Producing New Women:

Work, Consumer Culture and Jewish Clothing Companies in Wilhelmine Germany

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the involvement of Jewish commercial clothiers in the making of women's modernity in turn-of-the century Berlin. Its focus is specifically on expressions of support for and collaboration with the first women's movement, and on the promotion of feminine ideals that corresponded with the modern female type known as the New Woman, in a non-advertising context. The thesis explores how the public investment of clothing manufacturers and retailers in the middle-class women's cause related to their roles as employers, pioneers of consumer culture, and profit-driven businesses, each of these areas intersecting with middle-class women's modernity in different ways. Using a mixed methodology including ideas from discourse analysis and close reading, the author considers how these positions were inflected by class, gender and ethnicity. Importantly, the research suggests how the Jewishness of companies and their owners factored into the equation, among other things through politics and Jewish philanthropic practices.

The arguments draw on three original case studies, which also represent three arenas in which women's modernity was manifested in Wilhelmine Berlin, the centre of the German clothing trade: the commercial company, the trade press, and the universal exhibition. The first chapter analyses the illustrated promotional albums published by *Kaufhaus* N. Israel, a family-run store and clothing manufacturer in Berlin. The findings show how the firm idealised the growing participation of women in modern life and connected this phenomenon to contemporary feminism. The second chapter examines how the journal *Der Confectionair*, as the leading trade publication of commercial clothiers, sided with the middle-class women's cause while remaining sceptical about reform in the clothing industry, which through its manufacturing practices contributed to the marginalisation of working-class women. The third chapter addresses the central role played by commercial clothiers

at the 1912 women's exhibition "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," demonstrating for the first time how certain Jewish groups used the event as a platform to further Jewish interests.

The dissertation centers on the tension between commercialism and activism/political idealism, arguing that both phenomena are, in addition to other factors, simultaneously active in the examples discussed. The research raises questions about the lack of attention to commercial actors and the role of market liberalism in the annals of German feminism, which seems to correlate with the tendency to label Jewish women's feminist activism as Jewish only in cases where it functioned as an expression of a Jewish religious identity. It connects the history of the Imperial German women's movement with the histories of German business as well as the history of the Berlin-Jewish community. The text offers a cultural historical reading of the activities of German-Jewish clothiers, illustrating, in the process, how the impact of business and the people behind it extended into the social and cultural spheres of Wilhelmine German life. Ultimately, the thesis suggests how a predominantly male, Jewish cohort participated in the co-production of female modernity through commercial business, and how its efforts resulted in a particular female ideal: the *productive* (or producing) modern woman.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AZDJ – *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*

BJFB – *Blätter des Jüdischen Frauenbundes für Frauenarbeit und Frauenbewegung*

DKD – *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*

HLA – Helene Lange Archiv

HSA – Hamburg State Archive

JFB – *Jüdischer Frauenbund* (Jewish Women's League)

JWA – Jewish Women's Archive

JMB – Jewish Museum Archive, Berlin

LAB – Landesarchiv, Berlin

LBI – Leo Baeck Institute

LBIYB – Leo Baeck Institute Year Book

NIL – National Library of Israel

ZDSJ – *Zeitschrift für Demographie und Statistik der Juden*

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores the connections between commerce and the middle-class women's cause, and the Jewish dimensions of this relationship in Wilhelmine Germany. It is a cultural history that intersects with the spheres of business and the economy while connecting to important social and political phenomena between the 1890s and the beginning of the First World War. It is also a very "Berlin" story. Berlin is where the events of this dissertation unfold, and it is where its main actors are based. Berlin was the capital of Imperial German industrial production and German cultural life. It was, furthermore, an important centre for German Jews, one in five of whom resided in Berlin by 1900 (and close to one in three by the 1930s).[1] In this dissertation, Jewish history meets the history of urban business and German modernity. I survey through three examples how prominent commercial clothiers in Berlin positioned themselves as supporters of women's rights, modernity, and professionalisation. Most of the companies in question were owned by Jewish families. I explore the relevance of this factor, alongside other variables, as I cover this striking chapter of German, German-Jewish, and feminist history for the first time.[2]

Focusing on the Jewishness of actors when studying their involvement in general modernising movements is not without its complications. Indeed, according to Peter Gay, it is "sheer anti-Semitic tendentiousness, or philo-Semitic parochialism, to canvass the great phenomenon of Modernism from the vantage point of the Jewish question."[3] Gay, like many prominent central European historians who have shared his view, was of the generation that had lived through the Holocaust as refugees or emigrés from Germany or Austria.[4] The Berlin ready-to-wear garment trade, or

[1] Jakob Lestschinsky, *Das wirtschaftliche Schicksal des deutschen Judentums: Aufstieg, Wandlung, Krise, Ausblick* ([Berlin?], [1932]), 61.
[2] By "feminist" history I mean here the histories of feminist thought and the women's movement, rather than a "feminist" rewriting of history. See below for a disambiguation of terms and outline of methodologies used in this dissertation.
[3] Peter Gay, *Freud, Jews, and other Germans: Masters and Victims of Modernist Culture* (New York, 1978), 21.
[4] See discussion in Lisa Silverman, "Revealing Jews: Culture and Visibility in Modern Central Europe," *Shofar* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 135–6.

Konfektion, on which this dissertation concentrates, is a particularly delicate topic, because, like modernist movements in art, it was centrally associated by the Nazis with both Jewishness and cultural and moral decline. This devastating association was used to justify the murder and dispossession of Jewish businessmen and their families. As far as some scholars are concerned, the impulse to pay attention to Jewishness where it is not made explicit is not only discriminatory but distorts the historical record, since individuals may, in fact, not have been "acting as Jews." Others yet have questioned the ethics of "labeling social actors with, or even imprisoning them in, a category not necessarily of their own choosing," as Leora Auslander points out.[5]

Several historians have challenged these perceptions, with Auslander asserting that the analytical exclusion of Jewishness "limits our capacity to tangle with the messy problem of what being Jewish is all about."[6] Contending with Gay's arguments directly, Auslander argues that "Jewishness was deeply relevant to [Jews'] taste [for modernism]," because, as scholars in the last few decades have demonstrated, "very few German Jews were, in fact, assimilated in the sense of having lost all contact with Judaism."[7] In her work on Jewish "passing" in Weimar Germany, Kerry Wallach has similarly contested Gay's views by maintaining that "social conditions and inner-Jewish discourses" influenced Jewish cultural production, which "originated under different circumstances [...]."[8] Lisa Silverman encourages us, meanwhile, to "expose the 'assumptions and practices' inherent in eyewitness testimonies," so that we may better understand categories of difference and "expose the system that constructed" these differences in the first place.[9] In her work on Jews in interwar Austria, Silverman suggests "how the experiences of a variety of Austrians of varying levels of Jewish self-identification, as well as the culture they produced, can become powerful historical evidence for how

[5] Leora Auslander, "The Boundaries of Jewishness, or When is a Cultural Practice Jewish?" *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 8, no. 1 (March 2009): 48.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., 55. See also Elana Shapira, "Jewish Identity, Mass Consumption, and Modern Design," in *Longing, Belonging, and the Making of Jewish Consumer Culture*, ed. Gideon Reuveni and Nils Roemer (Leiden, 2010), 61–90; Elana Shapira, ed., *Designing Transformation: Jews and Cultural Identity in Central European Modernism* (London, 2021).
[8] Kerry Wallach, *Passing Illusions: Jewish Visibility in Weimar Germany* (Ann Arbor, 2017), 13.
[9] Silverman, "Revealing Jews," 135.

Jewish difference functioned to constitute Austrian self-understandings."[10] Among the most recent works in this expanding field, Jonathan Freedman's book *The Jewish Decadence: Jews and the Aesthetics of Modernity* argues that the Jewish response to "a body of thought that saw them as the cause or linchpin of decline and degeneracy," in effect inspired Jews to transform both the culture of European modernism and themselves.[11]

Historians of the so-called "economic turn" in Jewish Studies have similarly engaged with the role of Jewish difference in defining the experiences and strategies used by Jews in their economic activities, broadly conceived.[12] These studies suggest how Jewish history may benefit from re-discovering economic themes while moving away from the reductive and essentialist positions of classical thinkers such as Max Weber and Werner Sombart regarding the relationship between Jews and modern capitalism. Gideon Reuveni and Sarah Wobick-Segev's edited volume *The Economy in Jewish History* from 2011, among the first to break a long-standing taboo surrounding economic themes in modern Jewish history, includes a contribution by Wobick-Segev that is particularly relevant for the present dissertation. Wobick-Segev makes sophisticated use of Jewishness in her analysis, as she demonstrates how German coffeehouses of the early twentieth century, while inherently neutral/mixed spaces, were used by Jews to "create, display, and consume modes of Jewish belonging."[13] Rebecca Kobrin's edited volume *Chosen Capital*, published the following year, similarly asks what specific economic niches and methods shaped the "Jewish encounter with American capitalism," and how capitalism, in turn, "alter[ed] the practice and experience of Judaism

[10] Lisa Silverman, *Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars* (New York, 2012), 7.
[11] Jonathan Freedman, *The Jewish Decadence: Jews and the Aesthetics of Modernity* (Chicago, 2021), 5, 22.
[12] Theoretical discussions of this trend can be found in Jonathan Karp, "An 'Economic Turn' in Jewish Studies?" *AJS Perspectives* (Fall 2009): 8–13 (see also the articles by Adam Mendelsohn and Rebecca Kobrin among others in the same issue); Gideon Reuveni, "Prolegomena to an 'Economic Turn in Jewish History,' in *The Economy in Jewish History: New Perspectives on the Interrelationship between Ethnicity and Economic Life*, ed. Gideon Reuveni and Sarah Wobick-Segev (New York, 2011), 1–22; Riv-Ellen Prell, "The Economic Turn in American Jewish History: When Women (Mostly) Disappeared," *American Jewish History* 103, no. 4 (October 2019): 485–512.
[13] Sarah Wobick-Segev, "Buying, Selling, Being, Drinking," in Reuveni and Wobick-Segev, *The Economy in Jewish History*, 116. See also Sarah Wobick-Segev, "German-Jewish Spatial Cultures: Consuming and Refashioning Jewish Belonging in Berlin, 1890–1910," in Reuveni and Roemer, *Longing, Belonging*, 39–60.

itself."[14] Adam Mendelsohn, meanwhile, examines the role of the garment trade as a specialisation in defining the American Jewish experience, arguing that "from humble beginnings Jews rode the coattails of the clothing trade from the margins of economic life in the nineteenth century to a position of unusual promise and prominence in the twentieth."[15] Derek Penslar seminal study focusing on western and central Europe but with an emphasis on Germany, had, before any of these works, examined "how Jews in modern Europe perceived and accounted for their economic difference."[16] Reuveni also explores how German Jews understood their own economic activities, echoing Penslar's observation that some *fin-de-siècle* Jews believed the market economy possessed special powers to foster integration.[17] Like Penslar, Reuveni characterises the economy as central to the ability of Jews to maintain their distinctiveness as a group, as "[...] a firewall against the loss of collective identity in the face of rampant modernization and secularization [...]."[18] For Reuveni, the economy has been essential for the preservation of the Jewish collectivity and for the development of modern Jewish identities through modern consumer culture. These scholars, and many others, suggest how studying the relationship between Jewish difference and economic difference can shed light on our understanding of Jewish modernity.[19]

Fewer studies about Jews and European modernity have addressed broad questions of social progress or social movements while paying critical attention to the category of Jewishness. "Jews served German social thinkers as a touchstone for defining what it meant to modern and what it meant to be German and European in a context of rapid social change," observes Chad Alan Goldberg.[20] Indeed, as this thesis demonstrates, a concern for the universal cause of social modernity became a

[14] Rebecca Kobrin, ed., *Chosen Capital: The Jewish Encounter with American Capitalism* (New Brunswick, 2012), 4.
[15] Adam Mendelsohn, *The Rag Race: How Jews Sewed Their Way to Success in America and the British Empire* (New York, 2014), 3.
[16] Derek Penslar, *Shylock's Children: economics and Jewish Identity in modern Europe* (Berkeley, 2001), 1.
[17] Gideon Reuveni, "Emancipation through Consumption: Moses Mendelssohn and the Idea of Marketplace Citizenship," *LBIYB* 59 (2014): 7–22; Gideon Reuveni, *Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity* (Cambridge, 2017), 112–21.
[18] Ibid., 249.
[19] For recent work, see the special issue "Jews, Europe, and the Business of Culture," *Jewish Culture and History* 24, no. 1 (January 2023), including the introduction by Maja Hultman, Benito Peix Geldart, and Anders Houltz and my article on the N. Israel albums.
[20] Chad Alan Goldberg, *Modernity and the Jews in Western Social Thought* (Chicago, 2018), 46.

key aspect of the public identities of some German Jews. Joyce Antler's *Jewish Radical Feminism*, on the 1960s women's liberation movement in the United States, offers an important precedent for integrating Jewishness into analyses of social "modernisation," i.e., the evolution of society in accordance with the principles of liberal progressivism, in this case, in relation to gender equality. Antler claims that the predominance of Jewish women was an "open secret" among some liberationist collectives, even if Jewishness was not something any of them wished to highlight.[21] "Why would we identify ourselves as Jewish when we wanted to promote a vision of internationalism and interfaith and interracial solidarity?" reads a fitting quote from Vivian Rothstein, one of the founders of the Chicago Women's Liberation Union.[22] This same tension between the absence of a public acknowledgement of Jewishness from contemporary Wilhelminian Jews in the context explored here, and "the formative impact of Jewish background and Jewish values on them, even when not consciously acknowledged,"[23] to borrow from Antler, forms a central pivot of this dissertation.

