dealing with the holiday’s agricultural significance nor as representing the time when the Book of Ruth was read in synagogues.<sup>753</sup>

An English-language article in the liberal, pro-Zionist *Der tog* of 1922 noted that Jews continued to celebrate this harvest festival long after leaving Palestine, whether working in fields, factories or offices. Turning to agricultural developments in Palestine, the article stated “Shevuoth is no longer a memory or a hope--but a reality.” The piece also noted that the holiday celebrated the story of Ruth and the birth of the House of David.<sup>754</sup> A year later, *Der tog* wrote about Shevuos as a precursor to Jewish agricultural work in *Eretz Israel* [the land of Israel] seeing such work as a return to “productive labor.”<sup>755</sup> On the woman’s page, J. Chaikin, in 1924, focused on Shevuos in terms of “Jewish national living,” referring to Ruth as “the true mother of the Jewish people, whose grandchild was King David, the founder of the Jewish state.”<sup>756</sup>

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<sup>751</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 298-299.

<sup>752</sup> “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (May 1897): 95; “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (August 1897): 238; “Editorial,” *American Jewess* (May 1898): 95.

<sup>753</sup> See, e.g., “Shevuoth,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, May 17, 1915; “Rus un dos natur folk,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 6, 1916; Ella Blum, “Matn toyre un rus,” *Froyen zhurnal* (June 1925): 5.

<sup>754</sup> “Shevuoth Harvest Festival,” *Der tog*, June 2, 1922.

<sup>755</sup> “Shevues,” *Der tog*, May 21, 1923.

<sup>756</sup> Ch., “Vi azoy iden hoben amol gelebt,” *Der tog*, June 8, 1924.

In an 1922 article, Chaikin wrote of Elimelekh going to Moab with his wife Naomi and two sons to seek “*a shtikl broyt*” [“a piece of bread”] in a strange land. “Apparently the Moabites did not have immigration laws like they now have in America, and so the Jewish family quietly settled there and were probably what you would call good ‘*sitizens.*’ [‘citizens]” In Chaikin’s retelling of the story of Ruth, Elimelekh, the father, was busy “making a living”; meanwhile, “the sons . . . ‘Moabized,’ assimilated and married Moabite women, just as many of today’s young men are Americanized and marry American women.” Ruth the Moabite had married one of the sons. When Naomi became a widow and her sons had died, she decided to return to the Old Home, and Ruth went with her. Back home, Ruth met Boaz, a wealthy relative of Elimelekh, who married the forty-year old widow. All’s well that ends well; whether the story is true makes no difference: circumstances still force people to go from place to place.<sup>757</sup>

*Froyen zhurnal*’s Ella Blum, on the other hand, did not see Ruth or Shevuos in national terms. Coupling the granting of the Torah to the Jewish people by God with the faithfulness of Ruth the Moabite to her mother-in-law Naomi, Blum ignored the agricultural aspects of Shevuos altogether. Blum likewise did not utilize the analogy of the Jewish people accepting the Torah and thus collectively becoming Jewish, with Ruth’s acceptance of the Torah allowing her to become individually Jewish.<sup>758</sup> For Blum, the holiday underscored a commitment to the Law on one hand, and the family on the other:

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<sup>757</sup> Ch., “Vos di mayse fun rus dertseht unz,” *Der tog*, June 3, 1922.

<sup>758</sup> Cf. Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 299.

In the granting of the Torah, the Jews were taught a belief; in Ruth, they learned about family-life.

Jewish belief and Jewish family-living--they are both fundamentals upon which the entire building which we call the Jewish nation is held together.

Take away one fundamental and the entire Jewish structure collapses.

Blum compared the Jews to the ancient Greeks and Romans, noting the total power the husbands in the latter two groups exercised over their wives, including the power of life and death, the ability to sell wives, treating them like animals. She told the story of a woman, Ruth, who would not abandon her widowed mother-in-law; the two women looked after each other, worried about each other, protected each other. Writing of the wealth and position of Boaz, Blum drew a contemporary analogy, perhaps to the marriage of the millionaire William Graham Stokes to the former shop-worker, Rose Pastor:

He was an immensely rich farmer, a prince in Judea--she was a poor wanderer, a beggar from a strange land. Will you find some sort of a connection between a greenhorn millionaire manufacturer and the *opereytor* ["operator" of a sewing machine in a garment shop]?

The article ends with Blum stating that the Jewish people could not exist without the Torah or a Jewish family life.<sup>759</sup> In "*Matn toyre un rus*" ["The Granting of the Torah and Ruth"], another article, Blum wrote that "[t]he granting of the Torah and Ruth--both go together, because both the Jewish Torah and Jewish family life are

built on fundamentals of pure reason which leads a person to happiness.” For Blum, the lesson of Ruth’s story is total loyalty to husband, children and family.<sup>760</sup>

I. L. Bril, writing in *Froyen zhurnal’s* English pages in 1922, placed women at the center of Jewish history in a discussion of Shevuoth as “. . . preeminently the Jewish Mother’s Festival”:

Shevuoth takes us back, far back into the distant past, when the world was still in its infancy and the Children of Israel were at the inception of their manhood. The Rabbis tell us that the redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage was hastened by reason of the piety of the Israelitish women, who taught their children to be loyal to the ideals of the Fathers and to be hopeful of the coming of the day when their people would be released from the slavery imposed upon them by Pharaoh.

After discussing Ruth, Bril returns to the role of Jewish women:

Shevuoth, the Jewish Woman’s Festival is significant of the position woman occupies among the Jewish people. She is not a chattel; she is not a slave. She is the mother of the children; she it is who teaches them the first lesson; she it is who brings the blessing into the home. “Honor thy wife,” said the sages of Israel, “for it is she who brings happiness into the home. Do nothing to degrade her.”

No nation on God’s earth ever had a finer attitude toward its women-folk.

On Shevuoth the Jewish boy was taken for the first time to the synagogue to begin his studies. The father took him and showed him the Sepher [Scroll] Torah. But it was the mother who prepared him for that day. And it was again the mother who taught her daughters. This is of the past. What of the ever-present? The story of the achievements of the Jewish woman is an unbroken record of helpfulness, of courage, of devotion. The Jewish woman carries on.

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<sup>759</sup> Ella Blum, “Matn toyre un di familie,” *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1923): 5.

<sup>760</sup> Ella Blum, “Matn toyre un rus,” *Froyen zhurnal* (June 1922): 5.

She never weakens.

And this is not written in vain-glory, in a spirit of empty boastfulness. Herein is but summarized the actual life of the Jewish woman. Throughout the length and breadth of the land, the Jewish women are laboring nobly; they are inspiring the youth with the spirit of loyalty to the Jewish cause.<sup>761</sup>

In 1923, *Froyen zhurnal*'s English-page writer Harold Berman waxed eloquent over the role of women in Jewish history:

Let Shevuos be the Jewish woman's day: Let this day be dedicated to her, as a tribute to her worth and nobility, a tribute to all that she had done in all the years of the nation's existence, in thick and thin, in times of peace and in times of danger and menace. She will no doubt show her entire worthiness of it by turning it to the very best possible account. It will surely be novel, but also useful and far-reaching in its influence. What say you, my masters?<sup>762</sup>

Blum, Brill and Berman sought to create a new new kind of traditional Judaism, an Orthodox Judaism which placed women at the center rather than the periphery of activity and belief.

Consistent with Socialist ideology, *Forverts* had no pieces dealing with Shevuos during the period under review. Ruth and Naomi could not be recast as the equivalent of Biblical shop-workers. The harvest holiday overtones coloring the views of the pro-Zionist *Der tog* would not do for the anti-nationalist *Forverts*; nor could acceptance of the Decalogue as the birth of Jewish religious faith.

Rosh Hashanah begins a New Year's cycle, in the month of Tishri, preceded

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<sup>761</sup> I. L. Brill, "Shevuoth: The Jewish Mother's Festival," *Froyen zhurnal* (June 1922): 67.

<sup>762</sup> Harold Berman, "Shevuos and the Jewish Woman," *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1923): 49.

by the month of Elul. According to believers, between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, God engages in divine bookkeeping. On the first holiday God inscribes the names of the righteous in the Book of Life, and on the second, decides whether those withheld from immediate inscription should be listed in the Book of Life or the Book of Death.<sup>763</sup> The customary New Year's greeting, "*leshona tovah tikasevu*" ["may you be inscribed for a good year"] refers, of course, to the Book of Life.<sup>764</sup> Ten days after Rosh Hashanah is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, a fast day. Customarily religious services last an entire day, complete with a memorial service.<sup>765</sup> The *shofar* [ram's horn] is blown at the end of both the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. The symbolism of the blown *shofar* has ranged from the pagan-derived scaring away of evil spirits, to more lofty religious reasons, such as announcing the coronation of God as King, acknowledging God as Creator, to warn against transgression, and to remember the warnings of the prophets, as a reminder of the coming Messianic Age with the ingathering of exiles, among other reasons.

In 1895, *American Jewess*, "The Woman Who Talks" spoke to her sisters following the New Year, asking ". . . what have you, oh, woman of Israel, resolved to accomplish during the coming year?" "The Woman Who Talks" called upon her readers to thrust themselves into informing themselves over the social and economic problems of the day, and, even lacking the right to vote, to use that information:

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<sup>763</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 165, 185.

<sup>764</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

Be soldiers of the right, brave and true, dauntless and undismayed. To be the moral redeemers of your kind, to further the ends of justice and righteousness, to keep in touch with the great heartbeats of our common humanity--there is your glorious mission, there you have something to stand for, to work for, to live for--to die for! Little reck [sic] it if a world applauds or condemns so long as the inner voice whispers approvingly, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."<sup>766</sup>

In 1922, *Froyen zhurnal* carried greetings from the magazine's publisher and editor,<sup>767</sup> as well as a challenge to readers in the English-language section written by Ray Brill, a challenge remarkably close in tone to that of *American Jewess* in 1895:

What story do they tell? A truly marvelous tale. There is not one human endeavor in which our women are not interested. We have our representatives in every profession. We have our business women and our women of affairs. Together they form a noble band, a company of Jewish women of which there is good reason to be proud. \_ But our women are not just working for themselves. Thousands are engaged in altruistic service, in furthering the progress of mankind by spending themselves in the cause of human progress.

A new era has dawned for woman. No avenue of self-expression is closer to her. She can give full play to all her powers and remain winsomely feminine notwithstanding.

The modern woman need not lose her charm and her beauty. Work and an interest in life do not vitiate beauty and loveliness. On the contrary they heighten all womanly attractiveness.

Woman has come into her own and Jewish women are taking their full part in the changed status of womankind.

She then called readers to move forward to greater knowledge, duties, helpfulness, responsibilities, and service, adding action to idealism in her New Year's message.<sup>768</sup>

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<sup>766</sup> "The Woman Who Talks," *American Jewess* (October 1895): 60.

<sup>767</sup> Victor Mirsky and Samuel Goldstein, "Nay yohr bagrisung," *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1922): 62.

<sup>768</sup> Ray Brill, "Forward! A Message to Jewish Womanhood," *Froyen zhurnal*



“*Leshona tovah*” greetings even appeared in the non-believing Socialist *Forverts*. During and after the Great War, New Year’s greetings often had a very bitter tone as newspapers considered the refugees, poverty and pogroms unleashed after the war.<sup>769</sup> In 1914, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* appealed to readers for aid to those still in Europe, stating in its Rosh Hashanah editorial “[t]he Jews of America should have a year of *mazl-brokhe* [“the blessings of luck,“ i. e. prosperity] in order to fulfill their duties to our brothers who are in need of our help.”<sup>770</sup> Closer to home, on the same day the newspaper carried an interview with Leo M. Frank at the Atlanta jail, as he marked his second Rosh Hashanah behind bars.<sup>771</sup> Three years later, in 1917, *Dos yidishes tageblatt* continued to hope for better times ahead as it considered the effects of the war: “We wish the Jews of America a happy new year. *Halevay* [“God grant,” often used for an unlikely wish] the war should end before the next twelve months will end. *Halevay* we should be able to write ‘*leshona tova*’ with an easier heart than we now do.”<sup>772</sup> Thus the newspaper honored and mourned the war dead, Jewish and non-Jewish.

In 1917, the Socialist *Forverts* deemed Jewish liberation in Russia following the Russian Revolution the most important event in Jewish history.<sup>773</sup> *Forverts*

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(October 1922): 80.