My research is defined by apparent contradictions; it is about Jews who are not clearly acting "Jewishly" (whatever that may mean); it is about economic institutions as social and cultural actors; it is about liberal progressivism that eschews questions of labour reform; and it is, most remarkably perhaps, about male "feminists."[24] It takes on board the suggestions of Antler, Silverman, and others, to use the intersectional lens but to treat categories such as gender, ethnicity, and class as the constructs that they are, while transcending the invisible boundaries between Jewish studies,

[21] Joyce Antler, *Jewish Radical Feminism: Voices from the Women's Liberation Movement* (New York, 2018), 8.
[22] Antler quotes Rothstein in ibid., 12.
[23] Ibid., 5.
[24] Henceforth, I will not use this term to describe the protagonists in this dissertation. "Feminism" and "bourgeois feminism" will be used to mean organised responses by women to challenge their subordination in society on the basis of their sex – yet the dissertation also raises questions about the exclusivity of this definition in light of the role played by male (and commercial, non-activist) allies of the middle-class women's cause. I take Karen Offen's view that there is sufficient continuity in cause to speak of a cross-national feminist movement around the turn of the century. My definition does not include other forms of female activism, such as labour activism, which focused primarily on the socialist class struggle. Western first-wave feminism was almost exclusively middle-class and strongly influenced by bourgeois culture. The adjective "feminist" will be applied more liberally, to ideas and tendencies which challenged the subordination of women. See Karen Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700–1950: A Political History* (Stanford, 2000), xi–xiii.

business/economic history, and German social and cultural history. In the following sections, I explore a few key contexts and their multidisciplinary relevance, reviewing the relevant historiographical background. First, I examine the department store as a site of modernity, not primarily as an economic enterprise but as a social and cultural phenomenon. Department stores came in many forms and, some, including those explored in this dissertation, were specialised fashion retailers and also manufacturers of soft goods. Second, I address the idea of the "Jewish" (clothing) company in the German and international context, focusing specifically on the connections between Berlin *Konfektion* and Jewish history. Finally, I outline my contribution to the literature and explain my methodology. By the end of this dissertation, I hope to have answered the following questions: What position(s) did Berlin clothiers take on the woman question? How and through what media were these positions formulated and expressed? How did the public stances of clothing companies on the women's cause intersect with their "Jewishness" and that of their owners or directors, in addition to other considerations such as business/profit and class?

The Department Store and Modernity

The turn-of-the-century department store was a site for staging "modernity" and, in and of itself, a manifestation of the modern development. Contemporary observers understood modernity as a complex array of phenomena that challenged "tradition," including the rise of the nation state, industrialisation and capitalism, secularisation, urbanisation, technological progress, and the birth of new and disruptive cultural forms. Department stores represented the pinnacle of capitalist economic rationalisation with their massive labour force and advanced business practices designed to generate profit. As vast retail palaces populating most major cities, department stores helped redraw modern urban landscapes across the globe. Yet, as David Chaney points out, modernisation was "primarily experienced as a shift in the character of social relationships, a shift in tone and sensibility that in cultural forms of representation [...] has been generically labelled the era of modernism."[25]

[25] David Chaney, "The Department Store as Cultural Form," *Theory, Culture & Society* 1, no. 3 (1983): 26.

The classical approach to the study of department stores has focused on their role in revolutionising retail.[26] Virtually all major stores began as small-scale shops that expanded their inventory over time, organising only gradually their commodities in departments, and adopting new advertising and sales techniques as they grew. The end product of this evolution was nonetheless without precedent, as new stores presented their customers with a centralised "world of goods," simplifying the shopping process while advancing the monopoly of the store over smaller firms. Focused on large turnovers of mass-produced merchandise, department stores were able to offer good bargains, which became even better during special promotional seasons and events. Prices were fixed and purchases cash-only, marking a transition away from the practices of small shops and the market or *bazar*, where customers were expected to haggle and could, at least in the former case, often pay by credit. Department stores made the most of advances in transportation, sourcing and importing goods directly and offering home delivery by post or courier. In order for these massive enterprises to function, an intricate clockwork of tasks and processes was performed by a highly effectivised and hierarchical labour force, itself divided into a host of different departments. Department stores, as Rudy Laermans points out, "changed selling into an industry."[27]

Another emphasis in the historiography has been on department stores as physical venues and urban landmarks. Store façades functioned as a canvas for experimentation in new architectural styles and their imposing store windows, bringing the world of the department store out into the street, served as a stark reminder of the increasing importance of consumerism in the public life.[28] Luxurious interiors combined aesthetics from castles and cathedrals, creating touristic venues of a new kind. The policy of free entry – "ohne Kaufzwang," without compulsion to buy – encouraged casual visits, while a range of amenities, including tea rooms, child-minding services, and toilets for women – still

[26] Among noteworthy early works, see Hrant Pasdermadjian, *The Department Store: Its Origins, Evolution, and Economics* (London, 1954). The book first appeared in French in 1949.
[27] Rudi Laermans, "Learning to Consume: Early Department Stores and the Shaping of Modern Consumer Culture (1860–1914), *Theory, Culture & Society* 10, no. 4 (1993): 86.
[28] Paris had some of the first purpose-built department stores (called grand magasins) in the 1860s, but a number of early Berlin fashion stores exhibited similar features already in the 1840s and 50s. Ibid., 84; Mila Ganeva, "Elegance and Spectacle in Berlin: The Gerson Fashion Store and the Rise of the Modern Fashion show," in *The Places and Spaces of Fashion, 1800–2007*, ed. John Potvin (Abingdon, 2009), 123–4.

a rarity in many cities – ensured the customer could linger at her (or his) pleasure. Some companies invested in state-of-the-art technologies to maintain a welcoming atmosphere especially during the winter months, using mechanical ventilation, electrical lighting, and indoor heating.[29] They entertained customers and employees with music recitals, plays, cultural soirées, and eventually fashion shows using live models; the Berlin fashion house of Herrmann Gerson even installed a theatre stage with cutting-edge design features to host live performances.[30] Store buildings functioned as the ultimate advertisement for store brands and, at the same time, as showrooms for the most diverse expressions of modernity.

Department stores also contributed centrally to the "ocularcentric" tendencies of modernity, i.e., the growing emphasis on sight over other senses.[31] Their efforts to bring aesthetics and visuality into the public realm as a way of reeling in potential buyers had repercussions far beyond the marketing context in fuelling a growing, modern visual culture. Companies developed advanced technologies of display using mechanical light, colour, and glass, with the aim "to transform everyday objects into commodities and to make consumers out of passersby."[32] Department stores were forerunners in the use of new printing methods such as photogravure and chromolithography, the latter of which facilitated the reproduction of large, colourised images.[33] Skilled window dressers created eye-catching microcosms in shop windows, combining merchandise in new ways. Inside the store, entire

[29] These practices should be seen not only in light of a desire to be modern and forward-thinking, but in the context of criticism of department stores as unsanitary environments and reports of health problems among department store employees. Michael B. Miller refers, for instance, to dossiers of the Parisian store *Le Bon Marché*, according to which up to 20 per cent of staff who had begun their employment before 1907 vacated their jobs for reasons of fatigue, health, or death. Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché: Bourgeois Culture and the Department Stores, 1869–1920* (Princeton, 1981), 94. John F. Mueller relates how the situation changed for the better in Germany between the 1890s and 1900 through pressure from clerks' associations and legislative reform. John F. Mueller, *The Kaiser, Hitler, and the Jewish department store: The Reich's Retailer* (London, 2022), 78–9.
[30] Ibid., 126–7.
[31] See Martin Jay's discussion on the "Scopic regimes of modernity," in *Modernity and Identity*, ed. Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman (Oxford, 1992), 178–95.
[32] Emily Marshall Orr, "Designing Display in the Department Store: Techniques, Technologies, and Professionalization, 1880–1920" (PhD diss., Royal College of Art, 2017), 3; See also William R. Leach, "Transformations in a Culture of Consumption: Women and Department Stores, 1890–1925, *The Journal of American History* 71, no. 2 (September 1984): 323; Jan Whitaker, *The Department Store: History, Design, Display* (London, 2011); Laermans, "Learning to Consume," 89–92.
[33] Ibid., 90.

departments manifested foreign and magical landscapes including Egyptian temples, "oriental" fairytales, and Japanese gardens, while extravagant promotional stunts, including dance, acrobatics, and even live animals further centered viewing at the heart of the department store experience. Meanwhile, the visual universe of the department store contributed to the increasing objectification of the human body, particularly the female body. Polished shop attendants, beautiful models, and general visual imagery celebrated the ability of some women to attract the gaze of others. Customers were drawn into an elaborate visual drama, in which appearances played a central part in the public performance of the self.

Perhaps the most lasting impression of department stores on modern life was through advertising – that is, through the marketing of goods as signifiers of identity. As consumption became an intrinsic part of the weekly routines of the urban middle classes, department stores magnified its importance beyond the fulfilment of daily needs. Consumption "engaged the individual buyer [...] in a comprehensive process of self-fashioning, collapsing the boundaries between the [advertising] image and her," writes Nils Roemer.[34] The impulse to "design" one's identity, as Roemer highlights, was a feature of modern existence particularly visible where its upheavals were experienced most intensely: in the city.[35] Department stores stepped into a vacuum, associating ideas with objects, contributing in the process to what is commonly referred to as "consumer culture" – a culture, i.e. beliefs and behaviours, associated with acts of consumption.[36] Buying was construed as a step toward being and belonging; being desirable, wealthy (in appearance), professional, intelligent etc., and belonging to a higher social class. Yet it was also conceived as an avenue toward liberation; the freedom to act as an independent agent, to liberate oneself from societal expectation, and to move

[34] Nils Roemer, "Photographers, Jews, and the Fashioning of Women in the Weimar Republic," in *Fashioning Jews: Clothing, Culture, and Commerce*, ed. Leonard J. Greenspoon (West Lafayette, 2013), 100.
[35] Roemer relates his observation to the work of Berlin sociologist Georg Simmel titled "The Metropolis and Mental Life," published in 1903. Ibid., 100–1.
[36] Many studies refer here to French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and the idea of "symbolic goods," i.e, that goods may function as both "a commodity and a symbolic object." Pierre Bourdieu, "The Market of Symbolic Goods," in *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Cambridge, 1993), 113.

toward a world of unlimited possibilities.[37] These factors, among others, contributed to the apparently "democratising" influence of early department stores.[38]

A central theme in the literature on department stores has been their role in advancing women's modernity. Western middle-class society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, research has shown, was marked by a strict sexual division of labour as a social consequence of industrialisation. This system was reinforced by cultural attitudes and beliefs regarding male-female gender difference, which were shared among the European bourgeoisie, and in Germany predated full-scale industrialisation by around a century.[39] According to the bourgeois consensus, men were conditioned for public activity through their psychological and physiological disposition while women were prescribed private reproductive/domestic roles in line with their perceived "gender character" (*Geschlechtscharakter*).[40] Although women found ways to challenge the spatial division of this ideal gender order, particularly through activism and philanthropic work, there were clear limits to their access to public life. Many public venues either barred entry to women or deemed women's presence inappropriate; indeed, the city itself was seen as a dangerous terrain for unaccompanied women, "ladies of the night" being the only "ladies" found routinely roaming its streets. Largely excluded from political decision-making and professional life, middle-class women welcomed the freedom offered by department stores to gather and explore in a safe and socially acceptable environment, and to exercise their newfound power as consumers.

[37] Leach, "Transformations," 326–7.
[38] Daniel L. Purdy makes a convincing case that German retail and industrial production responded to rather than created consumer desire, which, as he shows, had existed in Germany since the eighteenth century through widely circulating printed accounts, which connected Germans to the cosmopolitan consumer culture of places like London and Paris. Daniel L. Purdy, *The Tyranny of Elegance: Consumer Cosmopolitanism in the Era of Goethe* (Baltimore, 1998).
[39] Karin Hausen, "Die Polarisierung der "Geschlechtscharaktere," in *Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas*, ed. Werner Conze (Stuttgart, 1976), 363–93; Karin Hausen, "Family and Role-Division: The Polarisation of Sexual Stereotypes in the Nineteenth Century – an Aspect of the Dissociation of Work and Family Life," in *The German Family: Essays on the Social History of the Family in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Richard J. Evans and Robert W. Lee (London, 1981), 51–83.
[40] Ibid.

Department stores were exceptional among public institutions in this period – and in later periods no less – in their demonstrated interest in women. "Whereas in other disciplines women have often been overlooked entirely, marketers [...] have sought to understand the minutiae of women's lives to better hone products and services to their needs," writes Pauline Maclaran.[41] While not all customers were female, shoppers at department stores formed a strikingly feminised crowd in a public, urban setting. Retailers geared their messages largely toward the female customer, constructing their grand emporiums especially with women in mind. French novelist Émile Zola captured these impressions in his bestseller, *Ladies' Paradise*, through which he created a cliché of department store-related literature[42]; Zola used the term in part to criticise department stores, yet many stores embraced the "lady haven" association without irony[43] – American department store owner Edward Filene, notes Susan Porter Benson, mockingly conceded that his sex had, in fact, been overtaken in his "Adamless Eden."[44] Catering to the female consumer meant catering to the modern development – which was something department stores were more than keen to do.

According to Gunther Barth, "the buying stage of the shopping was the most visible sign of female emancipation in the modern city."[45] Erika Rappaport, meanwhile, foregrounds shopping itself as an activity through which women "imbued the urban center with meaning," through "produc[ing] new attitudes about the city," and "contribut[ing] to the creation of new urban institutions."[46] Many other cultural historians have likewise emphasised the "empowering" aspects of middle-class women's

[41] Pauline Maclaran, "Marketing and Feminism in Historic Perspective," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 4, no. 2 (2012): 463.
[42] Émile Zola and Nelson Brian, *The Ladies' Paradise*, trans. and ed. Brian Nelson (Oxford, 2020 [1883]).
[43] For Germany, see J. Lorm [Eugenie von Zedlitz], "Ein Gang durch das Haus N. Israel," in Gustav Meinecke, *Die deutschen Kolonien – Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Völkerkunde der deutschen überseeischen Besitzungen. Nach amtlichen Quellen bearbeitet von G. Meinecke, Direktor des deutschen Kolonial-Museum*s (Berlin, 1901) (the text is discussed further in Chapter 1 of this dissertation); Hans Berthold, "Streifzüge durch das Reich der Mode," in *Hermann Tietz Alexander Platz – zur Eröffnung des Erweiterungs-Baues 1911* ([Berlin?], [1911]). See also Paul Göhre, *Das Warenhaus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1907), 24, with regards to the Wertheim company.
[44] Filene is cited in Susan Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores 1890–1940* (Urbana, 1988 [1986]), 76.
[45] Gunther Barth, *City People: The Rise of Modern City Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford, 1980), 137.
[46] Erika Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, 2000), 6.

consumer experience. Department stores allowed women not only to become consumers of a thrilling new visual landscape, but to consolidate their economic power as overseers of the family budget. With their vast selection of goods, department stores generated new "consumer knowledge" that supported women's ability to make educated decisions about purchases.[47] According to Mica Nava, it was not just advertisers that attached "symbolic meanings" to commodities; women, as the primary shoppers, "played a crucial part in the development of these taxonomies of signification."[48] Consumption thus "facilitat[ed] the acquisition of 'cultural capital.'"[49] Arguments such as these relate to the more general idea of "marketplace citizenship," which holds that the modern free market has created opportunities for marginalised groups to further their status even while being disenfranchised through other white, middle-class and male-dominated power structures.[50]

Grounded in Anglo-Saxon, market-positive liberalism, these perspectives are contrasted by those that question the "liberating" potential of consumption. In Imperial and Weimar Germany, many raised objections to marketers' employment of psychological knowledge to "seduce" customers into spending money. The apparent idolisation of materialism by department stores, it was thought, encouraged immoral behaviour including theft, especially among women, who were regarded as constitutionally weak and impressionable.[51] However, as Darcy Buerkle has pointed out, "[w]omen were not victims of advertising."[52] William R. Leach similarly states that critics "have tended to exaggerate the extent to which the mass of women (and men) are manipulatable and passive."[53] Victoria de Grazia offers an appealing suggestion that lies between two extreme positions: to accept

[47] Mica Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal: Women, the City, and the Department Store," in *Modern Times: Reflections on a century of English modernity*, ed. Mica Nava and Alan O'Shea (London, 1996), 53; Laermans, "Learning to Consume," 87.
[48] Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal," 48.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Different sides of the debate are discussed in Victoria de Grazia, "Empowering Women as Citizen-Consumers," in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough (Berkeley, 1996), 275–86.
[51] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 94–138; Uwe Spiekermann, "Theft and thieves in German Department Stores, 1895–1930: a Discourse on Morality, Crime and Gender," in *Cathedrals of Consumption: The European Department Store, 1850–1939*, ed. Geoffrey Crossick and Serge Jaumain (Aldershot, 1999), 135–59.
[52] Darcy Buerkle, "Gendered Spectatorship, Jewish Women and Psychological Advertising in Weimar Germany," *Women's History Review* 15, no. 4 (2006): 627.
[53] Leach, "Transformations," 320–1.

that the relationship between consumption and citizenship is a complex one. "For the moment, what historians can do, is what they do best, namely, establish the sometimes elusive connections between the fast-paced consumer sphere and the new forms of gendered citizenship within specific constellations of time and place."[54]

Fashion forms a final field of inquiry in the nexus between the study of women and consumer modernity. Department stores were the most important carriers of serially manufactured attire in western countries at the turn of the century, while clothing articles formed for many consumer businesses the single most important commodity. This relationship was especially conspicuous in Imperial Germany, where many of the largest mixed-goods retailers originated in the ready-made clothing trade and retained their reputation as specialists in clothing and fashion.[55] The production and distribution of ready-made clothing constituted not only part of a broader consumer revolution, but a social transformation of women's everyday practices. As Eric Hagen, former owner of the trade journal *Der Confectionair*, highlights, the founding of the ready-to-wear clothing trade in Berlin meant that women began sewing less at home and better-off women began spending less time at the tailor's.[56] Yet as late as the 1880s, Hagen claims, most German women wore shawls or small mantillas instead of serially produced overcoats.[57] As consumption subsequently gained momentum, the mass-manufacturing of garments increasingly shifted part of the production process from female amateurs and professional modistes to a new figure: the commercial clothier, the creative (and mostly male) genius who frequently doubled as the owner of the fashion or department store owner. According to Hermann Bamberg, co-owner of the Berlin fashion house Gebr. Mannheimer, the clothier "always had to combine the advantages of a skilled salesman with a pronounced taste for

[54] De Grazia, "Empowering Women," 277.
[55] For a discussion about the relationship between fashion and department stores in the American context, see Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 106–13.
[56] Eric G. Hagen, "Die Geschichte des Verlages L. Schottlaender & Co. und der Zeitschrift 'Der Konfektionär' / von Dr. Eric G. Hagen vormals Erich Greiffenhagen Berlin." (New York, 1965); AR 2791, LBI.
[57] Ibid.

fashion matters[...]."[58] With the clothier as the brains and the tailor as the muscle, then, "clothing" transformed into "fashion": a medium for conveying fluctuating ideas and cultural codes, not merely objects of use. This, in turn, revolutionised what people, and most clearly women, wore.

Even as women's relationship to clothing production changed, some women gained agency in new areas. As consumers, bourgeois women generally made the final call on new trends. Fin-de-siècle women were, suggests Nava, "confirmed as arbiters of taste and interpreters of the new – the modern."[59] Moreover, "[f]ashion became central to women's experience of modernity," not least as "a powerful medium for the autonomous self-expression of women," writes Mila Ganeva.[60] Echoing this sentiment, Einav Rabinovitch-Fox asserts that "women's utilization of dress styles [...] enabled them to negotiate new freedoms and gender identities, using fashion as a form of empowerment and self-assertion."[61] Such readings, which emphasise female agency, diverge from others (some by feminists) that have focused on fashion, beautification, and commercial cultures more generally as "bearers of false consciousness,"[62] as a means of imposing new societal expectations and financial expenditures on women, or as physical prisons that constrict and distort female bodies for the sake of fashion. Yet, while some first-wave feminists advocated dress reform, many chose to embrace mainstream fashion in their efforts to gain legitimacy for their cause. Indeed, "[u]nder the circumstances dressing fashionably became a political act," maintain Joel H. Kaplan and Sheila Stowell in their work on Edwardian feminism.[63]

[58] Hermann Bamberg, "1886–1926: Eine Lebensepoche der deutschen Bekleidungswirtschaft," in *Der Konfektionär 40: 1886–1926 Jubiläums-Sonderausgabe*, ed. Verlag L. Schottlaender & Co (Berlin, 1926), 53. On the Bambergs and their connections to other Berlin-Jewish clothiers, see Gesa Kessemeier, *Ein Feentempel der Mode oder Eine vergessene Familie, ein ausgelöchter Ort – Die Familie Freudenberg und Das Modehaus "Herrmann Gerson"* (Berlin, 2013), 48–49.
[59] Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal," 48.
[60] Mila Ganeva, *Women in Weimar Fashion: Discourses and Displays in German Culture 1918–1933* (Rochester, 2008), 2.
[61] Einav Rabinovitch-Fox, "This is What A Feminist Looks Like: The New Woman Image, American Feminism, and the Politics of Women's Fashion 1890–1930" (PhD diss., New York University, 2014), xi.
[62] Phrase borrowed from De Grazia, "Empowering Women," 276. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (New York, 1963) is one of the most influential left-wing feminist texts in this context.
[63] Joel H. Kaplan and Sheila Stowell, *Theatre and Fashion: Oscar Wilde to the Suffragettes* (Cambridge, 1994), 153.

In addition to supporting the rise of the female consumer, however, department stores also played an important role in middle-class women's employment and professionalisation. While women of the lower classes had always worked, the process of embourgeoisement had shifted women's responsibilities increasingly toward the domestic realm. Still, a growing number of middle-class girls and women needed to work in order to stabilise family incomes in times of turbulence and some women of the upper middle classes saw work and careers as a way out of the ennui of the leisured existence dictated for women by bourgeois culture. Department stores created new, specialised positions that transformed the female job market, most importantly, the position of the female sales clerk. "For each morning," notes Catherine Elizabeth Adams, "hundreds of neatly dressed young women appeared in the city center and entered offices, department stores, shops" in major German cities – "a sight unfamiliar twenty years earlier."[64] "The modern department store," echoes Paul Lerner, "presented a new phenomenon, a massive female workforce."[65]

Women's employment supposedly undermined the very foundation of bourgeois "civilised" society. It challenged the gendered constitution of the public workplace and men's prerogative for wage-earning while apparently weakening the appeal of motherhood as the definitive female "career." Women employees in department stores contributed to the stores' appearance as "[a] new kind of public space for women,"[66] which blurred the gendered boundaries of bourgeois society. These were not only "female leisure centres"[67] but public hubs of female activity. In Imperial Germany, anxious contemporaries associated women's work with declining fertility rates and the erosion of bourgeois sexual mores, vilifying department stores and their owners for their roles in these developments. As Lerner has shown, expressions of discontent with department stores and commercial clothiers in

[64] Carole Elizabeth Adams, *Women Clerks in Wilhelmine Germany: Issues of Class and Gender* (Cambridge, 1988), 1.
[65] Paul Lerner, *The Consuming Temple: Jews, Department Stores, and the Consumer Revolution in Germany, 1880–1940* (Ithaca, 2015), 110. Ganeva, Roemer, and Wallach, among others, highlight further how fashion opened up professional opportunities for women in affiliated industries, including fashion journalism and photography. Ganeva, *Women in Weimar Fashion*; Kerry Wallach, "Weimar Jewish Chic: Jewish Women and Fashion in 1920s Germany," in Greenspoon, *Fashioning Jews*, 113–35; Roemer, "Photographers, Jews." See also Susan Hiner, *Behind the Seams: Women, Fashion, and Work in 19th-Century France* (London, 2023).
[66] Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 9.
[67] Laermans, "Learning to Consume," 82.

early twentieth-century Germany frequently assumed antisemitic overtones.[68] In most cases, however, the threat of department stores to bourgeois family life was unfounded. If stores changed the status quo in the labour market through the employment of women, their gendered messaging to female consumers, including those who worked for them, often perpetuated gendered bourgeois stereotypes about women's nature and ideal roles.[69] Furthermore, the idea that women who entered work abandoned their reproductive "duties" simply did not stand up to scrutiny: around 95 per cent of female clerks were unmarried (compared to two thirds of male clerks).[70] Middle-class women, like wider bourgeois society, viewed salaried work mostly as a temporary arrangement.