<sup>769</sup> See, e.g., “Tsum nayem yohr,” *Forverts*, September 26, 1919; “Leshone toyve!” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 1, 1921; “Leshone toyve!” *Forverts*, October 4, 1921.

<sup>770</sup> “Unzer glik-vuntsh tsum nayem yohr,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 23, 1914.

<sup>771</sup> “A nay-yohr grus fun leo m. freynk,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 23, 1914.

<sup>772</sup> “Leshona tovah tikasevu,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 16, 1917.

<sup>773</sup> “Leshono toyvo,” *Forverts*, September 16, 1917.

wished its readers a Socialist “*leshona tova*” in 1925:

The *Forverts* does not believe that a good year is predestined somewhere in heaven, that by prayer or crying, the fate of men or peoples can be predetermined by a superior power.

Still, it doesn't hurt to take the opportunity of Rosh Hashanah to express the wish, to express what we hope would happen in the coming year.

We wish our readers a year of health and happiness.

We wish that unity, peace and harmony will rule the ranks of our workers.

We wish that Jewish troubles in the various countries shall come to an end; that the antisemitic waves on both sides of the ocean should sink into the abyss.

We wish that the entire world should open its eyes to the new dangers which are being created from new capitalist conspiracies, and they should see, once and for all that as long as the capitalist order exists, over the world hang clouds of fire which can break out any minute into as bloody a deluge as 1914.

We wish the world, all of humanity, the best luck which can come to it through an order built on the highest ideals and principals of humanity--the order of Socialism.<sup>774</sup>

The *leshona tova* of *Forverts* incorporated a belief in the secular religion of Socialism, viewing, as did the other publications, holidays through ideological lenses.

*Der tog* carried Rosh Hashanah greetings which acknowledged the holiday as one of Jewish national existence. These editorials and articles did not mention

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<sup>774</sup> “Leshone toyve!” *Forverts*, Sept, 18, 1925.

God.<sup>775</sup> In 1921, J. Chaikin noted that once Jews had their own land, the holidays would be celebrated differently, especially since so the agricultural calendar gave birth to many holidays.<sup>776</sup> *Der tog* thus put a nationalist twist to the Rosh Hashanah holiday.

As with Passover and Shevuos, some writers sought to make Rosh Hashanah woman-centered. In 1914, Lena Rozenherts, writing about the *yomim-neroim* [“The Days of Awe,” the period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur], referred to the heightened religiosity of women after the first blast of the Shofar:

The woman, however, who sits at home, the quiet and loving mother, feels, with the arrival of Elul, every heartstring begins to vibrate, and absorbed in the still and sad thoughts about her small woman’s world, the quiet tears begin to flow.

In every day, in every day of fasting and prayer, the clearest and holiest light shines forth from the noble figure of the Jewish woman.

In every day, in every day of remorse and forgiveness, you can clearly see what a great part a woman takes in Jewish life, how deeply she feels Jewish pain and with how much sacrifice she helps carry the heavy pack of Jewish troubles.

Continuing in much the same vein, Rozenherts concludes:

Thus she carries her weeping and lets it forth like a despaired crying-out above the male prayers and throws out a shudder, filling the heart with divine fear.

Thus laments the Jewish woman, the Jewish mother, the Jewish

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<sup>775</sup> See, e.g., R., “Unzer rosh heshone un zeyer nay-yohr,” *Der tog*, September 18, 1925; “Rosh heshone,” *Der tog*, September 18, 1925.

<sup>776</sup> Ch., “Rosh hashone--der idisher nay yohr,” *Der tog*, October 2, 1921.

patriot.

Thus the Jewish mother asks for her husband and, children and for the entire community of Israel.

The women's prayers make our *yomim-neroim* sublime, holy and touching.<sup>777</sup>

Lena Rozenherts thus added her voice to those seeking to refashion American Jewish life along feminine lines.

Ella Blum, writing almost a decade later in the 1923 *Froyen zhurnal* shifted the emphasis from prayer in the present to Jewish female activity in the past, as she recalled the childless "mothers of Israel," Sarah, Rachel and Hannah, for they ". . . were the builders of their people."<sup>778</sup>

The solemnity of Yom Kippur meant that even the Socialist *Forverts* remained respectful, noting only that forgiveness could be obtained solely from the one wronged.<sup>779</sup> *Der tog*, asserting that all Jewish holidays confirmed Jewish national existence, noted that on Yom Kippur, American Jews came face to face with a sense of Godliness, while the Jewish people examined its collective soul.<sup>780</sup> In *Froyen zhurnal*, Ella Blum painted a picture of Jewish women in an Orthodox *shul* on Yom Kippur: "And dressed in white, the symbol of purity and innocence go our sisters, Jewish wives, into *shul* on Yom Kippur, pouring out their hearts and asking

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<sup>777</sup> L. Rozenherts, "Di froy im yomim-neroim," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 23, 1914.

<sup>778</sup> Ella Blum, "Fun rosh hashone biz yom kiper," *Froyen zhurnal* (September 1923): 5.

<sup>779</sup> "Yom kiper--tsu a got un tsu layten," *Forverts*, September 15, 1918.

<sup>780</sup> "Yom kiper," *Der tog*, September 27, 1925.

forgiveness . . .”<sup>781</sup>

As with the other holidays, ideological considerations dictated the views of the publications in this study. Various writers also sought to place women closer to the center of these events.

Sukkos, occurring five days after Yom Kippur, represents the third important agricultural holiday of the Jewish year, this one celebrating the grape harvest.

“Sukkos” [“*sukes*”] means “booths” and during the holiday, men, and men alone, sleep, eat and pray in temporary structures especially decorated for the holiday.<sup>782</sup>

The Socialist *Forverts* carried pictures of such booths in New York City’s East Side, without further comment<sup>783</sup>

Eliash, writing in 1915 for the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, focused on women during the holiday:

It causes enough pain when the Jewish daughter does not have the opportunity to sit in the booth together with her husband and sons. Alone she remains in the house; she runs in quickly to bless the candles and hear her husband’s *kidesh* [benediction over the wine]. Her heart swells from these moments of joy.

Eliash went on to say that while the Jewish woman experienced Sukkos as a tragedy, being separated from her family, it also served to test her love. Religious law would not allow her to stay in the booth, and “[i]f a tradition or a *din* [determination of religious law by rabbis] made an exception for a woman, then she is glad and will not

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<sup>781</sup> Ella Blum, “Yom kiper un sukes,” *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1922): 7.

<sup>782</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 227, 228-229; “Sukkah,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 15, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 493.

break a *din* or a tradition.”<sup>784</sup>

Following Sukkos is Simchas Torah, which celebrates the end of the annual reading of the Torah, and the beginning reading for the next cycle.<sup>785</sup> In the liberal *Der tog*, J. Chaikin recommended that even freethinkers should celebrate this holiday, since it honors Jewish allegiance to idealism, as symbolized by commemorating the completion of the annual cycle of reading Torah portions. The Torah served as the embodiment of Jewish ideals.<sup>786</sup>

In the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, Eliash argued that female participation in Simchas Torah proved that in Jewish tradition women had equality with men, even though only men read the Torah:

The Jewish woman celebrates Simchas Torah equally with the man; adopting the modern concept of suffrage, one can say that on Simchas Torah the Jewish daughter has equal rights. She comes into the *shul* together with her husband and takes an equal part in the celebration with the Torah.

Eliash bases his claim on shared oppression and sacrifice:

On account of what have Jews suffered all manner of horrible persecutions, troubles, tortures and Inquisitions? On account of what have so many *kdoyshim* [“martyrs”] burned on faggots, on account of what were so many killed in pogroms? The Jewish religion and the Jewish Torah which the Jewish people protected and from which the Jewish people are supported.

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<sup>783</sup> “Sukes bilder fun der ist said,” *Forverts*, October 4, 1925.

<sup>784</sup> Eliash, “Di froy in sukes,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 22, 1915; see, also, Eliash, “Di froy um sukes,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 30, 1917.

<sup>785</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 240-241.

<sup>786</sup> Ch., “Farvos iden zolen halten simkhes toyre,” *Der tog*, October 15, 1922.

It is the Torah which peoples would destroy together with us. Jewish women have borne the sufferings of the martyrs together with their men. They burned Jewish daughters on the auto-da-fe's; they were as driven and tortured as Jewish sons were. Equally with the men they patiently suffered, patiently bearing all agonies.

It is therefore natural that when it comes to celebrating, they should celebrate together with the man; it is natural that the women, who shared in all the suffering and agony of our people should also in all the joys which life gives us.

The accusation that one hears from time to time from various sides that Jewish daughters participate less in national life is false. No people in the world from "back when" until the present can demonstrate a greater, more beautiful, more noble sacrifice for the interests of the people than the sacrifice of the Jewish women for the Jewish nation.

Every time that a crises comes to Jewish life, when a catastrophe occurs, when the menacing sword of misfortune hangs over us, the Jewish daughter, just like the Jewish son, prepares to risk their lives and sacrifice themselves for the people, for the existence of our *emune* ["faith, creed"].

The article ends with Eliash invoking the role of the woman as the one raising the children, letting ". . . their souls drink the beautiful, glorious joys of our life."<sup>787</sup> As is evident here, Eliash and other writers for *Dos yidishes tageblatt* denied the accusation that Orthodox Judaism made women second-class citizens, a charge leveled in articles from *American Jewess*, *Der tog* and *Forverts*, all pointing to the morning prayer of Orthodox males thanking God they were not born women, as previously noted.<sup>788</sup>

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<sup>787</sup> Eliash, "Di froy um simkhes toyre," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 7, 1917.

<sup>788</sup> Rose Kohler, extracts from paper read to New York Section, NCJW, February 10, 1895, reprinted in "Editor's Desk," *American Jewess* (June 1895): 154-155; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (April 1896): 381; "Editorial," *American Jewess* (December 1896): 137-138; Rachel B. Muravchik, "Zeynen froyen veniger fehig vi

Chanuka, the next holiday, lasts eight days. It commemorates the victory of the Jews led by Judah Maccabee over the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 B.C.E., restoring Jewish rule over the land of Israel, and the restoration of the Temple in Jerusalem. Rule by the Syrians under Antiochus Epiphanes had occurred after the death of Alexander the Great in 320 B.C.E. Antiochus Epiphanes embarked on a program of Hellenization which included a ban on circumcision and Jewish Sabbath rituals. Turning the Temple into a pagan shrine, a Hellenized Jew started to sacrifice a pig on its altar. A Jewish religious leader, Mattathias, killed the Hellenized Jew and fled for the hills with his five sons, to conduct a war which would overthrow the Syrian-Greeks. The third son of Mattathias, Judah, became leader after his father died. Successful in their efforts, they liberated Jerusalem and the Temple. The legend arose that in retaking the Temple, the Maccabees found only enough holy oil to keep the menorah burning for one day; miraculously, that oil lasted for eight, thus becoming known thereafter as the Festival of Lights. The Chanuka story as told by the Rabbis in the Talmud focused on the oil, ignoring what led to that miracle, namely the victory of Judah and the Maccabees.<sup>789</sup> The Maccabees took royal power, calling themselves the Hasmonean dynasty, attributed by the historian Josephus Flavius to Asamoniaios, Mattathias's great-grandfather. Under the Hasmoneans, Jewish territory and power expanded, and with this, monotheism.<sup>790</sup>

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mener?" *Forverts*, April 15, 1923; Dr. K. Fornberg, "Di moyre far froyen," *Der tog*, June 23, 1925.

<sup>789</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 244-246.

<sup>790</sup> Menahem Stern, "Hasmoneans," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 7, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 1455-1456.



The rabbis opposed establishment of the Hasmonean dynasty on the grounds that only those from the House of David could ascend to rule. Further, “. . . the Hasmonean dynasty had quickly become corrupt and Hellenized, opposing and even persecuting the Rabbis.”<sup>791</sup>

Chanuka, like Passover, represented a holiday capable of diverse interpretations. In articles and editorials, interpretations of Chanuka presented the holiday in terms of Jewish religiosity,<sup>792</sup> Jewish national consciousness,<sup>793</sup> Zionism,<sup>794</sup> the defeat of the strong by the weak and the oppressor by the oppressed,<sup>795</sup> as part of a battle against assimilation,<sup>796</sup> or as combinations of these arguments, dependent upon the ideological view of the publication.