First impressions notwithstanding, employment in department stores was not straightforwardly "emancipatory" for women. The widespread availability of work, the demand for women workers in particular, and minimal educational requirements, certainly increased its attraction to young women. Many chose sales and office work, among other things, because it allowed them to "maintain ladylike dress and behaviour" while industrial work did not.[71] Employment came with many other benefits such as relatively decent wages, a pleasant work environment, special staff lounges, free participation in recreational activities such as cultural events, exercise classes, and personnel retreats, in-store medical care, and complementary professional training.[72] In fact, as far as John F. Mueller is concerned, "department stores offered women a near-unique opportunity to work independently and respectably away from home."[73] Relative to other work available to women at the time – even with work hours of up to thirteen hours (including breaks) before 1908, when German department stores achieved a consensus with employee organisations to limit the work week to 48 hours[74] –

[68] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*.
[69] Laermans, "Learning to Consume," 95–6; Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Konsum und Geschlechterverhältnisse: Einführende Bemerkungen," in *Europäische Konsumgeschichte: Zur Gesellschafts- und Kulturgeschichte des Konsums (18. bis 20. Jahrhundert)* ed. Hannes Siegrist, Hartmut Kaelble, and Jürgen Kocka (Frankfurt, 1997), 395–410, especially 398–402.
[70] Adams, *Women Clerks*, 18. See also the results of Marie Baum's statistical survey from 1906 concerning female department store employees in Karlsruhe, discussed in Mueller, *The Reich's Retailer*, 71–3.
[71] Adams, *Women Clerks*, 12.
[72] The Berlin department store N. Israel, studied in this dissertation, was one of the firms to offer its personnel access to an on-site doctor. See also Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 118–22; Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 142–153; Mueller, *The Reich's Retailer*, 78–85.
[73] Ibid., 70.
[74] Ibid., 82.

employment in department stores, Lerner believes, was not a bad deal "for a young woman of modest background."[75] Department store work offered some opportunities for social mobility, since firms provided many resources through which working-class girls and women could (and were, indeed, expected to) assume bourgeois norms and behaviours – to become sales "ladies." Employers, however, additionally placed demands on staff appearance, and even on how employees used their time outside of work hours; loyalty to the company was expected to come ahead of workers' personal aspirations. Bosses kept employees in check through punishments and rewards such as fines and bonuses. According to Susan Porter Benson, writing about American department stores, even welfare schemes and professional training aimed to assert the control of the department store over its employees, because "a new outlook" among staff, particularly the inculcation of working-class women with bourgeois values, would, employers imagined, enhance the customer experience and help boost sales.[76]

Seen from one angle, then, the structure of modern department stores prevented any real progress in women's lives. Even as women were becoming increasingly visible in city life, they rarely rose to managerial or supervisory positions in commercial firms. Employees could not easily work their way up the corporate ladder after entering the lower ranks of the workforce; the modern, capitalist company, observes Adams, was far too segmented to allow for smooth transitions or proper career progression.[77] The organisation of many German department and fashion stores, especially in Berlin, posed a further problem: they were interlinked with the local clothing industry or *Konfektion*. Retailers and wholesalers typically employed a large number of female casual workers, many of whom relied on the mediation of middlemen and few of whom had direct connections to the companies commissioning contracts. These "homeworkers," working remotely at the lowest level of production, enjoyed none of the benefits bestowed on formal department store employees, precisely

[75] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 122.
[76] Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 143. Further on the role of paternalism in relation to department store and commercial employees more generally, see Miller, *Bon Marché*, 80–112; Adams, *Women Clerks*, 10.
[77] Adams, *Women Clerks*, 7–8. Compare with Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 164–5, concerning American stores.

because they were considered independent entities in an affiliated "gig economy," to use present-day language.[78] Not typically discussed in the international literature on department stores, homeworkers were essential to the German department store business. Homework was a diverse category that included unrecorded child labour, independent tailors, and in-house workshops. Attention to homeworkers illustrates, nevertheless, how some department stores exercised enormous influence over a large external and predominantly feminised workforce, the members of which rarely experienced the "liberating" effects of modernity.

Contrasting this top-down view of negative domination, some scholars have explored how women (on official payroll) seized the opportunities presented by the nature of their employment in department stores, creating a separate "women's culture" in the workplace. American historian Benson, the foremost proponent of this view, has argued that, while business culture possessed its own set of values and priorities, saleswomen created a modern "counter culture" (pun no doubt intended) that was "[i]n most ways diametrically opposed" to the former.[79] This culture, contends Benson, was intrinsically relational, comprising a class-infused clerking "sisterhood."[80] Adams, less focused on everyday life and more on organisational history, highlights how women clerks in Imperial Germany went on to found alternative spaces for gender-based solidarity in female clerking associations. What Adams does not explore, but what this dissertation adds to the conversation, is how commercial clothiers, as major employers of female, white-collar workers, related to some of these professional, bourgeois feminist or socialist, women-led organisations.

A final point concerns the politics of the department store. "The department store since its birth had always presented a political dimension, its association with Liberalism was well known [...],"

[78] On homeworkers in Berlin *Konfektion*, see Rosmarie Beier, *Frauenarbeit und Frauenalltag im Deutschen Kaiserreich* (Frankfurt, 1983); Rosmarie Beier, "Zur Geschichte weiblicher Lebenschancen," in *Frauen in der Geschichte*, vol. 2, ed. Annette Kuhn (Düsseldorf, 1982), 212–44; Robyn Dasey, "Women's Work and the Family: Women Garment Workers in Berlin and Hamburg before the First World War," in Evans and Lee, *The German Family*, 221–55.
[79] Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 4.
[80] Ibid., 227–82.

observes Bill Lancaster.[81] This ideology was, in many cases, an amalgam of market liberalism and certain aspects of individual rights liberalism, which, being infused with bourgeois values, exhibited major inconsistencies. The owners and directors of department stores, as we shall see for Wilhelmine Berlin, viewed professional organisations and trade unions, and therefore middle-class and working-class "rights," in a very different light. Yet as several scholars have demonstrated, many department store owners lent practical and promotional support to the women's cause. Many firms advertised vigorously in suffragist papers, including the British *Votes for Women*.[82] Wanamaker's store in Philadelphia gave its female staff time off work to participate in women's parades.[83] Several English and American companies relinquished prime display space to suffrage propaganda, and some sold merchandise in the white, green, and purple colours of the suffrage movement.[84] Harry Selfridge allegedly declared that he had "helped emancipate women" since women "came to the store and realized some of their dreams."[85] His store, Selfridge's, publicised its endorsement of women's enfranchisement in several British newspapers through its column, "Callisthenes."[86]

Turn-of-the-century department stores, then, are linked to notions of modernity through a complex web of phenomena, variously interpreted by contemporary observers and later historians. Importantly for this dissertation, consumer companies tended to view their societal roles in the broader context of modernisation, including but transcending the economy, as messengers of the "good news" of liberal progress. These tendencies are, as noted, well-documented for the British and American contexts. The chapters below add a perspective from Imperial Germany. According to Nava, department stores "perceived the innovations in retailing as part of the same modernising process as women's emancipation and saw no conflict of interest between women's growing

[81] Bill Lancaster, *The Department Store: A Social History* (London, 1995), 192.
[82] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre and Fashion*, 172, 174–5.
[83] Leach, "Transformations in a Culture," 338.
[84] Ibid.; Lancaster, *The Department Store*, 191; Lindy Woodhouse, *Shopping, Seduction & Mr Selfridge* (New York, 2013), 123; Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre and Fashion*, 173–4.
[85] Gordon Honeycombe, *Selfridges – Seventy-Five Years: The Story of the Store 1909–1984* (London, 1984), 24.
[86] Woodhouse, *Shopping, Seduction*, 123.

independence and the economic success of the stores."[87] Stores typically employed women not for "feminist" reasons but because they could get away with paying them a lower salary; yet even as employers, companies viewed or at least portrayed themselves as acting in the service of societal progress, not merely through building a successful business but through their apparent transformation of workers into cultivated citizens. This dissertation extends the discussion to pre-war Berlin, where the cosmopolitan currents of international business intermingled with the particularities of Wilhelmine culture. It argues that, at least in Germany, the Jewishness of some of the foremost commercial supporters of early feminism is relevant for understanding the nature of and motives behind their endorsements.

The Jewish Clothing Company

"[A]nyone in the Weimar Republic who needed a coat or a ready-made garment, jetted to Jewish shops [...]," wrote Avraham Barkai in 1980s.[88] His observation captures the essential connection between the ready-made garment industry, clothing retail and wholesale, and Jewish occupational activity, that has become an accepted truth in most historical accounts of early twentieth century Germany. There has, nonetheless, been no systematic study of the German clothing trade that addresses the overlap between department stores and the fashion/ready-made clothing industry; most studies operate, often uncritically, within the German census categories of *Handel* (trade) or *Bekleidungsgewerbe* (clothing industry); and yet, as Adam J. Tooze points out, the Imperial German census term of "Gewerbe" (industry) was an "archaic" concept of "increasing irrelevance to the more modern sectors of the economy."[89] There were certainly clothing stores that were not department stores and there were department stores without a special focus on fashion commodities. But the

[87] Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal," 55.
[88] Avraham Barkai, "Die Juden als sozio-ökonomische Minderheitsgruppe in der Weimarer Republik," in *Juden in der Weimarer Republik* ed. Walter Grab and Julius H. Schoeps (Stuttgart, 1986), 340.
[89] Tooze analyses the work of Imperial German statistician Rudolf Meerwarth. Meerwarth observed that the German statistical apparatus continued to uphold an "artisanal ideal" of the past rather than inventing categories better suited for the increasingly capitalist-oriented German economy. Adam J. Tooze, *Statistics and the German State 1900–1945: The Making of Modern Economic Knowledge* (Cambridge, 2001), 53; Rudolf Meerwarth, *Einleitung in die Wirtschaftsstatistik* (Jena, 1920), 6–83.

Jewish-owned companies at the centre of this dissertation played a formative role in both sectors, as both department stores and clothing manufacturers.

Beyond the German context, there has been a conspicuously limited amount of research on Jews and the turn-of-the-century department store business. The Jewish origins of stores such as Macy's New York and the 1920s Houndsditch Warehouse in London – nicknamed "the Selfridges of the Jewish Quarter" – are well known but rarely explored in the academic literature. Jewish entrepreneurship and business, on the other hand, has featured centrally across international histories of the garment trade and related fields. In Manhattan, Jewish-owned companies dominated first the second-hand clothing (*shmatte*) business and German-Jewish immigrants were likely instrumental in the establishment of the ready-to-wear clothing scene in New York, Boston and Philadelphia.[90] In London's East End, Jewish clothing entrepreneurs, employees, and labourers proliferated; according to Stanley Chapman, a "Jewish network" sustained through inter-marriage and connections to the Great Synagogue in Duke's Place benefited Jewish "innovators" in the nineteenth-century London apparel trade.[91] In *fin-de-siècle* Paris, Nancy L. Green has shown, the clothing industry was an important source of income for Jewish immigrants, and "[t]he capmaking industry [...] was, from top to bottom, essentially Jewish."[92] Focusing on Finland, Laura Ekholm has argued, moreover, that Jewish dealers of second-hand clothes "introduced ready-made clothing to local consumer markets" around the turn of the century.[93]

[90] Mendelsohn, *Rag Race*; Avraham Barkai, *Branching out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States, 1820-1914* (New York, 1994), 86; Nancy L. Green, *Ready-to-wear, Ready-to-work: A Century of Industry and Immigrants in Paris and New York* (Durham, 1997); Thomas Kessner, *The Golden Door: Italian and Jewish Immigrant Mobility in New York 1880-1915* (New York, 1977).
[91] Stanley Chapman, "The 'Revolution' in the Manufacture of Ready-made Clothing 1840–60," *The London Journal* 29, no. 1 (2004): 55. See also Stanley Chapman, "The Innovating Entrepreneurs in the British Ready-made Clothing Industry," *Textile History* 24, no. 1 (1993): 5–25.
[92] Nancy L. Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque* (New York, 1986), 134.
[93] Laura Ekholm, "Jews, second-hand trade and upward economic mobility," *Business History* 61, no. 1 (2019): abstract. On Sweden, see Laura Ekholm, "Jewish migration and the development of the Swedish and Finnish garment industry," *Jewish Culture and History* 24, no. 1 (2023): 76–95.

Germany never had an immigrant Jewish enclave in the apparel business on the scale of New York or London, which perhaps explains its omission from discussions about Jewish ethnic economies. Imperial German legislation was not accommodating to Jewish immigrants; their numbers were heavily restricted and resident Jews periodically expelled.[94] More often than not, eastern European Jews continued their journey through Germany toward more plentiful opportunities in the New World and the British Empire. In a global context, then, the German industry was marked by its "'*relative* insignificance [...] as an employer of Eastern Jews," to borrow from Jack Wertheimer's paraphrase of Imperial German researcher Klara Eschelbacher[95]; most noticeably, it did not generate "ghettos" of immigrant Jewish workers comparable to those found in cities like New York.[96] At the same time, Jewish immigrants had played a crucial part in shaping the German industry – as commercial *entrepreneurs* in the ready-made clothing sector. It was not just the case that successful Jewish clothiers did not, by the early twentieth century, employ a large number of Jewish garment makers; few ready-to-wear clothiers were actually directly involved in clothing production. The main focus of most *Konfektionäre*, as they were known, was retail, wholesale, or both. As the German magazine *Der Spiegel* so aptly expressed it in a 1993 piece, these were "Fabrikanten ohne Fabriken," manufacturers without factories.[97]

Given the complexities of defining these businesses, particularly as they did not readily conform to accepted Imperial German categories of trade, it is perhaps unsurprising that many scholars have chosen to simplify the discussion by focusing either on department stores (*Warenhäuser/ Kaufhäuser*) or clothing companies/fashion salons (*Konfektionäre/ Konfektionshäuser*).[98] For the

[94] Jack Wertheimer, *Unwelcome strangers: East European Jews in imperial Germany* (New York, 1987), 48–71.
[95] Ibid., 95. Emphasis in the original. See also Klara Eschelbacher, "Die ostjüdische Einwanderungsbevölkerung der Stadt Berlin," ZDSJ 16, no. 1–6 (January–June 1920), 1–24.
[96] Ibid., 11–15; Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers*, 80.
[97] "Magnet für Modemacher," *Der Spiegel* no. 1 (3 March 1993). https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/magnet-fuer-modemacher-a-a3dcbac1-0002-0001-0000-000013686728.
[98] On the problems of defining *Konfektion* and isolating the role of Jews in it, see Alfred Marcus, *Die Wirtschaftliche Krise der deutschen Juden* (Berlin, 1931), 86–8. One of the few more recent studies to take a middle route by exploring the inter-connected clothing industry and "modern fashion store," is Ganeva, "Elegance and Spectacle," 122–4. See also the discussions in Mueller, *The Reich's Retailer*, 39–42, 44–5; Christoph Kreutzmüller, *Final Sale in Berlin: The Destruction of Jewish Commercial Activity, 1930-1945* (New York, 2015), 80.

purposes of understanding the activities of these companies in the context of German modernity, however, it is necessary to recognise the obvious connections between the two aforementioned fields. They not only relied on each other; they were intertwined. There was certainly a spatial dimension to be considered; the clothing industry concentrated in one particular area of Berlin – the quarters surrounding *Hausvogteiplatz*, mainly on Kronenstraße, Mohrenstraße, and Jerusalemer Straße (Fig. 1, appendix)– whereas department stores were spread out across the city and the country. Clothing companies, by definition, specialised in clothing and fashion; among the stores explored here, however, all sold a variety of related articles, from shoes, to headwear, to soft furnishings, and even furniture. Additionally, just like clothiers, department stores relied on homework for the affordable mass-manufacturing of merchandise, including garments, toys, and tobacco; not unusually, department stores were the de-facto "producer" in the above sense, in that they commissioned the production of goods from external contractors. In a number of cases, stores that were formally classed as merchants had in-store workshops to facilitate the production of simple articles such as underwear, while ateliers for design and for the finishing of products were a standard feature of large commercial enterprises.

When examining the involvement of Jews in both economic sectors, the links become, furthermore, hard to ignore. The birth of *Konfektion* was related to Jewish westward migration prompted by geo-political events.[99] As Prussia declared in its 1812 Edict of Emancipation that all Jewish residents of certain provinces were Prussian citizens, poorer Jews from eastern parts of the empire, especially

[99] Some scholars connect the history of the ready-made clothing industry to even earlier phases of German-Jewish history, namely to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Jewish trade in second hand garments under provisions made by Frederick William of Brandenburg in 1671, and the (apparent) subsequent illegal fabrication of new clothes by Jews, barred, at the time, from joining tailors' guilds. See for e.g., Ingrid Loschek, "Contributions of Jewish Fashion Designers in Berlin," in *Broken Threads: The Destruction of the Jewish Fashion Industry in Germany and Austria*, ed. Roberta S. Kremer (Oxford, 2007), 48–75; Maria Makela, "The Rise and Fall of the Flapper Dress: Nationalism and Anti-Semitism in Early-Twentieth-Century Discourses on German Fashion," *Journal of Popular Culture* 34, no. 3 (Winter 2000): 183–208; Erwin Wittkowski, *Die Berliner Damenkonfektion* (Leipzig, 1928), 3–7. While this theory seems to explain the particular nature of Berlin clothiers as middleman companies, it is difficult to demonstrate the mechanics of the transition from the trade in used clothing to serial manufacturing, especially as the descendants of most of the early clothiers (with the exception of the Israels) did not have roots in the rag trade.

Posen, flocked to Berlin to pursue new opportunities. [100] Many among this early cohort came equipped with artisanal skills such as sewing and tailoring.[101] Between 1820 and 1840, as life in Berlin gained greater stability and the city experienced economic recovery in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, "the need arose for the city's swiftly growing middle-class population to be dressed appropriately, quickly, and cheaply[...]," writes Ganeva.[102] Jewish entrepreneurs entered this niche, founding the country's first companies for ready-to-wear clothing. Herrmann Gerson (Hirsch Gerson Levin, 1813–1861) and his competitor Valentin Manheimer (1815–1889) opened their pioneering shops in 1830s Berlin, both manufacturing women's overcoats by the late 30s.[103] A few decades later, the environs of *Hausvogteiplatz* were teeming with Jewish entrepreneurial activity. Some firms failed or achieved only short-term success; the companies that made it, however, became key players in *Konfektion* and clothing retail over the next century. Berlin transformed into a world centre for ready-made fashion, responsible for around 90 per cent of womens- and childrenswear produced in Germany alongside three quarters of boys' clothing and a good quarter of ready-made menswear.[104] By 1913, the value of goods produced by the German fashion industry and exported to other countries had reached 1,5 billion RM, that is, around fifteen percent of the total value of German exports before the First World War.[105] One exception notwithstanding – Rudolph Hertzog, whose owners were Christian – the major fashion houses and specialised department stores of Wilhelmine and Weimar Berlin were owned and/or established by Jews, and all but Hertzog among the industry's founding companies were forced to give up their businesses in the 1930s under Nazi racial laws.[106]

[100] Rosmarie Beier-de Haan, "Die Entwicklung der Berliner Bekleidungsindustrie," in *Gründerzeit, 1848 – 1871*: *Industrie & Lebensträume zwischen Vormärz und Kaiserreich*, ed. Ulrike Laufer and Hans Ottomeyer (Dresden, 2008), 290; Julia Schnaus, *Kleidung zieht jeden an: Die deutsche Bekleidungsindustrie 1918–1973* (Berlin, 2017), 47–8.
[101] Makela, "Flapper Dress," 184–6.
[102] Ganeva, "Elegance and Spectacle," 123.
[103] Uwe Westphal, *Berliner Konfektion und Mode: die Zerstörung einer Tradition, 1836-1939* (Berlin, 1992), 17.
[104] Beier, *Frauenarbeit*, 38.
[105] Makela, "Flapper Dress," 188.
[106] Westphal, *Berliner Konfektion*, 18.

In most historical accounts, the history of German department stores begins not in Berlin but in Gera, Thuringia, where Hermann Tietz (1837–1907) and his nephew Oscar Tietz (1858—1923) – Jews hailing, like many *Konfektionäre* of an earlier generation, from the province of Posen – established the Hermann Tietz enterprise retailing yarn, buttons, whites, trimmings and woollen goods in 1882. Around the same time, the non-Jewish merchant Rudolph Karstadt began selling ready-made and manufactured goods at fixed prices in the Hanseatic City of Wismar.[107] By this time, Berlin stores were already vast consumer palaces, their field having been boosted by the German occupation of Paris, Europe's fashion capital, and France's subsequent defeat in the Franco-Prussian wars 1870–1.[108] The Berlin firm Herrmann Gerson had occupied a custom-designed four-story building since 1849, including an architectural feature closely associated with later department store architecture: an atrium.[109] Already in 1875, *Kaufhaus* N. Israel had eight different departments of merchandise, including carpets and piece goods in different fabrics.[110] The store of Abraham Wertheim, another merchant from a Jewish family, this time from Stralsund on the Baltic Sea, was among the first to implement business strategies characteristic of department stores in the 1870s, including the pursuit of high turnovers at low margins and customers' right to exchange purchases.[111] A. Wertheim would, like Hermann Tietz, become a department store chain, with the first Wertheim branch opening in Berlin in 1885, followed by Tietz's expansion there in 1900. By 1907, Wertheim's Berlin store employed 3,200 staff (including over 2,000 women); around 1890, the clothier Valentin Manheimer had by comparison around 8,000 employees.[112] During the 1890s and early 1900s, A. Jandorf & Co. (the parent firm of the KaDeWe, *Kaufhaus des Westens*), founded by a German Jew from Baden-Württemberg, opened several department stores across Berlin and Charlottenburg.[113] Department stores became, alongside large fashion stores, the major distributors for Berlin *Konfektion*.

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[107] The Karstadt company dated their establishment to 1881, but according to Lerner (*Consuming Temple*, 40), the retail store was founded in 1891. Dates for different enterprises may vary in different accounts, depending on when the firms went into the department store business or began manufacturing clothes etc.
[108] Beier, "Zur Geschichte," 214, citing Otto Büsch, *Industrialisierung und Gewerbe im Raum Berlin/Brandenburg* (Berlin, 1977), 2: 95.
[109] Ganeva, "Elegance and Spectacle," 123.
[110] H.G. Reissner, "The Histories of 'Kaufhaus N. Israel' and of Wilfrid Israel," *LBIYB* 3 (January 1958): 237.
[111] Simone Ladwig-Winters, *Wertheim: Geschichte eines Warenhauses* (Berlin, 1997), 11.
[112] Göhre, *Das Warenhaus*, 65; Beier-de Haan, "Die Entwicklung," 288.
[113] See Nils Busch-Petersen, *Adolf Jandorf: von Volkswarenhaus zum KaDeWe* (Berlin, 2008).

By the Wilhelmine period, the number of consumer companies had exploded in German cities and many non-Jewish firms operated in the clothing manufacturing and retail sectors. Meanwhile, the Great Depression of 1873–96 left its mark on Jewish alongside non-Jewish livelihoods.[114] While some filed for bankruptcy, others successfully navigated the changing market into a new century. Not only was the proportion of Jews in commerce declining but the number of Jewish workers shrank notably in many enterprises as companies grew and employed staff from outside of family and friendship circles (and, as noted above, the preconditions for an immigrant-based Jewish ethnic labour economy to develop did not exist in Imperial Germany). This trend coincided with the feminisation of the workforce in the Berlin clothing industry, which by 1895 employed just under 80,000, mostly working-class, non-Jewish, women – and the parallel departure of many Jewish women from the sector with social mobility and greater family wealth.[115] Jews remained, nevertheless, visible as the owners and business directors of leading fashion houses. According to one sociological survey from 1930, around half of Berlin *Konfektionäre* in the interwar period were Jewish but over 70 per cent of those whose "middleman" firms in the womenswear sector engaged additionally or rather in wholesale.[116] These percentages – which include neither department stores nor any other retail stores – would have been even greater in the Imperial period.

[114] Marion Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class: Women, Family, and Identity, in Imperial Germany* (New York, 1991), 159–60.
[115] On female garment workers, see Beier, *Frauenarbeit*, 38. Statistician Jakob Segall suggests that there were under 500 total Jewish women engaged in homework (a sub-category of independent work) across the occupations of lace manufacturing, sewing, and tailoring, based on the 1907 Imperial occupational census. The census survey recorded Jews by religion. Jakob Segall, *Die beruflichen und sozialen Verhältnisse der Juden in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1912), 85, table and description. On Jewish women's shifting relationship to work vis à vis their embourgeoisement, see Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*.
[116] Marcus, *Die Wirtschaftliche Krise*, 89–91. The former percentage (c. 50) is also mentioned in Jacob Toury, *Soziale und politische Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland, 1847–1871* (Düsseldorf, 1977), 89, where he cites Hartmut Kälble, *Berliner Unternehmer während der frühen Industrialisierung* (Berlin, 1972), 79. The c. 70 per cent (70.6) is my calculation based on the number of "Jewish" companies engaged exclusively in wholesale or in wholesale in addition to manufacturing according to the study by Dr Alfred Marcus (who was most likely Jewish). For context, 91 per cent of the 1,741 German businesses in women's and girls' ready-made clothing production or wholesale were, in the same period, located in Berlin. The equivalent proportion, given by Marcus, for the former in the Berlin mens- and boyswear industries (with figures for wholesale alone) was 60.7 per cent. Unfortunately, I have only had access to part of this book and do not know exactly how Marcus conducted his surveys and whether he included official census statistics; neither is it clear to me how Marcus defines a "Jewish" company, although it seems to be based on the religious affiliation of the company owner/s.