In May M. Cohen’s “The Maccabees,” a short piece appearing in the December 1897 *American Jewess*, the author tells the basic Chanuka story, omitting all mention of women and their sacrifice. She does mention the “. . . legend described in the Talymud [sic] how the oil for the light of rededication [of the

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<sup>791</sup> Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, 246.

<sup>792</sup> L. Rozenherts, “Di khanike helden,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 13, 1914; Ethel Judelson, “A Miracle of Chanukah,” *Froyen zhurnal* (December 1922): 65.

<sup>793</sup> “Haynt abend di khanike-likht,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 1, 1915; Eliash, “Ertsehlt ayere kinder,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 5, 1915; “Tsvey pasende yomim tovim hoben zikh bagegent,” *Der tog*, November 28, 1918; “Khanike,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 2, 1923; “Profounder Aspects of Channukah,” *Der tog*, December 2, 1923; J. Foshko, “Khanike-likhtlakh,” *Der tog*, December 13, 1925.

<sup>794</sup> Louis Lipsky, “The Spirit of Chanukah and Zionism,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 5, 1915; Di Litvishe Khakheymnis, “Khanike, der yontef fun likht-zayn nayer zinen fir froyen,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 6, 1915; Di Litvishe Khakheymnis, “Khanike, der yontef fun likht-zayn nayer zinen fir froyen,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 4, 1918.

<sup>795</sup> “Khanike,” *Der tog*, December 7, 1920.

<sup>796</sup> “Zey gehen tsum zeyden,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 15, 1914.

Temple] seemed merely enough for a single night, but by a miracle proved sufficient for the week of the festival. From this fact is supposed to originate the name given to Hanucah [sic],--the Festival of Lights.” The very end of her article called for women especially to act:

. . . It rests with us, the women of Israel, to revive in all its brilliancy the festival of Hanucah. From all over the country come words of appreciation, concerning the work of religion which our women are trying to perform; we must certainly live up to what Jewish communities everywhere are expecting from us.<sup>797</sup>

The Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*'s Gedaliah Bublick in 1914 presented Chanuka as a war for the freedom of worship. It was not for “*expanshon*” [“expansion”], foreign markets or military glory, the goals of the belligerents in contemporary Europe.<sup>798</sup>

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* represented not only an Orthodox, but a Zionist, point of view. I. L. Brill, in a 1925 piece, “Chanukah,” wrote:

If there was ever a time when Chanukah should be observed rigidly and with a full understanding of what the Maccabean feast implies, it is at this present age.

Notwithstanding the wide-spread influence of Zionism, the Jewish national movement, despite the teaching of Hebrew and the general use of that language as a living tongue, there are forces and without Jewry not at all wholesome, and unless checked, will vitiate the very principles and ideals for which the valiant Maccabees

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within

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<sup>797</sup> Mary M. Cohen, “The Maccabees,” *American Jewess* (December 1897): 129-130; see, also, “A Light in the Window,” *American Jewess* (December 1898): 6.

<sup>798</sup> Gedaliah Bublick, “Der befrayer fun der idisher neshome,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 13, 1914; ; “Khanike,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 11, 1925.

fought.

Why did old Mattathias raise the standard of revolt? Was it merely because the physical well-being of the country was threatened, or because of the fear that the political independence of the Jewish people would be destroyed that the Maccabees battled for three years against overwhelming odds? Hardly that. The reason for the stand of the loyalists was of much greater depths [sic]. It went to the very roots of the Jewish faith.

Fighting for the Zionist goal of a Jewish homeland was not enough. Without a spiritual return, the political return would be for naught. “The Maccabees

realized only too well that the Jewish people could not be preserved, though the country might be saved from the foreign invader, unless the spiritual concepts of the Jewish people were kept pure and free from any alien alloy.” *Dos yidishes tageblatt* had previously taken a dim view of Israel Zangwill’s play, “The Melting Pot,” and the concept it represented. Among other things, the newspaper interpreted the “melting pot” concept as one of race-mixing, assimilation and conversion.<sup>799</sup>

Bril concluded by emphasizing the light of idealism represented in the holiday:

These Chanukah lights, the first of which is kindled this evening, are not decorative lights. They beautify the home only when they cause us to realize for what the Maccabees and countless generations of Jews after them have struggled.

Judaism, Jewish though, Jewish idealism must be preserved pure and untouched by alien influences. There must be no assimilation of any kind.

Kindle the Chanukah lights and kindle the Jewish Spirit as well so

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<sup>799</sup> “Mr. zangvil un di idishe tsukunft in amerika,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, January 27, 1914; “Di khasenes tsvishen idishe tekhter un italianer,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 6, 1915.

that it may inspire again the generations yet to be born.<sup>800</sup>

The newspaper continually invoked Chanuka as an affirmation of Zionist goals and ideals.<sup>801</sup>

The liberal, pro-Zionist *Der tog* tended to interpret Chanuka along nationalist lines. Thus, in 1925, noting how a small minority prevailed against overwhelming forces, the paper's editorial stated that "Chanuka is the holiday of the Jewish nationalist victory, of the Jewish people in the struggle for its national existence."<sup>802</sup>

The Socialist *Forverts* presented Chanuka neither in religious nor nationalist terms, but rather as a struggle of the weak against the strong, the oppressed against the oppressor, for freedom over slavery.<sup>803</sup>

As with Shevuos, Purim and Passover, a number of authors sought to redefine Chanuka along lines that would make the holiday more woman-centered. The family aspects of the celebration, complete with especially prepared food plus selected parts of the Chanuka story, aided in this effort. Thus, Eliash noted that mothers not only prepared holiday foods, but had the responsibility of telling the

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<sup>800</sup> I. L. Bril, "Chanukah," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 11, 1925; see, also, I. L. Bril, "Towards Chanukah," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 15, 1919; I. L. Bril, "Kindle the Lights!" *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 5, 1920; I. L. Bril, "If I Were Not a Zionist," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 2, 1923; I. L. Bril, "Chanukah," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 3, 1923.

<sup>801</sup> See, e.g., "Khanike fir unzer yugend," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 13, 1914; "A khanike unter naye umshtenden," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 28, 1918; "Khanike," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 5, 1920; "Dos likht fun khanike," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 14, 1922; ; Tsvi Katz, "Khanike, der yon-tef fun benayung," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 24, 1924.

<sup>802</sup> "Khanike," *Der tog*, December 12, 1925; see, also, Joseph Margoshes, "Far vos iden feyeren khanike," *Der tog*, December 2, 1915.

<sup>803</sup> "Khanike," *Forverts*, December 23, 1916.

Chanuka story to their children.<sup>804</sup> Getzel Zelikowitch, writing as the “Lithuanian Wise Woman,” stated in two articles appearing three years apart that while years and years ago, “we women” prepared *latkes* (potato pancakes) for the men to eat while they played cards, today the situation is different. Zionism has arrived, and women now have “*spiritual latkes*” in the form of Hebrew, presumably in the context of the development of modern Hebrew as part of the Zionist project.<sup>805</sup>

From a consideration of women as integral to the celebration of Chanuka, others moved towards making her central not just to the holiday, but to what the holiday commemorated. Lena Rozenherts, writing about Hannah, “. . . the holy, heroic mother of the heroic seven sons . . .” for the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* in 1914 referred to her as the “Chanuka heroine”:

Hannah, the holy, heroic martyr whose great love for her God, people and land, was just as holy and eternal as the light from wonderful jar of oil which burned and spread bright light in our dark lives more than two thousand years ago, and still has not been extinguished . . .

The mothers of millions of other Jewish sons and daughters who, with joy, have given up their lives for their people.<sup>806</sup>

Rozenherts continued with the basic Chanuka story, mentioning the Maccabees just once. For Rozenherts, the truly heroic figure remained Hannah.

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<sup>804</sup> Eliash, “Di idishe froy um khanike,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 9, 1917.

<sup>805</sup> Di Litvishe Khakheyminis, “Khanike, der yontef fun likht-zayn nayer zinen fir froyen,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 6, 1915; Di Litvishe Khakheyminis, “Khanike, der yontef fun likht-zayn nayer zinen fir froyen,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 4, 1918.

<sup>806</sup> Lena Rozenherts, “Di khanike helden,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 13, 1914.

J. Chaikin likewise emphasized the martyrdom of Hannah and her seven sons, not mentioning candles, oil, miracles or even Maccabees. Little was known about her, he wrote; even Hannah may have been the wrong name for this martyr. Similar to other unknown women raising their children to be Jews and inspiring their husbands, when women such as Hannah sacrificed themselves and their children for their beliefs, these sacrifices emboldened the Maccabees to act. Chaikin set up a simple progression: no Hannah, thus no Jewish upbringing, thus no Jewishness, thus no Jews. Therefore, Chanuka is the holiday of the Jewish woman.<sup>807</sup> Two years later, in 1923, Chaikin would make much the same argument, asking why the Maccabees would fight. “True, in those times there were also the assimilated, the so-called Hellenists,” but they were not truly part of “the people.” The reason Chanuka and Purim will last, Chaikin wrote, had to do with the centrality of Jewish women, the protectors of the family, purity and ideals. He asked his reader to imagine an “unknown Joan d’Arc,” who, being a simple mother, was no “Joan d’Arc.”<sup>808</sup> That Joan d’Arc achieved Roman Catholic sainthood is a fact which seems to have eluded Chaikin.

In *Froyen zhurnal*, Ella Blum, after talking about the victory of the Maccabees, stated that it was the Jewish wife woman and mother who inspired the Maccabees, saying:

She, the Jewish woman, was the spark in the powder-keg which blew apart and destroyed Antiochus’s bloody rule over the Jews, who with

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<sup>807</sup> Ch., “Khanike, der yon tef fun der idisher froy,” *Der tog*, December 26, 1921.

<sup>808</sup> Ch., “Vos iz khanike far der idisher froy?” *Der tog*, December 3, 1923; see, also, R., “Vos iz der groyser nes fun khanike?” *Der tog*, December 12, 1925.

died a joy gave up her seven children to the gallows and who herself martyr--she prepared the source for the holiday of Chanuka.

The holiday of the Maccabees?--No, the holiday of ever Jewish mother, the great martyr.

The mother with her seven sons--history doesn't even have her name. Neither Graetz nor other historians knew who she was. She was like the unknown fallen hero of our World War, whose memory all honor and on whose grave all lay wreaths of flowers, about whom we know nothing.

Writing of the Jewish mother as idealist and martyr in all places at all times, Blum referred to the 1919 pogroms in the Ukraine:

child In the Ukraine, when she saw that the honor of her daughter was in danger from the human beasts, the bandits, she killed her own with her own hands and then took her own life to preserve the purity of the Jewish family.

Such events took place many times during the dark days of the Ukrainian massacres.

suffers for the And in the home--who doesn't know, the woman, the noble Jewish woman, is ever suffering. She suffers for her husband, she her children, she is always carrying the yoke of the house, of family--she is the eternal martyr.

Blum concluded by reminding readers that the seven sons never would have sacrificed their own lives, had they not been taught to do so by their mother. "If one wishes for their children to grow up as Jews, the mother must teach them Jewishness."<sup>809</sup>

Chanuka also stood for resistance to assimilation. In "Profounder Aspects of

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<sup>809</sup> Ella Blum, "Vos khanike lernt unz," *Froyen zhurnal* (December 1922): 8.

Channukah,“ a 1923 English-language article in the liberal *Der tog*, the author set forth the anti-assimilationist message of Chanuka:

It [the struggle of the Maccabees/Hasmoneans against the ”Asiatic Greeks”] was the reassertion of the Jewish spirit. It was a violent repudiation of the old evil of assimilation. As Ezra determined that the Jewish spirit had to be cleansed of the evil of drift, of assimilation through weakness, so the Hasmoneans--determined that the influence of the Asiatic Greeks (themselves impure Greek in spirit) had to be combatted and repulsed.

The author compares the Middle Eastern “then” with the American “now”:

But how little the true spirit of Channukah is sometimes misunderstood may be gauged by the weird references which Jewish parents sometimes make to Channukah as ”the Jewish Christmas” and even point to the Channukah candles as the Jewish replica of the Christmas tree illuminations.