Whether and in what way Berlin *Konfektion* and/or department stores may have functioned as an ethnic niche or as part of a broader Jewish economy goes beyond the scope of this dissertation. I focus on the uppermost strata of large businesses, where the distinction between these fields was especially unclear. This select cohort, among which many traced their history to the founding years of Berlin's ready-made clothing industry, was overwhelmingly Jewish. The families in question were closely connected to one other and to a wider Jewish business scene in Berlin and beyond, through culture and/or religion – not all identified as Jews or practiced Judaism – friendships, business, kinship, or a shared Jewish immigrant background. Several lived in close proximity to one another in illustrious districts such as *Tiergarten* or in their exclusive summer residences in places like Nikolassee. Jewish businessmen and their families crossed paths in their involvement in various Jewish philanthropic enterprises, including Jewish hospitals and orphanages.[117] Many employed younger male relatives or children of acquaintances as clerks or apprentices and sent their sons to train at other Jewish-owned firms as a step toward independent entrepreneurship or greater job security.[118] Intermarriage between Jewish business families was not uncommon; to give but one example, Hildegard Grünfeld, the grand daughter of Falk Valentin Grünfeld, an esteemed Silesian textile entrepreneur whose family resided in Berlin operating one of the city's most prestigious retail stores, married Georg Freudenberg, one of the directors of the Herrmann Gerson company (in the 1920s). Her cousin, Edith, meanwhile, was married to Georg Tietz, the proprietor of the Hermann

[117] One important example was the Jewish friendly society *Magine Rëim* (מָגִינֵי רֵעִים), the foremost members of which included, in addition to publisher Rudolph Mosse and German operatic composer Giacomo Meyerbeer, Moritz and Valentin Manheimer of the fashion salon V. Manheimer (the former acting as chair), Berthold Israel of *Kaufhaus* N. Israel, Louis Simon (most likely of the esteemed menswear store *Gebrüder Simon*), Hermann Gerson (possibly Herrmann Gerson, misspelled in the source), sewing machine and arms manufacturer Ludwig Loewe, and commercial councillor Joel Wolff Meyer, co-owner of the silk factory Jacob Abraham Meyer. A brief history of the organisation and its membership is found in *Jüdisch-liberale Zeitung* 7, no. 8 (25 February 1927). Among the many members and donors to the school of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (science of Judaism) in 1912 we similarly find, among others, F.V. Grünfeld, Berthold Israel, V. (presumably Valentin) Manheimer, the womenswear company Kraft & Lewin, all the Freudenberg brothers of the firm Herrmann Gerson, and Moritz Manheimer. *Dreissigster Bericht der Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin* (Berlin, 1912), 37–49.

[118] This fits in with what sociologists understand as the utilisation of "ethnic resources" as a "key business advantage," including ethnic solidarity and trust. See Antoine Pécoud, "What is an ethnic economy?" *International Review of Sociology – Revue Internationel de Sociologie* 20, no. 1 (March 2010): 59–76, especially 62–4. For a similar point on the employment of Jews as clerks in American-Jewish clothing firms, see Adam Mendelsohn, "The Clerks' Work: Jews, Clerical Work, and the Birth of the American Garment Industry," in Greenspoon, *Fashioning Jew*s, 67–75, especially 72.

Tietz department store.[119] The close-knit circle of Jewish clothiers and their families was embedded among Berlin's commercial and cultural elites and its members catered in their stores to all ethnicities and religious persuasions. This group set the tone for the entire field of *Konfektion*, leading the way in new fashion trends and business practices. Meanwhile, the same individuals fostered intimate ties to wider German-Jewish society, performing pivotal roles in exclusively Jewish contexts.

While some have argued, against the backdrop of Nazi accusations, that the Jewishness of commercial clothiers had no bearing on how their firms functioned, overwhelming evidence suggests otherwise. It is not that there was something "inherently different" about Jewish-owned companies that would have been visible to the non-Jewish consumer or a "special concept" to the business practices of Jewish firms, to contend with Uwe Westphal's reservations on the subject[120]; indeed, no two companies were identical. Department and fashion stores were, moreover, mixed workplaces built upon German culture as the common ground. As commercial enterprises, they were focused on maximising profit by turning over as much product as possible, to as many people as possible, regardless of the customers' ethnic or religious background. This does not mean, however, that ethno-religious considerations were irrelevant to Jewish businessmen or that Jewish clothiers did not express their multi-faceted identities through their companies; as we have seen, business connections were often forged and maintained through intra-ethnic marriage. Furthermore, it was not just the Nazis who believed that *Konfektion* was "in Jewish hands" but Jews too – albeit as a neutral observation or even noted with a sense of pride.[121]As Penslar, Reuveni, and others have stressed, prominent liberal German Jewish lobbyists of the early twentieth century attached special significance to Jewish (commercial) economic activities as an assurance of Jewish rights and

[119] Kessemeier, *Ein Feentempel,* 55.
[120] Uwe Westphal, *Fashion Metropolis Berlin, 1836–1939* (Leipzig, 2019), 164; Westphal, *Berliner Konfektion*, 98.
[121] See for e.g., the unpublished memoir and company history of Eric Hagen, the publisher of the preeminent trade journal of German clothiers, *Der Confectionair*. Hagen, "Die Geschichte." See also the newspaper report "Der Antheil der Juden an der Berliner Konfektion," AZDJ 63, no. 25 (23 June 1899), 295–7.

integration.[122] No single sphere of German-Jewish occupational life could compare in this respect to the importance of *Konfektion*.

There are many different angles which reveal the reciprocal relationship between Jewish culture and German *Konfektion*, besides those mentioned above. Evidence suggests that the majority of Berlin wholesalers of ready-made garments were closed for business on Jewish High Holidays; at least this was the case during the First World War, when companies had every incentive to abandon tradition for the sake of their economic survival.[123] In the early Imperial period, most firms (excluding retail stores) were shut on the Sabbath, with a conspicuous number continuing this practice into the early twentieth century. Large companies provided extensive benefits and pensions for their employees. Although there was a certain paternalistic element to these schemes,[124] Lerner adds that "[d]irectors like the Tietzes and Salman Schocken, who gave generously to charities, also understood these programs in the context of Jewish philanthropic imperatives."[125] Gerson, N. Israel, A. Wertheim, and A. Jandorf, among others, established employee sick funds that usually provided far greater coverage than the company health insurance mandated by Imperial German law. The Israel company had a special fund to assist orphans and widows of deceased employees, created in 1895 to honour the late Jacob Israel – a reflection not only of the firm's sense of corporate responsibility but of its communal thinking and commitment to social justice, values seen by many as intrinsic to Judaism.

Studies about the Weimar period provide further indications about this evolving relationship between commerce and ethnicity/religion in Berlin. Michael Brenner, Kerry Wallach, and others have highlighted the importance of department stores in the creation of a "Renaissance of Jewish culture"

[122] Penslar, *Shylock's Children*, 150*;* Reuveni, "Emancipation through Consumption"; Reuveni, *Consumer Culture*. See discussion in the introduction above.
[123] An announcement to this effect, bringing the timing of the closures to the attention of the readers of the trade journal *Der Confectionair*, occurred in 1915, i.e., before major wartime shortages and restrictions on the German garment industry. It is possible that these closures were introduced after the outbreak of the war if shorter opening hours were anyway deemed necessary with the stagnation of the commercial sector; however, they were more likely a continuation of business as usual. "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 30, no. 69 (29 August 1915).
[124] Miller, *Bon Marché*, 73–162; Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 143; Adams, *Women Clerks*, 10.
[125] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 120.

in interwar Germany. Brenner, for example, attributes the success of the Jewish *Volkshochschule* in Berlin partly to its partnership with stores such as Hermann Tietz and KaDeWe, which sold tickets to the institution's events[126]; in the third chapter of this dissertation, I similarly mention that Wertheim promoted Jewish cultural and Zionist events in this way already in the Wilhelmine period.[127] Wallach's analysis demonstrates how Jewish companies made both direct and indirect use of Jewish motifs in their Weimar advertising campaigns, cultivating in this way Jewish forms of consumer culture.[128] Gideon Reuveni suggests, in a similar vein, that "[c]onsumer culture did not act solely to foster a sense of separate Jewish identity, nor did it simply facilitate Jewish belonging to a larger culture of consumption"; he argues that it did both.[129] Through targeting Jews as a distinct group, advertisers encouraged Jewish integration into a general marketplace while suggesting, according to Reuveni, new (and sometimes confusing) notions of Jewish self-understanding.[130]

This brings us back to a certain view of the modern economy as a democratising force, familiar from debates concerning consumer culture and women's modernity. The above perspectives are joined together in the literature on Jewish women in Weimar consumer culture, to which Wallach, Ganeva, and Darcy Buerkle have made important contributions. Wallach's work explores the gendered dimensions of Weimar marketing by Jewish-owned stores to Jewish consumers, which combined the popular perception of woman as the consumer and advertising psychology with knowledge of Jewish religion and culture. "The result," maintains Wallach, "was a rich constellation of images that pitched department stores to female consumers as kosher-friendly havens with a kind of Jewish 'sex appeal.'"[131] Wallach and Ganeva both emphasise the central role played by Jewish women in the creation of general German consumer culture, especially in fashion; "many of the best known

[126] Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (New Haven, 1996), 92.
[127] See page 199 and footnote 649 below. Wallach also highlights how Tietz facilitated a Jewish beauty pageant through ticket sales in 1931. Kerry Wallach, "Kosher Seductions: Jewish Women as Employees and Consumers in German Department Stores," in *Das Berliner Warenhaus/The Berlin Department Store: History and Discourse*, ed. Godela Weiss-Sussex and Ulrike Zitzlsperger (Frankfurt am Main, 2013), 125–6.
[128] Ibid., 125–37.
[129] Reuveni, *Consumer Culture*, 29
[130] Ibid., 27.
[131] Wallach, "Kosher Seductions," 124.

[1920s] styles were created or promoted at least in part by Jewish women."[132] Buerkle, meanwhile, makes interesting observations about visual portrayals of the New Woman, an emancipated female literary archetype – shown in this case as an independent, modern, sexually desirable consumer – in Weimar advertising. Referring to imagery found in the middle-class women's magazine *Die Dame*, Buerkle points to instances where women exhibiting features of the figure were "coded as *Jewish-enough* so that both the image and the addressee *could* be a Jewish woman" – until such visual cues "all but disappeared" by the early 1930s.[133] The New Woman becomes, in this way, a representation of both Jewishness and modernity to a general (bourgeois, female) readership, and her "literal erasure" in this form a sign of "social death – in this case the erosion of her appearance in public and as the subject of specular desire – [as] one of the first efforts to remove her from public life."[134]

Finally, we must account for Jewish women's professional roles in Jewish clothing companies. Jewish women's paths into the fields of *Konfektion* and department stores run in some ways parallel to the trajectories of middle-class German women more generally, since the majority of German Jews were "securely bourgeois" by the 1870s.[135] Apart from recent eastern European immigrants (among which few were women), Jewish women had generally become distanced from working life by the late nineteenth century. Upholding bourgeois norms became particularly important for Jews as part of their efforts to integrate, so much so that *Bildung* or self-cultivation, a central tenet of bourgeois culture, "served not only as the entrée of Jews into cultured German society," notes Marion Kaplan. "Paradoxically, for many Jews it also became 'synonymous' with their Jewishness."[136] Jews eagerly absorbed bourgeois German culture while making it their own. Less than one in five Jewish women worked for pay in 1907, whereas the proportion among non-Jewish German women was around one in three. Jewish women, who had previously performed important tasks such as keeping

[132] Wallach, "Weimar Jewish Chic," 113.
[133] Buerkle, "Gendered Spectatorship," 631. Emphasis in the original.
[134] Ibid., 633.
[135] Toury, *Soziale und politische Geschichte*, especially 111–2 including Table 51. According to Toury, on average 60 per cent or more of German Jews had reached a socio-economic status of "securely middle-class existences," i.e., were found in the highest or intermediate tax brackets, by 1871/4 (this proportion varied regionally). An additional 15 to 35 per cent belonged to the lower middle classes.
[136] Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 10.

books and serving customers in family firms, were now largely relegated to the home, taking up the role of the perfect bourgeois housewife. As Kaplan demonstrates, Jewish women used this position to shape German-Jewish bourgeois culture and to reform every-day Jewish religious practice. Nonetheless, it reinforced their exclusion from public life, and the persistence of these beliefs may have contributed to the growing appeal of feminist ideas among a younger generation of German-Jewish women and girls at the turn of the century; indeed, as Imperial German-Jewish statistician Jakob Segall observed in 1912, Jewish women had, like their non-Jewish counterparts, become gripped by an "urge for freedom, [a...] desire for independence" which had, in turn, eliminated "[t]he view, which was firmly rooted in Jewish circles, that only the man was called to work and the woman to running the household and bringing up the children, and that the Jewish house daughter should sit idly in the parents' house waiting for marriage."[137] When Jewish women took up paid work or careers, they did so, like other middle-class German women, from a position defined largely by domesticity and against the current of bourgeois culture.