The supreme irony of such a perversion of the meaning of Channukah lies in the very fact that if Channukah is anything at all, if it has any peculiarity as a Jewish religious or national festival it is precisely this: that its origin lies in the struggle of the Jews to cut away from itself those unhealthy influences, not proper to their own culture, which were threatening to destroy it without giving an adequate substitute.<sup>810</sup>

Over time, Chanuka evolved into the most Americanized of the Jewish holidays, an occasion for gift-giving. In Eastern Europe, children customarily received “*Khanike gelt*,” [“Chanuka money,” i.e. small coins] from adult members of the family; gifts did not take any other form.<sup>811</sup> An article in the December 1913 *Di*

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<sup>810</sup> “Profounder Aspects of Channukah,” *Der tog*, December 2, 1923.

<sup>811</sup> Hayyim Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals: From Their Beginnings to Our Day*, trans. by Samuel Jaffe (NY: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1938), 231-233; Dr. S. Pietrushka, “Khanike,” in *Yidishe folks-entsiklopedie*, Vol. 1, 2nd rev. ed. (NY: Farlag Gilead, 1949), 890; I. Heller, “Yidishe lebensshtayger,” in *Algemayne entsiklopedie*, Vol. A, 2nd ed. (NY: Central Yiddish Culture Organization, in



*froyen-velt* noted how Jewish children longed for the poetry and beauty of Christmas.<sup>812</sup> In America, it became an occasion for children to receive gifts in various forms, in effect going from coinage to commodities.

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* carried Chanuka gift advertisements in 1897. In 1906, the newspaper “. . . called not for the abolition of gift giving among Jews, but, instead, for the use of presents as a means of bolstering the enthusiasm surrounding Chanukah.”<sup>813</sup> By the 1920s, this campaign of acculturation had succeeded.<sup>814</sup> By 1949, theological scholar Louis Finkelstein, then Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, would write that “[i]t is customary to mark the festival with family meals, games, and the exchange of gifts, particularly within the family.”<sup>815</sup> In 1923, Ella Blum would write in *Froyen zhurnal* of Chanuka gift-giving as a *minhag* [“custom”]:

Among Jews there is a custom--truly a beautiful custom--of giving presents every Chanuka.

Back home it was called “*Khanike gelt*” [“Chanuka money”]; in

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cooperation with the S. Dubnov Fund, 1941), 647; Moshe David Herr, “Hannukah,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 7 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 1287-1288.

<sup>812</sup> “Khanike un unzere kinder,” *Di froyen-velt* (December 1913): 3.

<sup>813</sup> Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance*, 77.

<sup>814</sup> Jenna Weissman Joselit, “Merry Chanuka’: The Changing Holiday Practices of American Jews, 1880-1950,” in *The Uses of Tradition: Jewish Continuity in the Modern Era*, edited by Jack Wertheimer (NY: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 306-307; Jenna Weissman Joselit, *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture, 1880-1950* (NY: Hill and Wang, 1994), 230-233.

<sup>815</sup> Louis Finkelstein, “The Jewish Religion: Its Beliefs and Practices,” in *The Jews: Their History, Culture, and Religion*, Vol. 2, edited by Louis Finkelstein (NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1949, 1960), 1785.

America we call them “*Khanike prezents*” [“Chanuka presents”]; but everywhere among Jews the beautiful thought of friendliness and good wishes manifests itself through a gift.<sup>816</sup>

In writing about this “custom,” Blum used “*prezents*,” the transliterated form of the English “presents,” rather than the Yiddish word for “gifts,” “*matones*.” Blum presents this “custom” not as an adjustment to the gift-giving of Christmas, but as an American version of “*Chanuka gelt*”; in short, the results of an Americanized Jewish holiday. Just as Christmas had changed under the impact of the development of an American consumer society, so too with Chanuka.

J. Chaikin, of the liberal *Der tog*, noted in 1925 that in the Old World Jews knew about playing *dreydel*, eating potato *latkes* and Chanuka *gelt*; he saw the very concept of a “Chanuka present” as proof of assimilation, devised to coincide with non-Jewish children receiving Christmas gifts. As with Ella Blum, Chaikin used the transliterated English word “*prezent*” rather than the Yiddish “*matone*” for “present,” a way to emphasize its novelty. Chaikin, while hesitant to condemn those wishing to give Chanuka gifts, warned that the next step, already taken by many, would be Christmas trees, Christmas lights, colored paper and Santa Claus, thus luring children away from Jewishness. He suggested that a Jewish education would better serve Jewish children than Chanuka gifts, even if it took the form of a religious Talmud Torah.<sup>817</sup>

The ultimate irony lay in the fact that Chanuka, which celebrated struggle against assimilation and assimilationists became the most Americanized of the Jewish

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<sup>816</sup> Ella Blum, “Bikher far unzere kinder,” *Froyen zhurnal* (December 1923): 6.

<sup>817</sup> Ch., “Khanike oder kristmes prezenten,” *Der tog*, November 5, 1925.

holidays. In 1879, an organization called Keyam Dishmaya met in Philadelphia and called for a “Grand Revival of the Jewish National Holiday of Chanucka.”<sup>818</sup> This call represented among the first in a series of events calling for a Jewish revival in America after the Civil War. Three institutions became established in 1893 alone: the Jewish Chautauqua Society, “Gratz College of Philadelphia, the first of a series of Hebrew teachers’ colleges across the United States that trained women on an equal basis as men,” and the National Council of Jewish Women.<sup>819</sup> Gratz College was named after Rebecca Gratz, originator of the first Jewish Sunday Schools, and a key figure in the “feminization of Judaism” in America, as previously noted.

In America, the transmission of religious education became a female, rather than a male duty, suggestive of the “feminization of religion” characteristic of the host society.<sup>820</sup> Although historian Henry L. Feingold wrote that “Judaism assigned women the sacred task of maintaining the purity of the family, whose holiness was based on its mission as the principal transmitter of the faith,”<sup>821</sup> in traditional Eastern Europe, that particular mission reposed in males, who transmitted religious knowledge to their sons. It was only as Jews moved into new social environments

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<sup>818</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 136-137.

<sup>819</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>820</sup> See, e.g., Paula E. Hyman, “Gender and the Immigrant Jewish Experience in the United States,” in *Jewish Women in Historical Perspective*, edited by Judith R. Baskin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 238; Paula E. Hyman, “Paradoxes of Assimilation,” in *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History: The Roles and Representation of Women* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 24; Hasia Diner, “From Covenant to Constitution: The Americanization of Judaism,” in *Transforming Faith: The Sacred and Secular in Modern American History*, edited by M. L. Bradbury and James B. Gilbert (NY: Greenwood Press, 1989), 15, 20-21; Sarna, “The Evolution of the American Synagogue,” 222.

<sup>821</sup> Feingold, *A Time for Searching*, 42.

that women increasingly became the transmitters of faith.<sup>822</sup>

Historical sociologist Ewa Morawska argued that part of the acculturation process included a transformation of traditional practices along American middle-class lines. “Inasmuch as religious practices were indeed increasingly privatized or ‘domesticated,’ as some studies have argued, the home and thus the women were becoming the main carriers of Jewish religious traditions; at the same time, it was largely the women who ethnicized this transformation of domestic religion.”<sup>823</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, writing for *Froyen zhurnal* in 1923, noted that in the Old Country, men had the duty of sending their sons to *kheder* or a Talmud Torah. “In America,” he continued, “the situation is, however, completely different, here the mother must not just keep her home in mind, but also worry about the Jewish education of the children.”<sup>824</sup> The shift in responsibilities for transmission of religious knowledge from fathers to mothers, without providing education for daughters, lead to a situation in which Jewish leaders blamed women for abandoning traditional practices.<sup>825</sup>

Having failed in their duty to provide children with Jewish education, J. Chaikin faulted women for the increase in intermarriage among young people.<sup>826</sup> Dr. B. Gitlin complained that women had assimilated. “They who ought to be telling

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<sup>822</sup> Cf. Marian A. Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family, and Identity in Imperial Germany* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>823</sup> Morawska, *Insecure Prosperity*, 154; see, also, Hyman, “The Modern Jewish Family,” 181-182.

<sup>824</sup> Mordecai Dantzis, “Di amerikaner idisher froy,” *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1923): 10.

<sup>825</sup> Hyman, “Seductive Secularization,” 88.

the new generation, have become estranged from us."<sup>827</sup> Y. Roytberg, in *Froyen zhurnal*, saw Jewish female conversions to Christianity as a specific consequence of the failure to adequately educate their Jewish daughters.<sup>828</sup> Not all writers placed the blame upon female shoulders. In an article in *Der tog*, the author pointed out that Jewish American girls received a better Jewish education than did their sisters in the Old Country, where *frum* Jewish daughters would go to a *gymnazie* and learn Polish and French, but nothing about being Jewish. In America, at the Sholem Aleichem Schools, the Zionist Herzliyah and other institutions, Jewish daughters learned about Jewishness as they never did in the Old Country.<sup>829</sup> In *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, journalist Alf-Lamed blamed parents for not giving their daughters a good religious education in America or the Old Country.<sup>830</sup>

In 1915, Eliash, writing in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, contrasted the religious activities and attitudes of Jewish men and women in America:

The Jewish daughter is far from a Jewish religious education. Just the sons of our people receive a more or less religious education. For women it is not necessary--so believe our fathers.

Men have their religious leaders. The wives are like orphans. Nevertheless the average Jewish woman is more religious, more seriously religious than the average man.

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<sup>826</sup> Ch., "Vos s'fehlt idishe froyen in kleyne shtetlakh," *Der tog*, July 18, 1921.

<sup>827</sup> Dr. B. Gitlin, "Di idishe froy un der keren heysod," *Froyen zhurnal* (April 1923): 33.

<sup>828</sup> Y. Roytberg, "Di idishe froy un di shmad bavegung," *Froyen zhurnal* (September 1923): 12; see, also, S. Goldberg-Cantor, "Jewesses Were Germany's First Modern Women," *Der tog*, March 1, 1925.

<sup>829</sup> R., "Di ertsihung fun di idishe tekhter," *Der tog*, December 28, 1925.

<sup>830</sup> Alf-Lamed, "Tekhter fun tsion," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 24, 1918.

Eliash went on to note how quickly men adapted to the New World, even riding in cars and subways on holidays or Shabos, violations of the commandment to rest upon the seventh day. For women it was different:

The Jewish woman longs for a religious environment. She strives towards it, but seldom participates in the Jewish religious celebrations. To cry, to shed tears, she is continually the first one.

Simchas Torah, Sukkos, Shevuos--the men dance and celebrate. The women remain busy in the kitchen. They have no special prayers for these holidays.

However, comes Rosh Hashanah, the Days of Selikhos [immediately prior to Rosh Hashanah], the entire month of Elul, the *yomim-neroim* [Days of Awe]--then the women show their religious souls. Then they raise their eyes towards heaven.

Eliash went on to comment that most of the women's prayers dealt with the holidays listed above, underscoring Jewish female religiosity.<sup>831</sup>

The views of writers such as I. L. Brill, Eliash, and Alf-Lamed, all appearing in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, demonstrated how much change in attitude had occurred in the new American environment. These traditionalists did not seek to merely replicate what had existed in the Old World, but actively sought to transform the old into something new, while still being recognizable, utilizing a traditional pattern to produce an updated garment. Reform Jews, in their view, sought to produce a Jewish garment from an American Christian pattern.<sup>832</sup> Thus, even among

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<sup>831</sup> Eliash, "Di froy un elul," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, August 13, 1915; see, also, R., "Di idishkeyt fun idishe tekhter," *Der tog*, September 26, 1925.

<sup>832</sup> See, e.g., "Minhag America," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, March 12, 1919; "Seventy-Five Years Reform," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 18, 1920; "The Lady

traditional Orthodox Jews a profound change had occurred, centered around the role of women, a change directly connected with the role women played within American religious circles.

Focusing on how publications used Jewish religious and cultural terminology to explain or translate American events or phenomena, as well as graphic modes of contrast and comparison, the next chapter moves from “what” to “how.” By using the old to explain the new, those so doing also perpetuated the old. Another way of stating this is in terms of continuity and discontinuity: in contrasting and comparing, readers could learn about the new, that is, engage in an act of discontinuity with their old image and identity.

## Chapter 8: Seeing and Saying

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Rabbi," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, July 3, 1922; "Jews Dodge the Jewish Issue," *Der tog*, January 25, 1923; "Our Rabbis, Yiddish and the Jews," *Der tog*, January 26, 1923; cf. Karla Goldman, "Reform, Gender, and the Boundaries of American Reform Judaism," in *Perspectives on American Religion and Culture*, edited by Peter W. Williams (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 294.

As demonstrated in the last chapter, the manners by which publications viewed and celebrated Jewish holidays mixed maintenance of old beliefs with modifications and inventions of new beliefs, especially when dealing with the role of women. The complex process by which immigrants negotiated new identities, some radically different and others modifications of their old identities, found advocates among the writers, editors and publishers in the various journals discussed herein. Both writers and readers came from a common culture, and not surprisingly that culture set the terms of reference for both groups. The journey across the Atlantic to the New World did not erase all vestiges of the Old World. For large numbers of immigrants, adherence to forms of Jewish traditional beliefs represented one form of continuity with the past. Another continuity manifested itself in the language used to address the immigrants. Not only did they use Yiddish, but many writers consistently employed religious references and imagery in their writing. They explained or translated America and American events for their readers in cultural terms familiar to their readers, as shown in the chapters concerning American and Jewish holidays. But this particular device went beyond holiday use and beyond the pious. Even those who had rejected religion, such as the writers grouped around the *Forverts*, employed this practice. Many of these writers, Abraham (Ab.) Cahan included, had begun their lives in the yeshivas of Eastern Europe. They and many of their readers came out of religiously saturated environments. When Cahan wrote for the Socialist *Arbeyter tsaytung* before he and others left the Socialist Labor Party to found the *Forverts*, he wrote a column based on the weekly Torah portion which he



signed “*Der proletarishker magid*” [“The Proletarian Preacher”].<sup>833</sup> The persistence of religious references represents one of the continuities between Old and New Worlds.

In a Thanksgiving editorial, *Der tog* referred to immigration restriction laws as a barrier between peoples, using the word for the partition in traditional synagogues separating men from women, the *mekhitse*.<sup>834</sup> The caption to the photograph of a turkey in *Forverts* referred to it as an “American *kapores*,” referring to a pre-Yom Kippur custom [*shlogn kapores*] whereby a man would symbolically transfer his sins to a chicken, which would then be whirled about his head. The caption went on to note that “Thanksgiving is *Yom Kippur* for turkeys.”<sup>835</sup> In a non-holiday reference in *Der tog*, Adella Kean suggested that her readers “*shlogen kapores*” with their old frying pans and substitute them for others.<sup>836</sup> In writing about clothing reform, *Di froyen-velt* declared “[t]he first *kapore* in this struggle must be--the awkward unaesthetic 'slit skirt!'”<sup>837</sup> Celebrating the appointment of a woman to a high position, *Forverts* used a phrase commonly heard among the Orthodox when it wrote that there is “*Borkh hashem*” [“Thank God,” “Bless the Lord”] a female ship’s captain.<sup>838</sup>

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<sup>833</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 169; see, also, Sorin, *Tradition Transformed*, 113-114.

<sup>834</sup> “Thenksgiving,” *Der tog*, November 27, 1924.

<sup>835</sup> “Interesante naves in bilder,” *Forverts*, November 27, 1924.

<sup>836</sup> Adella Kean Zametkin, “Fun a froy tsu froyen,” *Der tog*, July 20, 1918.

<sup>837</sup> “Letste modes in froyen kleyder,” *Di froyen-velt* (September 1913): 3.

<sup>838</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, June 16, 1918.

Thus, in talking about how clothing fashions seem to repeat themselves, a *Forverts* writer remarked that fashions return to *breyshe*s [“In the Beginning”].<sup>839</sup> Another *Forverts* author, Dr. I. Romberg, wrote about those who listened to the *droshe*s [“sermons”] of Margaret Sanger and followed her *toyre* [Torah] on birth control.<sup>840</sup> During 1916’s “Baby Week” in New York City, pioneer pediatrician Dr. Abraham Jacobi, *Der tog* reported, gave an entire *toyre* on child-raising.<sup>841</sup> An article in *Der tog* noted opposition to corset-wearing by doctors for health reasons and reformers for moral reasons, “and neither have had success with their *muser-droshe*s [moralizing sermons].”<sup>842</sup>

Along with the Torah, writers referred to the *Shulkhan arukh*, a codification of Jewish religious laws first printed in the sixteenth century.<sup>843</sup> A 1915 article in *Dos yidishes tageblatt* concerning table etiquette referred to it as “a *Shulkhan arukh* on How to Conduct Oneself at the Table.”<sup>844</sup> *Forverts* reported on an American women’s conference held in South Carolina which called for an end to the racial “double standard” and the establishment of “the same *Shulkhan arukh* on morality.”<sup>845</sup> *Froyen zhurnal*, in an opening column on etiquette, stated that “Today

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<sup>839</sup> “Der elter bobes kleyd iz arayn in der mode,” *Forverts*, September 2, 1917.

<sup>840</sup> Dr. I. Romberg, “Misis senger un ihr kamf far veniger kinder,” *Forverts*, October 29, 1922.

<sup>841</sup> “Di ‘beybi vokh’ in niu york,” *Der tog*, March 9, 1916.

<sup>842</sup> “Vilen nit tantsen mit meyd lakh vos trogen korseten,” *Der tog*, February 8, 1921.

<sup>843</sup> Louis Isaac Rabinowitz, “Shulhan Arukh,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 14 (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1971), 1475.

<sup>844</sup> “A shulkhn orekh vi zikh oyftsufihren baym tish,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 11, 1915.

<sup>845</sup> “Notitsen fun der froyen-velt,” *Forverts*, January 21, 1923.

we have an entire code, an entire *Shulkhan arukh* of forms and manners and refinements.”<sup>846</sup> In a review of Dr. J. Maryson’s pamphlet “*Muter un kind*” [“Mother and Child”] which appeared in the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, A. Sofer termed it “a *Shulkhan arukh*” for mothers,<sup>847</sup> an ironic term to use for something written by a well-known Anarchist.<sup>848</sup>

Describing the use and wonders of the Fireless Cooker in *Der tog*, Adella Kean told readers that the results of this innovation could best be described as “*tam gan-eydn*,” a “taste of Paradise” [literally, a “Taste of the Garden of Eden”].<sup>849</sup> In writing about the contamination of foods by the Trusts, Kean stated “Yes, a quarter of a million unnecessary preventable dead we send to the *malekh hamoves* [“Angel of Death”] for the sins of capitalist society.”<sup>850</sup> In another column, she referred to the dangers of a “new *malekh hamoves*--the automobile.”<sup>851</sup>

As for a non-Jewish actress involved in a breach of promise suit, *Der tog* wrote that “Miss Benson comes from the very *kodshe-kodoshim* [“Holy of Holies,” a reference to the Temple in Jerusalem], she is the daughter of a Bishop in the West.” Describing her a “a bit of a *rebbetsin* [“Rabbi’s wife”], it noted that she “. . . first

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<sup>846</sup> “Etikete,” *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922): 61.

<sup>847</sup> A. Sofer, “A shulkhan arukh far muters,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 10, 1914.

<sup>848</sup> See, Shelby Shapiro, “Yiddish Cultural Figures: Jacob A. Maryson,” *Yiddish of Greater Washington Newsletter* 15, 1 (September-October 1994): 4-5.

<sup>849</sup> Adella Kean Zametkin, “Fun a froy tsu froyen,” *Der tog*, March 8, 1919.

<sup>850</sup> Adella Kean, “Fun a froy tsu froyen,” *Der tog*, February 5, 1921.

<sup>851</sup> Adella Kean, “Froyen-klubs hoben gekent oysfihren shehnere gasen un besere hayzer,” *Der tog*, January 9, 1925; see, also, “Der nayer male-khamoves fun froyen shehnhey,” *Der tog*, October 12, 1915.

became acquainted two years ago with girls and wives of the upper '400' and taught them the holy *toyre* [Torah] of--tango and still other such kosher dances.”<sup>852</sup>

Whether used sarcastically, as in the “holy *toyre* of tango,” or seriously, this linguistic device connected readers to their past, and as long as writers employed such devices, would perpetuate Old World meanings in a New World setting. Jewish religious terms, as shown above, could describe the activities of Jews and non-Jews alike.

Another means by which readers learned of the activities of Jewish and non-Jewish women was through the use of graphics. *American Jewess* had lithographs and photographs as well as drawings. *Di froyen-velt* used photographs and drawings. *Froyen zhurnal*'s pages were filled with photographs.

*Forverts* began its acclaimed rotogravure section in February 1923, establishing a basic format around six months later. All pictures had Yiddish and English captions. The front page contained photographs related to the news, followed by a page devoted to high culture, either a museum, artist or some artistic theme. A travel section broadened geographic horizons, providing further contrast with the workaday world of the American Jewish reading public. The next page, “Pictures of Jewish Life in Europe,” contained pictures reminding readers of where they had originated, and how these places looked today. Right next to the page on Jewish life in Europe was a full page of portraits of Jewish women in America, as if to contrast “there” and “here.” “There” was dirty, rundown, antiquated; “here” was clean-scrubbed, fresh and modern. Other pages included people connected with various organizations, and later a fashion section. This section also contained

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<sup>852</sup> “Di sheyne rebbetsin fun di heylige kosher-tents,” *Der tog*, August 9, 1915.

two-page spreads to promote Yiddish plays and movies, for example Jennie Goldstein as “Tessie the ‘Kid’” in “*Hayntige meyd lakh*” [“Today’s Girls”], right arm on her hip, left hand holding a cigarette.<sup>853</sup> Photographs of prominent Socialists appeared, both in the United States and abroad, as well as a full page of Jewish children who graduated with honors from colleges and high schools.<sup>854</sup>

*Der tog*’s “*Interesante pasirungen fun der vokh in bilder*” [“Interesting Events of the Week in Pictures”] began in 1924. Its photographs lacked the depth, saturation and contrast of the rotogravure section in the *Forverts*; the saturation of the *Forverts* rotogravure section remains impressive even in the first decade of the twenty-first century. *Der tog*’s pictures consisted mostly of celebrities and newsmakers.

The wide variety of opinions, features and photographs offered in these publications represented less confusion than opportunity. Every time a drawing or photograph appeared, whether as part of an article or an advertisement, a new possibility occurred, as readers could compare themselves and their daily lives to those depicted in the pages of magazines and newspapers. The most traditional publication, the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, had the fewest photographs of women. Aside from advertisements, this newspaper had few pictorial models for women to emulate, contrast or compare.

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<sup>853</sup> “Hayntige meyd lakh,” *Forverts*, March 1, 1925.

<sup>854</sup> “Socialist Candidates for Various Offices,” *Forverts*, October 14, 1923 (no women depicted); “Important Personalities at the International Socialist Congress at Marseilles, France,” *Forverts*, September 20, 1925; “German Socialist Women,” *Forverts*, October 4, 1925; “Jewish Children Who Graduated from College and High School with Honors,” *Forverts*, July 12, 1925, July 19, 1925 and July 26, 1925.