Yet unlike their non-Jewish counterparts, most German-Jewish women had mothers or grand-mothers who had worked in shops and trade, albeit without pay.[138] Indeed, in traditional Ashkenazi Jewish society, women's breadwinning was idealised as a supportive role to male scriptural study.[139] "Ironically," as Kaplan highlights, "such 'New Woman' work [in offices and behind tills] may not have been so new to these young [Jewish] women" of the early twentieth century."[140] While Jewish women faced the combined prejudices of antisemitism and antifeminism on the open job market, work in Jewish firms was potentially free of the former. There were many objections to women's

[137] Segall, *Beruflichen und sozialen Verhältnisse*, 77.
[138] Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 160.
[139] Iris Parush, *Reading Jewish Women: Marginality and Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Eastern European Jewish Society* (Waltham, 2004), 38–46; Glenn Dynner, "Those Who Stayed: Women and Jewish Traditionalism in East Central Europe," in *New Directions in the History of the Jews in the Polish Lands*, ed. Antony Polonsky, Hanna Wegrzynek, and Andrzej Żbikowski (Brookline, 2018), 307–12; Paula E. Hyman, "East European Jewish women in an age of transition, 1880–1930," in *Jewish Women in Historical Perspective*, ed. Judith R. Baskin (Detroit, 1998), 271–87, especially 274; Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: the rise of heterosexuality and the invention of the Jewish man* (Berkeley, 1997), 151–86; Moshe Rosman, "The History of Jewish Women in Early Modern Poland: An Assessment," in *Jewish Women in Eastern Europe*, ed. Chaeran Freeze, Paula Hyman, and Antony Polonski (Oxford, 2007 [2005]), 33–42.
[140] Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 160.

work in Jewish families, who were concerned about breaking taboos of dominant bourgeois culture.[141] Still, many recognised the growing need for Jewish women to work for financial reasons; Segall points out that demands for ever greater dowries were growing among the German-Jewish population, meaning some Jewish women simply could not afford to get married and needed therefore to support themselves.[142] The natural place for these women to turn to for work was among their social circles, co-religionists, and those who shared a similar ethnic background. In Berlin, many employers among this Jewish cohort would have been on the lookout for women workers specifically, engaged as they were in constructing feminine fashions and female-friendly shopping experiences.

According to Kaplan, most Imperial German-Jewish working women "found themselves in a ghetto within a ghetto: a lower-paid, lower-status enclave within a 'Jewish' sector of the economy."[143] She refers to the segregated gender order that continued to influence women's status even in "Jewish" workplaces. This status difference was, she emphasises, generally relative only to Jewish men, however; compared to non-Jewish women, Jewish women were often able to secure more prestigious and better paid jobs, and Kaplan mentions Jewish organisations for professional training as one of the reasons for this difference.[144] Nonetheless, very few Jewish women resorted to homework, in the clothing industry or otherwise; like other unfavourable work situations such as begging and prostitution, a concentration of poor and immigrant Jewish women in homework may have been averted through Jewish communal efforts.[145] Everything points, then, to the fact that Jewish involvement in the burgeoning German clothing trade provided new professional opportunities that were especially available to Jewish women.

[141] Ibid., 168–17; Marion Kaplan, "Tradition and Transition: The Acculturation, Assimilation and Integration of Jews in Imperial Germany," *LBIYB* 27 (1982): 3–35.
[142] Segall, *Beruflichen und sozialen Verhältnisse,* 78.
[143] Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 168.
[144] Ibid., 166–8.
[145] For figures on Jewish women and homework, see Segall, *Beruflichen und sozialen Verhältnisse,* 85.

In this vein, Wallach shows that for Weimar department stores "Jewish women often played multiple roles behind the scenes, functioning in many ways as 'fashion intermediaries'" – a term borrowed from Regina Blaszcyk, by which Wallach means employees who "mediated between tastemakers and consumer desires."[146] Roemer argues that "[t]he pioneering development in fashion photography of [the Weimar Republic] was inextricably linked to Jewish female photographers," while Ganeva draws attention to the fact that many among Germany's fashion journalists of the 1920s, often writing for large Jewish-owned publishing houses such as Ullstein, "came from conventional, well-to-do bourgeois, often Jewish, families."[147] Wallach's work on Weimar fashion gives further traction to the idea that the German fashion-related industries provided a platform for Jewish women to exercise their creativity and professional agency, with examples including fashion journalist Julie Elias and headwear designer Regina Friedländer.[148] This dissertation takes a step back, examining the discourses and practices of the commercial clothing trade that preceded these phenomena of the democratic interwar period.

Thesis Contribution and Methodology

Most research on the Berlin clothing industry and its intersection with Jewish history has focused on the 1930s.[149] Beginning with the investigations of journalist Uwe Westphal in the mid 1980s, the discussion has mainly sought to grapple with the legacy of Nazi crimes against Jewish business owners and the genocide that the Nazi government committed not only against Jews and other minorities but against German culture, with the so-called "aryanisation" of the German and Austrian clothing industries.[150] The relevant publications by scholars such as Roberta S. Kremer, Irene Guenther, Kristin Hahn and Sigrid Jacobeit, and Maria Makela, shed light on the changing German fashion scene under Nazism, demonstrating how cultural loss was closely intertwined with the

[146] Wallach, "Kosher Seductions," 122.
[147] Roemer, "Photographers, Jews," 99; Ganeva, *Women in Weimar Fashion,* 66.
[148] Wallach, "Weimar Jewish Chic."
[149] Exceptions include the contributions of Wallach and Ganeva, as detailed earlier in this chapter.
[150] Westphal, *Fashion Metropolis;* Westphal, *Berliner Konfektion*.

personal and professional losses of Jewish clothiers.[151] They illustrate how anxieties relating to change and modernisation interacted with the ideologies of nationalism and antisemitism to bring about the destruction of Jewish livelihoods and a "collective amnesia"[152] concerning the nature and extent of Jewish involvement in German cultural production, the shadow of which remains to this day.

The literature on German department stores has similarly concentrated on the interwar and Nazi periods. A number of publications, including those by Kevin Repp and Kathleen James-Chakraborty (cited here using her former name Kathleen James), examine German responses to the changing nature of public life and physical urban spaces with economic modernisation and "Americanisation" in the early twentieth century from the perspective of architecture and advertising[153]; a handful of scholars such as Paul Lerner and Uwe Lindemann explore these debates in relation to the real and imagined roles played by German Jews.[154] Lerner delves, among other things, into novels from the 1920s and 30s, bringing gendered portrayals of the department store, in which the Jewish department store "king" presides over and exploits his female subjects – his employees and customers – into conversation with the histories of German department stores as businesses and workplaces.[155] Several microhistories explore, in addition, the histories of individual department stores and fashion salons, including A. Wertheim, Herrmann Gerson, and N. Israel, as well as the stories of their Jewish owners.[156]

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[151] Kristin Hahn and Sigrid Jacobeit, eds., *Brennender Stoff: Deutsche Mode jüdischer Konfektionäre vom Hausvogteiplatz* (Berlin, 2018); Kremer, *Broken Threads*; Irene Guenther, *Nazi chic?: Fashioning Women in the Third Reich* (Oxford, 2004); Christoph Kreutzmüller, Eva-Lotte Reimer, Michael Wildt, *Remembrance and Responsibility*, vol. 2, *Fashion and persecution: the fate of Jewish clothiers in the Nazi dictatorship on the premises of today's Justice Ministry* (Berlin, 2016); Makela, "Flapper Dress." On Berlin and fashion, see also Susan Ingram and Katrina Sark, *Berliner chic: a locational history of Berlin fashion* (Bristol, 2011).
[152] I borrow here from Westphal, *Fashion Metropolis*.
[153] Kevin Repp, "Marketing, Modernity, and 'the German people's soul," in In *Selling Modernity: Advertising in Twentieth-Century Germany* [electronic resource], ed. Pamela E. Swett, S. Jonathan Wiesen, and Jonathan R. Zatlin (Durham, 2007), 27–51; Kathleen James, "From Messel to Mendelsohn," in Crossick and Jaumain, *Cathedrals of Consumption*, 252–78.
[154] Uwe Lindemann, *Das Warenhaus: Schauplatz der Moderne* (Cologne, 2015); Lerner, *Consuming Temple*.
[155] Ibid., 94–138. See also Lindemann's discussion on Jewishness and femininity as overlapping themes in anti-department store discourses, in Lindemann, *Das Warenhaus*, 198–204.
[156] Ladwig-Winters, *Wertheim*; Kessemeier, *Ein Feentempel*; Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel"; Naomi Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel: German-Jewry's Secret Ambassador* (London, 2017 [1984]), eBook.

This dissertation ventures into the nascent consumer society of Wilhelmine Germany, which has received limited attention in the above historiographies. I focus on a period of relative peace and stability in Jewish/non-Jewish relations, when tensions surrounding consumption and culture and the involvement of Jews in advancing the former were, nonetheless, staple themes of public discourse. The Wilhelmine period was characterised by a vigorous debate on various social issues such as housing, workers' protection, and women's rights; there were middle- as well as working-class grass-roots movements that enthusiastically advocated for the rights of different groups – a scene which had all but died down in the Weimar democracy. Jews were not only the subject of discussions about immigration, consumer capitalism, and the limitation of homework, but active as lobbyists and philanthropists for a variety of social causes – all the while German-Jewish society was engrossed in its own particular set of issues.[157] This dissertation understands commercial companies not just as economic enterprises but as establishments of social and cultural importance. For Jewish-owned firms in Berlin *Konfektion*, this means going beyond their impact on fashion design and beyond the question of Jewish "contributions" to German culture. It involves viewing Jewish difference as a constitutive part of a broader narrative, in which the category of Jewishness mattered to Jewish and non-Jewish Germans alike.

My use of Jewishness as an analytical lens takes it cue from Lisa Silverman's work. Like gender and race, observes Silverman, Jewishness is a construct that encompasses a multiplicity of expressions and possible definitions that may change over time.[158] Focusing on Jewish difference bypasses the need for leaning into essentialist conceptions of Jewishness while allowing for a broader scope and opening up possibilities to study how Jewishness functions in contexts where it is not made explicit; "[i]ndeed," notes Silverman, "the very absence of a clear-cut manifestation of the 'Jewish' often

[157] Major themes of Jewish public discourse included declining fertility rates – which some interpreted as the beginning of the end for the Jewish minority – and the social engineering of Jewish occupational life away from the commercial sphere, including the "productivisation" of immigrant Jews. On Jewish fertility rates, see Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 16, 42–5; on Jewish social engineering, see Penslar, *Shylock's Children*, 205–16, 174–222.
[158] Silverman, *Becoming Austrians*, 6–7.

signals an engagement with Jewish difference – and points to its central importance."[159] I apply this logic to my analysis of Jewish clothing companies and their owners and leading creatives, whose Jewishness according to most existing research made no difference to their activities, other than affecting the way they were perceived by hostile members of society.[160] The firms I include in my analysis were, like their owners, "Jewish" to different degrees and the *visibility* of their Jewishness varied. Far from reproducing racist notions of the "Jewish business," then, studying Jewish difference in the context of business and entrepreneurship reveals Jewish companies as complicated ventures, formed at the intersection of cultures, economies and politics, gender, and religion. "[W]hat is 'ethnic' about ethnic enterprise may be no more than a set of connections and regular patterns of interaction among people sharing common national background or migratory experiences," argue sociologists Howard E. Aldrich and Roger Waldinger.[161] Jewish difference may, in turn, encompass religious difference in addition to difference based on ethnicity and culture. Jewishness is relevant for understanding how Jewish-owned businesses operated and why they did so in a certain way; however, it is not the only relevant factor.

My three core chapters engage with the field of *Konfektion* through three different mediums: corporate marketing, the press, and the universal exhibition. In each of these cases, I draw on the idea of the public sphere as the realm of public discourse and formation of public opinion, as proposed by Jürgen Habermas. Yet rather than assuming Habermas' more defined construct, embodied in male-dominated, bourgeois discursive arenas, or Penslar's view of the "Jewish Press [as] the superstructure... [giving] voice to a Jewish public sphere,"[162] (or, for that matter, Yehuda

[159] Ibid., 8.
[160] I will define companies as Jewish if their owners or directors belonged to the Jewish community by the beginning of the Wilhelmine period. I will therefore include, for example, the firm of the Wertheim brothers, the last of whom was baptised in 1906. (See discussion on page 199–200 below). The reason for including directors as well as owners is that some companies were registered as an GmbH (*Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung*) or AG (*Aktiengesellschaft*) (examples being A. Wertheim G.m.b.H. and Leonhard Tietz A.G.), which meant that they had multiple shareholders and could be listed on the stock market; the former sole owners, who often remained directors, tended to hold a ruling share but precise details about the nature of these arrangements are often lacking.
[161] Howard E. Aldrich and Roger Waldinger,"Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship," *Annual Review of Sociology* 16, no. 1 (1990), 112.
[162] Derek Penslar, "Introduction: The Press and the Jewish Public Sphere," *Jewish History* 14, No. 1 (2000): 6.

Gotthelf's understanding of the Jewish press as the "voice of a Jewish people"[163]), I am interested in the porosity of boundaries between different areas of the public sphere, and in how Jews, women and, indeed, Jewish women, created their own ethnic and gendered spaces within the wider bourgeois public sphere.[164] I explore, in other words, how Jewish difference operates in the promotional materials created by a Jewish company, in this case N. Israel, in the trade press for German clothiers, and in the context of a universal exhibition, *Die Frau In Haus und Beruf*, and the participation of Berlin clothiers therein.