*Forverts* exhibited another kind of “contrast and compare” in a dozen single frame cartoons appearing between the end of 1917 and September 1925, primarily in “*Dos shtif-kind*” [“The Stepchild”], the weekly humor page of *Forverts*. The historian Thomas Milton Kemnitz, in an article on British political cartoons, commented on the use of cartoons as historical evidence:

The cartoon has much to offer the historian concerned with public opinion and popular attitudes. It provides little insight into the intellectual bases of opinion--for which the historian usually has better sources--but it can illuminate underlying attitudes. Not only can cartoons provide insight into the depth of emotion surrounding attitudes, but also the assumptions and illusions on which opinions are formed. They remind the historian of the importance of contemporaries placed on seemingly insignificant events and of the relation between these occurrences, popular attitudes, and public opinions.<sup>855</sup>

In the *Forverts* cartoons, mothers and grandmothers invariably are depicted as short, dumpy, wearing aprons, long skirts or dresses, flat-heeled shoes, hair often in a bun, never with cosmetics. The daughters standing next to them invariably are depicted as thinner, with shorter, modern-styled hair, often bobbed, with lipstick and sometimes eye makeup, often in high heels, in short skirts or dresses, bare-armed, with thin eyebrows (as if plucked), often in a blouse with a more modern neckline. Of particular interest, however, is not the contrast in clothing but in physical appearance: invariably the mothers or grandmothers had the stereotyped “Jewish”

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<sup>855</sup> Thomas Milton Kemnitz, “The Cartoon as a Historical Source,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4, 1 (Summer 1973): 86; for an interesting use of cartoons as a source, see Connolly-Smith, *Translating America*, 22-53.

hooked nose, while the daughters invariably had pert, button noses.<sup>856</sup> It was as if the cartoonist(s) performed plastic surgery. In 1921, “[a]lthough some Americans were aware that correction of congenital and acquired deformities such as cleft lips and palates and saddle noses might be attempted, the ‘nose job’ as we know it was comparatively uncommon, face-lifts were brand new, and body surgery for cosmetic purposes was unknown, although some dreamt of it.”<sup>857</sup>

In August 1923, actress Fanny Brice had a nose job at her hotel, prompting the famous quip by the Jewish wit Dorothy Parker that Brice “cut off her nose to spite her race.”<sup>858</sup> In the ten articles on plastic surgery in the three newspapers which appeared between 1919 and 1924, Fanny Brice received two mentions in 1923, neither of which described her nose in ethnic terms. The first article speculated as to how Brice would feel about the surgery. The article, which neither condemned nor approved of the operation, simply stated that Brice felt her nose was ugly and sought to have this corrected.<sup>859</sup> The second article referred to the results as charming and coquettish, noting that not all actresses were as pleased with the procedure as

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<sup>856</sup> “A lebediger khanike lempel,” *Forverts*, December 9, 1917; “Muter un tokhter,” *Forverts*, January 2, 1921; “Fe, tokhter,” *Forverts*, June 12, 1921; “Muter un tokhter,” *Forverts*, June 26, 1921; “Bobe un eynikel,” *Forverts*, March 14, 1922; “Mame un tokhter,” *Forverts*, January 8, 1922; “Tokhter/Muter,” *Forverts*, May 20, 1923; “Bobe (tsum eynikel),” *Forverts*, April 20, 1924; “Muter un Leah,” *Forverts*, April 27, 1924; “Muter: Ikh hob gezogt...,” *Forverts*, September 21, 1924; “Foter: Host epes a guten khosn?” *Forverts*, July 19, 1925; “Shatkhn: -Ayer tokhter...,” *Forverts*, September 13, 1925.

<sup>857</sup> Elizabeth Haiken, *Venus Envy: A History of Cosmetic Surgery* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 19.

<sup>858</sup> *Ibid.*, 82, 96.

<sup>859</sup> “Ven an aktrise vert nimes ihr noz,” *Der tog*, August 16, 1923.

Brice.<sup>860</sup> An article appearing almost a year later discussed the pressures on actors to appear in certain ways, and plastic surgery represented one route they could take.

The article named a number of actresses, but did not include Brice.<sup>861</sup>

Of all the publications in this study, only *Dos yidishes tageblatt* did not have a fashion feature. *American Jewess* carried fashion articles and columns, as did *Di froyen-velt* and *Froyen zhurnal*. *Froyen zhurnal's* extensive section included not only clothes for women, but for boys and girls, as well as embroidery and other forms of house decoration. The fashion section appeared with captions in Yiddish and English, so that, the magazine stated, both mother and daughter could read it together, thus bridging a cultural gap between the generations. *Froyen zhurnal's* fashion pages usually consisted of ten or more pages and appeared simultaneously with those of the English-language women's magazine *Pictorial Review*. Just as mother and daughter could share in reading the captions of the fashion pages, readers of *Froyen zhurnal* and *Pictorial Review* could share their awareness of American fashions for women, children and the home.

When *Forverts* instituted the weekly rotogravure section in February 1923, a fashion feature appeared within months, and for the first time readers could learn about and see the latest fashions without derision or critique. In April 1923, the newspaper ceased its treatment of fashion as frivolity incarnate.<sup>862</sup> *Der tog* carried

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<sup>860</sup> "Miese froyen veren shehn durkh operatsies oyf di ponem'er," *Forverts*, August 21, 1923.

<sup>861</sup> "Vi azoy di muvi-aktrises nitseven iber zeyere ponem'er," *Der tog*, July 22, 1924.

<sup>862</sup> See, e.g., Regina Frishvasser, "Shklaferay fun der mode," *Forverts*, March 3, 1918; Regina Frishvasser, "Oykh mener zeynen gevoren shklafen fun stayls un modes," *Forverts*, August 17, 1919; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, February 1,



fashion pieces from its inception, initially with drawings and commentary by Anna Rittenhouse, and later with a daily pictorial feature. Unlike *Forverts*, *Der tog* did not consider women's fashions frivolous but took the topic seriously, with articles ranging from the descriptive, whether as captions or short paragraphs, to longer pieces. Pictures enabled readers to "try on" both new clothing styles and new identities in their imagination, as publications presented the possible to them.

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Der tog* had editorial cartoons, something only occasionally done at *Forverts*. Of the three papers, *Der tog* had an editorial cartoon every day. The humor pages of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Der tog* also had cartoons and caricatures, often of writers and activists on the East Side and nationally.

The language discussed in this chapter, saturated with the religious culture of Eastern Europe surrounded immigrants no matter what their past or present religious beliefs or practices, and served to both sustain and subvert the subject being discussed. Even when employed to build a new identity, it maintained important aspects of the immigrant's old identity, infusing the new with a special emphasis. If cultural or religious terminology employed the familiar as a means of explanation, publications used visual images to not only to compare and contrast, but also to suggest new paths for readers to take. They could literally see themselves doing so, just like those in the images, whether celebrities or anonymous.

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1920; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, March 20, 1921; "Notitsen fun der froyen-velt," *Forverts*, September 18, 1921.

## Chapter 9: Conclusion

No single Jewish identity existed for Jewish immigrants, male or female. The lack of a single identity is hardly surprising, considering that they came from different regions with differing economic and social levels as well as pressures. The Orthodox rabbi, Kasriel-tsvi Sarasohn, founder of *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, came from the same area as Rebecca A. Altman, a writer for the Reform *American Jewess*.<sup>863</sup> Jewish publications considered themselves guides to their readers and sought to develop identities consistent with the ideologies of their respective journals. These publications presented alternative models to their readers, different mixtures of attitudes and orientations towards religion, politics, the balance between the two, as well as the balance between Old and New Worlds. The issue with these publications is not what they achieved but what they hoped to achieve; the trails they blazed not whether those paths were taken; the alternative ideas presented to their readers no matter whether chosen. Historians must avoid the temptation of proving the “inevitability” of what the historian knows to have occurred. As the German philosopher and linguist Friedrich von Schlegel once observed, historians are prophets looking backward. The reality, as shown in this study, lies in not knowing what the future holds, but in realizing the possibilities presented, the solutions proposed, and the multitude of forks in the historical road.

This study focused on the prescriptive aspects of six publications with regard to women, in what the various journals advocated or opposed. The areas of religion,

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<sup>863</sup> “Editorials,” *American Jewess* (December 1898): 41.

women's suffrage, Jewish nationalism, political ideology, Jewish education, secular education, and women's economic roles, all enable the student to discern the main lines of different identities for Jewish immigrants in general and women in particular.

Three magazines were examined *in toto*: *American Jewess* (1895-1899), *Di froyen-velt* (1913-1914) and *Froyen zhurnal* (1922-1923). These three magazines appeared roughly a decade apart, and spoke to different audiences. *American Jewess* had as its constituency Central European Jewish women and their descendants. Largely middle and upper-middle class, the Eastern European Jewish immigrants represented both a problem and a project to this group. The intended Eastern European female readership of *Di froyen-velt* sought middle-class status; writers addressed women readers as if these women still worked in the shops. *Froyen zhurnal* had an intended readership of women in the middle class, families which could afford the furniture and decorative fashions advertised or discussed in its pages, whose daughters might attend college and even join a sorority.<sup>864</sup> Consumption-oriented, it followed the conventions of the American middle-class women's magazine genre.

The three daily newspapers in this study, *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, founded in 1885, *Forverts*, founded in 1897, and *Der tog*, founded in 1914, all mass circulation newspapers that sold nationwide, considered each other as the enemy: a question not only of fighting for readers and advertisers, but for ethnic leadership itself. Each paper represented a different leader or set of leaders, as well as different solutions to

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<sup>864</sup> See, e.g., Ray Brill, "The Jewish College Girl--Her Varieties," *Froyen zhurnal* (August 1922): 62.

the problems perceived as facing the immigrants. In their roles as publishers, editors, and writers, those involved in these publications served as “group interpreters across ethnic boundaries,” and “cultural mediators,” to quote American ethnic historian Victor R. Greene.<sup>865</sup>

Going from a general description and history of each publication in Chapter 2 to the particular in Chapters 3 through 8, this Conclusion returns to the general to consider the various images of Jewish-American womanhood promoted in each journal. While one method of discerning identity examines the matrix of roles and relationships so that an investigator might consider women as wives, daughters, mothers, and grandmothers, this study concentrates on what particular magazines and newspapers advocated in terms of beliefs and activities. Thus chapters 3 through 8 considered various aspects of Jewish-American beliefs and activities separately: the celebrations of religious and civil holidays, religious orientations, politics, nationalism, attitudes towards women working and learning, Jewish education for children, women as citizens fighting for and then exercising suffrage and citizenship rights, the concerns of women in both the public and private arenas, in both the Jewish and American worlds. This chapter weaves together the separate thematic strands of the earlier chapters to present the fabrics of identity promoted by each publication.

*American Jewess* promoted an identity combining nineteenth-century gentility, pious Reform Judaism with strong female participation, support for the

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<sup>865</sup> Cf. Greene, *American Immigrant Leaders, 1900-1910*, 4-6, 7, 8, 15-16, 86-95, 100-104.

political Zionism of Theodor Herzl, and a vigorous woman's club movement. The magazine and its publisher offered to represent the National Council of Jewish Women and criticized that organization for its failure to promote religious observance, in particular the pledge to restore the Sabbath to its "pristine purity." Also, *American Jewess* supported "religious suffrage," but not political suffrage. While single women could work, the magazine implied that married women should not with their duties as wife and mother eclipsing all other interests.

*Di froyen-velt* fought against religious superstition. The magazine stood apart from other middle-class woman's magazines with its support of political suffrage and labor organization. As with the other publications in this study, excluding the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, *Di froyen-velt* printed fashion articles. The ideal *Di froyen-velt* woman had an interest in public affairs, women's suffrage, fashion and health matters. Seeing itself as a *vegwayzer* ["guide"] in a world undergoing vast changes, where women entered factory work and stood side-by-side with men, they consequently demanded entry into areas hitherto off-limits to women. The magazine also sought to teach its readers about cultural and domestic matters, including how to raise children, and conduct themselves in the kitchen and at home.

*Froyen zhurnal*, unlike *Di froyen-velt*, avoided any critique of religious customs, practices and beliefs, and instead advocated adherence to traditional Judaism, primarily through the regular Yiddish columns of Ella Blum and the English columns by Harold Berman, I. L. Brill and Ray Brill. The magazine both informed and celebrated female achievements professionally and elsewhere within the work force. *Froyen zhurnal* also devoted considerable space to the Yiddish theater and its

female stars; only three issues failed to carry such articles. The actress Bessie Thomashevsky contributed five pieces between June and December 1922. *Di froyen-velt*, by contrast, carried nothing about the Yiddish theater.

The publishers of *Di froyen-velt* introduced their magazine when Jewish immigrants were in the process of leaving the working class to enter the lower middle class. When *Froyen zhurnal* appeared in 1922, that transition largely had already taken place. *Froyen zhurnal*'s English section, specifically addressed to the daughters of its intended readership, discussed Jewish college girls and what they would do after graduation. While both magazines carried fashion news, *Froyen zhurnal*'s extensive section included not only clothes for women, but for boys and girls, as well as embroidery and other forms of house decoration. The fashion section appeared with captions in Yiddish and English, so that, the magazine stated, both mother and daughter could read it together.

The ideal *Froyen zhurnal* woman, while placing home and children at the center of her life, could also participate in the professional and career world. She practiced traditional Judaism, dressed fashionably, used cosmetics and had a basic knowledge of high culture. Even though the magazine took a mildly pro-Zionist stand, political ideology did not play a central role in its pages. As if to emphasize the basically apolitical nature of the magazine, unlike the daily newspapers which saw each other as the enemy, nobody apparently perceived of *Froyen zhurnal* as competitor or threat. In 1922, for example, all three newspapers carried

advertisements for *Froyen zhurnal*.<sup>866</sup> Only two other publications, the Jewish holiday annuals edited by Khanan Minikes and *Der idisher almanakh* [*The Jewish Almanac*], edited by Victor Mirsky, who also served as editor of *Froyen zhurnal*, advertised in all three newspapers.<sup>867</sup> For the most part, journals advertised in newspapers close to their own political ideology.

*Dos yidishes tageblatt* promoted a Jewish-American womanhood rooted in traditional Orthodox Judaism: the Jewish Woman of Valor, self-sacrificing, dedicated to home, husband and children. While in favor of educating girls in Jewish matters, the newspaper did not advocate secular education beyond the high school level. The newspaper expected women to exercise their right to vote, not as part of a female bloc to advance women's interests, but rather as part of the Jewish community to advance the power of that community. *Dos yidishes tageblatt* provided little coverage of women working in jobs, careers or professions, and did not suggest such activities. By constantly stressing the role of women in the home, they discouraged participation in the world outside the home. With the exception of Madame Curie and Henrietta Szold, the founder of Hadassah, the female exemplars of *Dos yidishes tageblatt* had two attributes in common: none was alive, and none had lived in the twentieth century.

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<sup>866</sup> "Der idishes froyen zhurnal/The Jewish Woman's Home Journal," *Der tog*, April 18, 1922; *Forverts*, April 22, 1922; *Forverts*, June 3, 1922; *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, June 4, 1922; *Forverts*, June 5, 1922; *Der tog*, June 6, 1922.

<sup>867</sup> See, e.g., "Minikes' sukes blat," *Der tog*, September 11, 1918; *Forverts*, September 5, 1918; *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 11, 1918; "Minike's pesakh blat," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, April 9, 1922; *Forverts*, April 9, 1922; *Der tog*, April 11, 1922; *Forverts*, April 12, 1922; "Der idisher almanakh," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, November 18, 1921; *Forverts*, February 5, 1922; *Der tog*, February 6, 1922.

*Forverts* promoted the Jewish-American woman as one who should be educated and employed in the work force or professions. The newspaper, while not openly opposing religion in the same way that it opposed Jewish nationalism nevertheless did not encourage or advocate in religious activities. Her children might attend the afternoon schools of the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring. If working, she would belong to a labor union. The newspaper did not suggest that women belong to the Socialist Party. Within the Socialist Party, *Forverts* never encouraged women to run for office or become active beyond voting. In line with the pro-suffrage plank in the Socialist Party platform, *Forverts* supported women's suffrage, though not to the extent of the other publications. The newspaper did not, for example, grapple with the arguments of those opposed to suffrage. Nor did the newspaper encourage women to become officers at any level or take any leading role in their labor unions. If in traditional Jewish society men achieved status through their activities in the public religious sphere, then in America they could achieve status through their activities in the public secular sphere of Party and labor union. Just as "children should be seen but not heard," women could be led, but not lead. *Forverts* did not challenge traditional gender roles: the "Socialist womanhood" of *Forverts* consisted of voting the Party ticket during elections and supporting her husband.

As noted in Chapter 2, the Socialist content of the women's page of the *Forverts* waxed and waned. During the revolutionary year of 1919, the political convulsions that occurred received scant coverage on the woman's page. Sadie Vinokur wrote descriptions of a shopgirl's life on the woman's page from 1918 to 1922. It was only in the last three of the twenty-nine articles that Vinokur went



beyond descriptive stories to analysis and a call for action. Two pieces discussed the differences between American-born and immigrant shopgirls, while the third focused on the idealism of those already Americanized who were active as picketers, strikers and chairwomen.<sup>868</sup> While Dr. Esther Luria, a member of the Jewish Labor Bund, wrote an article on the low wages paid to women, this piece represented an exception. Otherwise, Luria's pieces concerned child-raising, child psychology and education. Judith Kopf briefly wrote articles referring to "we Socialists" before returning to discussing childcare and nutrition, as noted in Chapter 2. When *Forverts* instituted the weekly rotogravure section in February 1923, a fashion feature appeared within months, and for the first time readers could learn about and see the latest fashions without derision or critique. In April 1923, the newspaper ceased its treatment of fashion as frivolity incarnate.

*Der tog* promoted an image of Jewish women who stressed Jewish national feeling, whether of a Zionist variety or in terms of Yiddish culture. The newspaper saw religious holidays and customs through nationalist lenses. As a nonpartisan paper, it printed articles from a wide spectrum of political ideologies, with an overall tone of tolerance. For the most part, the newspaper presented women in jobs, careers, and professions in a very positive light, celebrating female achievements economically and educationally. One of the paper's regular columnists, D. M. Hermalin, who died in 1921, placed women on a pedestal; according to him, the

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<sup>868</sup> Sadie Vinokur, "Di idish-amerikanishe meyd lakh fun unzere sheper farshtehen nit di imigrantkes," *Forverts*, October 2, 1921; Sadie Vinokur, "Gants andere idishe meydelakh arbeyten haynt in di sheper," *Forverts*, August 6, 1922; Sadie Vinokur, "Idealistkes tsvishen di amerikanizirte arbeyter meyd lakh in di sheper," *Forverts*, August 13, 1922.

center of a woman's life should be as wife and mother. Alone among the paper's writers, he questioned whether women should be active in the workplace. A believer in the idea that women "naturally" played a nurturing role and as an ardent suffragist, he believed that women were innately morally superior to men. Even though female columnists for *Der tog* did not share Hermalin's worshipful views of women, they also stressed female achievements. Of all the publications in this study, only *Der tog* had a daily woman's page, even if not so denominated. Every day the back page covered items deemed of interest to women. Daily *Der tog* printed a column initially by Hermalin and after his death by J. Chaikin, as well as columns from the pens of Adella Kean and Ray Malis. Adella Kean's columns were ever present, as she wrote about everything from nutrition to natal care, suffrage to citizenship. She was but one of a group of women columnists whose work appeared not only in the women's pages but also throughout the newspaper. The number of columns and articles written by Adella Kean made her the true voice of the women's page in *Der tog*. The women's pages in *Forverts* and *Dos yidishes tageblatt* appeared on a weekly basis.

A reader of *Der tog* learned about Yiddish culture, American history, Jewish nationalism, the women's movement and women's fashions. *Der tog* carried fashion pieces from its inception, initially with drawings and commentary by Anna Rittenhouse, and later with a daily pictorial feature.

Returning to Benedict Anderson's concept of print culture working to create an "imagined community," four of the six publications in this study connected with other institutions within the larger Jewish community in efforts to recast the

community in the ideological image of the particular journal. These institutional networks constituted loose “movement cultures,” in which the values, beliefs and solidarity with others holding the same viewpoints could be created, shared, strengthened, and recreated.<sup>869</sup> Thus, *American Jewess* championed progressive Reform Temples and the National Council of Jewish Women. *Forverts* promoted the labor unions representing Jewish workers, the fraternal order Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring, and the literary and political journal *Di tsukunft* [*The Future*]. For *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, the institutional constellation included Talmud Torahs, the fraternal organization known as the Independent Order of Brith Abraham,<sup>870</sup> the Zionist youth group Young Judea,<sup>871</sup> and the political party of the Orthodox Zionists, Mizrachi. *Der tog* promoted the Farband fraternal order, various Yiddish cultural publications, and the National Radical Folk Schools instead of Talmud Torahs or the Socialist afternoon schools of the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring.

Consideration of these institutional networks ties in with the concept of the publishers and editors of these newspapers as ethnic leaders.<sup>872</sup> The ethnic leadership they hoped to achieve helps to explain the vehemence with which each paper attacked the other. A newspaper could cast itself on the side of the angels by

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<sup>869</sup> Cf. Dick Geary, “Beer and Skittles? Workers and Culture in Early Twentieth-Century Germany,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 46, 3 (2000): 388-389, 394-395, 397.

<sup>870</sup> For the Independent Order of Brith Abraham, see, Morris A. Gutstein, “Brith Abraham,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 4, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1977), 1379-1380.

<sup>871</sup> For Young Judea, see, “Young Judea,” in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* Vol. 16, edited by Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1977), 860.

depicting an opponent as a tool of the devil, for example, against the corrupt political machine of Tammany Hall.

*Forverts* accused *Der tog* of serving the Tammany grafters by printing State government advertisements in an editorial “*Der nadn vos temmeni shikt tsum ‘tog’ durkh albani*” [“The Dowry Sent by Tammany to *Der Tog* through Albany”] which occurred after *Der tog* took over *Wahrheit*, another competitor of *Forverts*. Stating that *Der tog* and *Wahrheit* represented a married couple, it was clear to *Forverts* that the government advertising contract that *Wahrheit* brought along with it represented the dowry. The wedding of the two papers therefore was accomplished through graft, *Forverts* claimed, as it awaited a “Tammany dance” on the pages of *Der tog*.<sup>873</sup>

*Der tog*, after repeated accusations along the same line by *Forverts*, boasted of the exasperation of *Forverts* with *Der tog*:

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It seems our loving neighbor, the *Forverts*, has just one ambition in life: to besmirch and insult the newspaper which has, in its short existence, had such a gigantic success and become beloved by classes and strata of Yiddish readers, that is *Der tog*. *Forverts* recently come out with a pack of lies and libels about us.

tog [*The*

There was a time when the *Forverts* wouldn’t even remember the name “*Tog*.” If they printed a report, a cable dispatch, or even a tiny piece of news from *Der tog*, *Forverts*, posing as an “honorable Socialist” newspaper, would not even mention where they got it. People then joked that on all ten floors of the Forwards Building you wouldn’t even greet someone with “Good day” [“*a gutn tog*”] or say that it was “a beautiful day” [“*a sheynem tog*”], because you would be reminding people of the existence of our newspaper, *Der Day*].

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<sup>872</sup> Cf. Greene, *American Immigrant Leaders*, 7, 14, 15-16.

<sup>873</sup> “*Der nadn vos temmeni shikt tsum ‘tog’ durkh albani*,” *Forverts*, March 27, 1919.

Unlike *Forverts*, which campaigned for Socialist Party candidates, *Der tog*, as an independent, non-partisan paper, did not represent any party. As to *Forverts* claims that *Der tog* was a Tammany paper, *Der tog*'s editorial stated "*This is a lie, and the Forverts knows it, as well as we and all our readers do.*" The editorial went on to state that *Forverts* made its claim on the basis of an advertisement: "*Der tog* has continually printed advertisements of Republicans, Democrats and Socialists and is proud of this. An advertisement is an advertisement and has nothing to do with the editorial policy of a newspaper."<sup>874</sup> *Dos yidishes tageblatt* also carried political advertisements, and endorsed Tammany's opponent in 1917.<sup>875</sup>

Both *Forverts* and *Der tog* accused each other of being in the back pocket of the antisemite Henry Ford. The basis for these charges: printing advertisements for Ford automobiles.<sup>876</sup>

As with traditional synagogues, the "movement culture" of fraternal organizations and political parties primarily consisted of men. Some of the fraternal organizations and political parties had "ladies' auxiliaries," but these served merely to support male-dominated organizations. *American Jewess* urged more female

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<sup>874</sup> "Der 'forverts' un temeni hol," *Der tog*, October 30, 1919.

<sup>875</sup> "Murphy & Mitchell," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 7, 1917.

<sup>876</sup> J. Foshko, "Arayngeföhren!," *Der tog*, Dec. 26, 1923; "Iden fun gantsen land protestiren gegen henri ford's advertayzments in idishe tsaytungen," *Der tog*, December 28, 1923; "Tsaytungs farkoyfer in shikago in strayk gegen'forverts'," *Der tog*, December 31, 1923; "Di 'frume neshome' aleyn hot ersht nit lang tsurik advertayzt ford's kars," *Forverts*, January 3, 1924; Louis Ginzburg, "Rov fardamt dem 'forverts' un morgen zshurnal' efentlikh fun der bime," *Der tog*, January 5, 1924; "'Forverts' itst di eyntsige idishe tsaytung vos drukt ford's advertayzment," *Der tog*, January 7, 1924.

participation in synagogue life and supported the National Council of Jewish Women. Writers for *Der tog* such as Adella Kean and Ray Malis suggested the formation of Mother's Clubs. Certainly, as set forth in Chapter 3, widespread support existed for the Jewish education of girls. This became a necessity as a direct result of the "feminization of religion" in America. Here women, not men, had the responsibility for the religious education of future generations.

Certainly Jewish publications, whether in Yiddish or English, did not view Europe with sentimental longing. Reports of European antisemitism, discrimination and pogroms filled their pages, no matter what their political or religious complexion. None of the publications in this dissertation extolled the Old Country. However, a few articles nostalgically recalled the celebration of religious holidays. Louis Lakson, Literary Editor for *Froyen zhurnal*, wrote that Rosh Hashanah always filled him with a feeling of nostalgia for his childhood years in the Old Country, where the air was thick with a sense of holiness.<sup>877</sup> In *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, Eliash contrasted Chanuka as celebrated in America and in the Old Country. Everything was surrounded in Jewishness there, the eyes of children in *kheder* were filled with wonder, as desires to be heroic and save the Jewish people were awakened. In America everything is different. Here people admire muscle and "*faytin*" ["fighting"]. "This is the holiday of Jewish heroism, of Jewish courage, of Jewish

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<sup>877</sup> L. Lakson, "Tsum nayem yohr," *Froyen zhurnal* (October 1922): 5; see, also, "Di froy un simkhes toyre," *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, September 29, 1915.

sacrifice.”<sup>878</sup> Eliash thus implicitly compared the raucousness of the American New Year’s celebration with the quiet holiness of its Jewish temporal counterpart.

An important common denominator among the Yiddish publications consisted of their use of Jewish religious and cultural terminology to explain America and things American. This device not only explained the new in terms of the old, the strange in terms of the familiar, but served as well to perpetuate a certain knowledge about Jewish culture. To know that the *Shulkhan arukh* concerned itself with ethics did not mean that the person reading or writing the title of that tract had read it. The religious and cultural phrases discussed in Chapter 8 appeared in Orthodox papers such as *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, nationalist ones such as *Der tog*, and Socialist publications such as *Forverts*. To use a non-Jewish comparison, knowing that jealousy is referred to as the “green-eyed monster” does not imply that those using the term necessarily read *Othello*.

Americanization stood as the common denominator among all the publications in this study. *American Jewess* not only conceived of its readers as outstanding Americans who Americanized the immigrants through philanthropic activities in the National Council of Jewish Women, but also as the Jewish equivalents of Christian clubwomen. *Di froyen-velt* and *Froyen zhurnal* expressly declared themselves as *vegvayzers* for immigrant women. Through their columns, the two magazines informed readers of the activities of both Jewish and non-Jewish women in America and abroad.

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<sup>878</sup> Eliash, “Ertseht ayere kinder,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, December 5, 1915.

Despite the differences exhibited by the various publications in this study, they shared one particular characteristic: a dedication to becoming Americans, though what constituted “becoming American” varied from journal to journal. To *Forverts*, for example, being a good American meant allegiance to the Socialist Party. The treatment of American civic holidays, frequently cast in Jewish religious language, in addition to express statements supporting Americanization point to this conclusion. In February 1897, a writer for *American Jewess* declared that “[t]o live under the protection of this glorious young nation, unmolested and unthwarted, in freedom and liberty, all that is best and highest of humanity develops and refines in thee into fairer form and higher achievement. Thy nature, steeped for generations in the traditions and dreams of the picturesque Orient, is absorbing and enfolding the practical realism of the Occident. The future is in thy hands.”<sup>879</sup> All of the publications presented a middle class American lifestyle as desirable, despite differing political and religious ideologies, a presentation in line with what the immigrants and their children experienced under American conditions.

In 1918, *Forverts* compared Tammany Hall politicians who bought votes to Socialist Party candidates, saying that “[t]he second is the true American; the first only a *khilel-hashem* [“Desecrator of the Lord,” i.e., a blasphemer] of America.”<sup>880</sup> This quote demonstrated the dedication of the *Forverts*, which condemned “Zionist chauvinism,” to the process of Americanization. Not only did *Forverts* engage in

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<sup>879</sup> S. E. S., “In the Temple,” *American Jewess* (February 1897): 215.

<sup>880</sup> “Amerikanizeyshon,” *Forverts*, August 5, 1918.



“American chauvinism,” it did so in explicitly religious terminology: irony heaped upon irony.

Writing in 1920 that *Der tog* binds Jews with Americans, and American Jewry with World Jewry, the newspaper declared on its sixth anniversary: “It [*Der tog*] called itself a a ‘national newspaper’--national in two senses, national, representing the interests of the Jews of America in its entirety, not just serving East Broadway, not an organ of the one and only class--but of all layers, a mirror of the general life of the Jews of America. A newspaper for *American Jews*, and therefore an *American* newspaper, for whom America is not just a constant object of critique, but a land to which we belong heart and soul, a country to which we are bound, in which we are citizens and fellow creators.”<sup>881</sup>

In the very first issue of *Froyen zhurnal* in May 1922, the publishers set forth Americanization as the very reason for starting the magazine, writing in the English section that “[t]his magazine has a message for you, kind friends--the message of a finer and deeper Americanism, as well as a better understanding between the ideas of the old world and the ideals of the new world.” This opening editorial stated “Jewish immigrant--you who are anxious to learn what America means and represents, here is your medium for the knowledge you seek.”<sup>882</sup> The Yiddish-language opening editorial declared that “America is the land of our children. The *Froyen zhurnal* will help create what is most necessary in our Jewish life--a bridge between Mamas and

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<sup>881</sup> “Zeks yohr ‘tog,’” *Der tog*, November 5, 1920.

<sup>882</sup> “The Jewish Woman’s Home Journal,” *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922): 66.

children. The *Froyen zhurnal* will teach Mamas to better understand their children and their land--America.”<sup>883</sup>

The Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt* expressed its view of America as a land of safety, tolerance and opportunity in a long, worshipful 1914 Sukkos editorial, which used the *suke* [booth] as a metaphor for life in America:

Our *suke* in America is the newest of all *sukes* which we have in all parts of the world. We came to this New World already after being tired of shlepping ourselves from land to land and country to country. Here we found the peace for which we waited, or much more than what we had awaited.

We experienced a few difficulties before we raised our tents here. The first governor of New York, which was then New Amsterdam and belonged to Holland, had no desire to allow the first Jewish immigrants and one had to use *shtadlones* [intercession by the influential] but finally they were allowed to settle, and there were no regrets about them coming here.

In two hundred fifty years the number of Jews in America increased from twenty-seven persons to two and a half million souls. Jews in America are now second in number after the Jews in Russia. Jewish *suke* in America is without *ayen-hore* [“the Evil Eye”] and becomes bigger and bigger.

But our *suke* is not just big; it is also comfortable, and we feel safer in her than in all of our other *sukes*. No stones are thrown into the Jew’s *suke* in America, no attack has been made on Jewish tents in the land of freedom.

The Jewish *suke* in America is supported by the strong wall of America’s laws of freedom; our foundation is the American Constitution; and our defense is the liberalism of the country.

We are safe from the stormy winds of antisemitism, which shall not

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<sup>883</sup> “Der froyen zhurnal,” *Froyen zhurnal* (May 1922): 3.

blow off the roof of our *suke*, or burn down the sides of our tent.

Quiet and confident can the Jew sit at his table in our American *suke*.  
He is among friendly neighbors. No scoundrels will disquiet him.

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our

Once in a while one hears the voice of a solitary antisemitic  
in the peaceful air baying at the moon, but that will not disturb  
rest.

This year, more than ever, we feel how fortunate we are to have  
settled in our American *suke*. The tents of our brothers in Europe  
shake strongly at this moment. Who knows in what kind of condition  
we will find the Jewish *suke* in Galicia and in Russia! Who knows  
what the stormy winds will make of them! We are fortunate to find  
ourselves in a quiet place.

The only wish we can have is that the American *suke* shall be a  
protection for us in the future just as in the past, and that millions of  
Jews should find the calm which we have found.

Many of our brothers will come to us in the near future, fleeing from  
the lands of war. They should only find the same open door through  
which we entered, and should find no hinderances in this new Jewish  
home.

The editorial then turned from the American *suke* to a more nationalist perspective:

“We should not forget the best home is the only home, and an only home is the land  
of the Jewish heritage, the land of the Jewish nation.” While expressing gratitude  
towards America, the editorial concluded by noting “[l]et us hope that the security of  
the Jewish *suke* in America will not cool the Jewish eagerness for its historical home .

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As the above quotations indicate, the publishers and writers in these  
publications saw Americanization as one of their goals; what “being a Jewish-  
American” varied from one to another. Each journal represented different mixes of

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<sup>884</sup> “Unzer suke in amerika,” *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, October 7, 1914.

Old and New World sensibilities and beliefs, views of the past and hopes for the future. Were Jews a faith community, a nationality, or a particular ethnic subsection of the American working or middle classes? As this study demonstrates, the issue of Jewish-American identity remained an open question as did the leadership of the Jewish community, and the directions those vying for leadership would take their followers. The very open-ended nature of Jewish identity in America testifies to the vitality of Jewish life in the New World.

As noted earlier, these publications exhibited relatively little change over the time period of this study beyond format. With the daily newspapers, the women's page also became the site for continuations of stories or articles that began elsewhere in the publication. Some of the women's pages shared space with columns on chess and prize-fighting. With the death of D. Hermalin, the mainstay of *Der tog's* women's page, a change of tone occurred. Neither J. Chaikin, Hermalin's successor, nor Adella Kean, the main writer on women's issues for *Der tog*, placed women on a pedestal as innately virtuous and peaceful. *Forverts* displayed change in its attitude toward the activities of Zionists in Palestine. Although it did not become Zionist, more articles friendly to Zionism appeared.

For Jewish women, other issues complicated the picture: what exactly would a Jewish-American wife's role be? Should home and hearth remain the center of her life, or should she set career and professional goals beyond the family circle? Who would be responsible for educating Jewish children and youth, and what form would that education take? The Socialist *Forverts* saw women as workers, mothers, members of labor unions and supporters of the Socialist Party who would live a

middle class life. The publications which identified with traditional Orthodox Judaism, in particular *Dos yidishes tageblatt* and *Froyen zhurnal*, advocated placing women at the center of Jewish observance, rather than at the periphery. *American Jewess*, a Reform publication, had a similar viewpoint about the centrality of women in worship. The non-religious *Der tog* took a similar view of the holidays, although along nationalist rather than religious lines. The New World brought all kinds of possibilities and opportunities to Jewish women. Jewish women certainly worked outside the home in Eastern Europe, but the range of work possibilities had a much more limited nature. The expanding American economy and the rise of a new consumption-oriented middle class meant a desire for consumer goods as well as a workforce to sell these goods. Jewish women went from selling commodities in *shtetl* stalls to working behind the counters of American department stores, a relatively new commercial institution.

The Great War expanded the types of jobs available, in addition to undermining the remaining arguments against women's suffrage based on women as the "weaker sex." Not only did war work undermine the arguments of suffrage opponents, it furnished the more potent weapon of entitlement to the arsenal of suffrage supporters. The Jewish press, as shown herein, for the most part supported suffrage, albeit to varying degrees.

The variety of proposed identities, possibilities and mechanisms for acculturation and stances presents a striking picture. Each publication presented a different image of Jewish womanhood to its readers, images shaped by ideology. Yet each publication, regardless of ideology, sought to redefine the meaning of

Jewish womanhood. For *American Jewess*, this meant full “religious suffrage,” support for Zionism, and activity within the temple and philanthropic organizations. Only *American Jewess* took a dim view of both women’s suffrage and work outside the home. Yet even that magazine saw wider participation for Jewish women as necessary and desirable. *Di froyen-velt* called for liberation from religious superstition and an active role for women as voting citizens. In the secular arena, *Froyen zhurnal* called for greater economic and political participation by women. In the sacred arena, columnists and writers such as Ella Blum, Harold Berman, I. L. Brill and Ray Brill argued for a woman-centered traditional Judaism. In the Orthodox *Dos yidishes tageblatt*, writers such as I. L. Brill and Eliash likewise sought a more woman-centered Orthodox Judaism. *Der tog* interpreted the holidays from both a woman-centered and national viewpoint. Meanwhile, columnists such as Adella Kean and Ray Malis encouraged women to expand their economic and political roles to empower them beyond the confines of the home. *Forverts* called for greater economic participation by women. In these six publications, a fundamental shift in emphasis occurred as writers wrote to, for and about the role of Jewish women and how they envisioned that role. Whether women readers would respond to these visions remained an open question: the writers, editors and publishers set the alternatives before the reading public for them to choose. This study deepens our understanding of the complexities of the various proposed identities.

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