My main concern is, nevertheless, not with Jewish difference but with questions of gender and specifically with the responses of commercial clothing companies to women's rights and professionalisation. I show how the promotional, political, and philanthropic priorities of Wilhelmine Jewish clothiers engaged them in the expansion of the women's public sphere – or, more accurately, in furthering women's access to the "general" bourgeois public sphere (even if they would not have understood their activities through this lens, developed by later scholarship). I differentiate this terminology from "public life" as the binary opposite of the private realm, employed by many scholars of women and gender; Habermas' model refers more specifically to the platforms and forums available for individuals to influence public decision-making and the process of citizenship formation. Per Nancy Fraser's argument, "there arose a host of competing counterpublics," along differing lines of politics, ethnicity, religion, and gender.[165] I suggest that the public involvement of Jewish clothiers in three distinct forums – each, in their own way, associated with modernity and the democratisation of the public sphere – helped carve out spaces for women to participate in public discourse while also helping to dictate the terms of women's public engagement. As predominantly male actors from outside the organised women's movement, the study of commercial clothiers and their activities encourages us to think critically about the

[163] Yehuda Gotthelf, "The silenced voice of a people," in *The Jewish Press that Was: Accounts, Evaluations and Memories of Jewish Papers in pre-Holocaust Europe* (Tel Aviv, [c. 1980]), 9–15.
[164] Because I focus on business, my research does not cover working-class or socialist publications.
[165] Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text*, no. 25/26 (1990): 61.

boundaries of the women's public sphere in terms of its relationship both to the commercial realm and to the (male) bourgeois public sphere. From a different perspective, the propagandistic dimensions of the cases explored here suggest new ways of thinking about feminist activism that not only account for the employment of commercial strategies by female women's rights activists – recognition of which is largely absent in German historiography[166]– but the politicised campaigns of commercial companies and women's involvement in their construction.

The first chapter addresses the company albums of *Kaufhaus* N. Israel, which appeared between 1899 and 1914. The portrayal of the clothing and department store and its founding family builds on the respective accounts by H. G. Reissner and Naomi Shepherd, neither of whom, however, explore the company's publications in greater depth.[167] I demonstrate how this printed series served to fashion the N. Israel brand, associating it and the firm's owning family with values such as modernisation and patriotism. My analysis centers on what I have described elsewhere as the "woman albums" [168]– a practical but ultimately unsatisfactory short-hand for a tendency of albums published after 1906 thematically to foreground women and "feminine" topics, visualise female subjects, and include female authors, compared to earlier issues in the series. Three sample essays from the three albums with the most conspicuous feminised and political content serve as the basis for my discussion, which elaborates on my two previously published journal articles.[169] With these as a basis, I examine references to the women's movement and depictions of the New Woman ideal, constructed by album essayists and N. Israel's graphic designers. My chapter examines the

[166] Exceptions include the work of Despina Stratigakos and Mary Pepchinski on the Berlin women's exhibition, as explained below.
[167] For brief mentions of the albums see Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 243; Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 35–6. The most extensive engagement with the album series can be found in the work of artist and author DESSA (née Deborah Sharon Abeles). DESSA deconstructs visual content assembled by N. Israel together with material from her related research, which she then integrates into new collages. These reflect on Jewish involvement in German business and society and Holocaust memory. DESSA (Deborah Petroz-Abeles), *A Tribute to Kaufhaus N. Israel 1815–1939: Collages and Paintings Based on N. Israel Album 1912 "Die Hygiene im Wandel der Zeiten"* (Pully, 2003). See also DESSA, *Stolzesteine – Stones-of-Pride: Hommage an das Kaufhaus N. Israel, Berlin* (Berlin, 2015).
[168] Angelina Palmén, "Modern Confections: Jews, New Women, and the Business of Fashion in Imperial Berlin," *Textile* 21, no. 3 (2023): 649. DOI: 10.1080/14759756.2022.2141038.
[169] Palmén, "Modern Confections"; Angelina Palmén, "Berlin Jews, Business, and Bourgeois Feminism 1890-1914: Commerce and the Making of a Cultural Moment?," *Jewish Culture and History* 24, no. 1 (2023): 96–121, DOI: 10.1080/1462169X.2022.2156191.

involvement of women in the making of the woman albums in relation to the creation of a women's public sphere. Meanwhile, I highlight limits to their participation, ostensibly set by patriarchal culture and N. Israel's vision for its company brand.

Like all my case studies, the N. Israel chapter draws on a range of materials, including some quantitative but mostly qualitative sources. My main thesis derives from the published N. Israel albums, copies of which exist in many archives, libraries, and private collections across Germany, Israel, and the United States. They are approximately the size of an A4 and enclosed in hard, bound, and often decorative covers, with later volumes encompassing around 100 pages of elaborately illustrated essays, in addition to a few dozen schemata of Berlin's theatres, and a calendar with inserted promotional pictures of the store. I focus on the unusual cultural and philosophical content that forms the main attraction, including the accompanying conspicuous visual matter. Combining ideas from Roland Barthes and Erwin Panofsky, I treat the images and texts as elements in the construction of a public discourse; I take on Barthes point that "the study of each [communicative] structure" needs to be "exhausted" in order that we may understand the relationship between different structures, thus analysing the verbal and the visual content separately.[170] My textual analysis pays close attention to word choices and recurring themes while contextualising the content historically and drawing on biographical information about the authors. The images are, meanwhile, treated not primarily as individual objects but as part of a new artistic creation, thematically collated, merged, and sometimes manipulated. I approach these new originals – composite visual portrayals including collages, montages, or groups of pictures – using interpretive techniques developed by Panofsky for the study of classical paintings. Scholarly "intuition," combined with a knowledge of the culture and context, help extract inherent "symbolical values," which illuminate how the Wilhelmine readers and creators of these composite objects may have understood them.[171]

[170] Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. and ed. Stephen Heath (London, 1977), 16.
[171] Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Garden City, 1955), 40–1.

My second chapter deals with the trade journal *Der Confectionair*, meaning "the Ready-to Wear Clothier." Published in Berlin, *Der Confectionair* was the country's leading paper for the industry and Europe's predominant journal in the textile trade (published in different languages) by the interwar period. Its story is told here for the first time using celebratory volumes produced by the publisher Leopold Schottlaender and issues of *Der Confectionair* found in libraries as well as some which are only preserved in partial, archival form. I show the manifold connections of *Der Confectionair* to Berlin *Konfektion* and its Jewish affiliates, illustrating how the journal functioned as a forum for Jewish as well as general professional affairs. Further to this, I trace the journal's affirmative position on the Woman Question through reading individual articles closely and decoding the assertions of individual (anonymous) authors; the sheer amount of material, nonetheless, precludes a full-fledged literary analysis. Focusing on tone and word choices and on the way in which these express feelings, views, and preferences, I suggest how the texts convey not only the impressions of the author but how they define the character and orientation of the publication. I consider the role of class, German culture, Jewish interests, and the politics and sustainability of *Der Confectionair* as a commercial publication in the construction of these verbal discourses. Importantly, my work uncovers the role of women in the production of *Der Confectionair*, demonstrating how Jewish and non-Jewish women influenced the journal's politics and how the journal in turn accommodated women and created professional and rhetorical spaces for women to participate in the public sphere. The chapter challenges assumptions about public spheres, showing how ethno-religious and gendered issues – and their female and/or Jewish advocates – found a platform in a public, apparently purely professional, arena.

The third chapter centers on the women's exhibition "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," held in Berlin between 24 February and 24 March 1912. The noteworthy publications on this topic belong to Despina Stratigakos and Mary Pepchinski, who explore the exhibition from the viewpoint of

architecture and space, urban studies, and women's history.[172] My interpretation echoes their observations about the commercial nature of the affair, obscured in many contemporary accounts (especially those by feminists) and passing mentions in later scholarship. I explore, however, for the first time the involvement of an individual industry or economic sector in the creation of the feminist-oriented enterprise, namely the ready-made clothing and fashion industries, and their male representatives. While Stratigakos emphasises how feminists took an idea originally hatched for commercial interests and transformed it into a feminist statement, I spotlight the multi-faceted nature of the event, including how commercial forces continued to exert influence, adding to the ideologically charged nature of the exhibition while also making it commercially promotional. My source base encompasses reports found in newspapers and periodicals (including reproduced photographs), memoirs, printed materials produced for the exhibition, and publications by the Lyceum Club, the organisation behind "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf." My analysis is influenced by Maria Grever and Berteke Waaldijk, whose work on the Dutch national women's exhibition of 1898 models how women's exhibitions can be discussed in relation to processes of citizenship and to the public sphere and its formation.[173]

The major historiographical contribution of this chapter is to examine the Berlin women's exhibition through the lens of Jewishness, used, per Silverman's suggestion, in a manner similar to the way in which one would use gender; i.e., by asking how it operates in this particular context, in which Jewish participation was extensive. "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" was portrayed as a universal display of women's achievements across the domestic and public realms of human activity. Stratigakos and Pepchinski have separately highlighted the issues inherent in this characterisation by contemporaries, especially in view of the bourgeois and elitist flavour of the exhibition, as elucidated in my chapter. I expand this picture by showing how one particular group, namely Jewish women, used the women's

[172] Despina Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin: Building a Modern City* (Minneapolis, 2008); Mary Pepchinski, *Feminist Space: Exhibitions and Discourses between Philadelphia and Berlin 1865–1912* (Kromsdorf, 2007).
[173] Maria Grever and Berteke Waaldijk, *Transforming the Public Sphere: The Dutch National Exhibition of Women's Labor in 1898* [electronic resource] (Durham, 2004), 10.

expo not only to support the general women's cause but to pursue their own, group-specific agendas. I highlight how Jewish women formed a crucial link between the exhibition and the Berlin business community and how they viewed the event as an important milestone; the Jewish press, as I show, largely ignored their endeavours while Berlin's foremost clothiers actively backed the collective women's and feminist spectacle.

Running through my dissertation is an attempt to implement the idea of intersectionality, as first delineated by critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw. My discussion revolves primarily around the intersections of Jewishness, Germanness, class, and gender; sometimes, when the gender and ethnicity of the authors is unknown, I propose best guesses based on extensive background research, using these as the basis of my analysis (for example, in cases where names are spelled differently). As a rule of thumb, I use "middle-class" to denote socio-economic status and "bourgeois" and "bourgeoisie" to refer to the culture and social practices that may or may not correspond to the same class. The middle-class perspective is the perspective that permeates the examples presented in this thesis, even if I make an effort to position them in relation to stances on working-class women and their rights inherent in the statements and activities of commercial clothiers and their mouthpiece in the press, *Der Confectionair*. The most difficult part of the analysis has been to pinpoint the role of the "Berlin factor"; to what extent are these demonstrations of support for the women's cause a product of a very particular environment, namely liberal and cosmopolitan Berlin? I suggest some possible answers to this question in my concluding remarks. This study would have further benefited from comparison with another field of commerce or industry in Berlin or in another Imperial German city in which the leading companies exhibited the same (or even a lesser) level of interest in women's rights and modernity but Jewish firms were not predominant – alas, such a counterweight has not materialised over the course of my research, which may or may not be a further indication of the anomalous nature of the phenomenon. All translations of primary and secondary sources alike are my own, unless otherwise stated.

I have framed my dissertation as an exercise in Jewish history, because that has been the primary focus of my doctorate. This introduction would not be complete, however, without mentioning how my sources, many of which are utilised here for the first time since their initial appearance, shed new light on the history of the German women's movement. Notwithstanding the specific examples given by Stratigakos and Pepchinski, my dissertation is the first to connect the activities and ideologies of the international and German women's movements to German business in a more comprehensive way. The literature on German feminism has overwhelmingly reproduced portrayals by contemporary middle-class activists of their own movement, which, in contrast to those of their American counterparts, involve scanty recognition of commercial influence or sponsorship – an understandable response to prominent anti-consumerist discourses among Wilhelmine ruling male elites. With my Jewish protagonists and their companies as go-betweens, my dissertation has produced new synapses between two realms with little demonstrated prior contact. It illuminates previously unknown parallels between German and Anglo-Saxon history; moreover, it shows how ideas influenced by feminism spread in Wilhelmine society through unexpected channels: among professional communities, by means of commercial marketing devices and through photographic images.

CHAPTER 1:

Kaufhaus N. Israel (1815–1939): Cultivating Vistas of New Women

"The picture of iron-hard industriousness; of restless, tireless, and honest productivity, the imposing 6,500 square metre department store rises in the middle of bustling and busy Berlin, opposite the *Rotes Rathaus*, like a citadel of work that has over the course of 86 years developed into a second 'women's paradise.'"[174]

With these words, Eugenie von Zedlitz introduces her essay "Walk through the House of N. Israel," found in the company album of *Kaufhaus* N. Israel for the year 1901. Using the gender-neutral penname of J. Lorm, von Zedlitz paints a picture of a fashionable and dynamic enterprise whose majestic department store, overlooking Berlin town hall, is a central fixture of a great European city. At this "citadel of work," busy hands labour away to the pulse of the city, creating in turn an oasis for "ladies" to escape the mundanity of their leisured lives. Visitors are beckoned from Berlin and beyond to witness the spectacle, guided through it in a photographic tour narrated by von Zedlitz. Bold art nouveau style lettering above the main portico will greet those who take the plunge, spelling the company name and that of its founding father, an eighteenth-century Jewish peddler who "made it," and whose descendants continue to shape the modern metropolis.

This chapter focuses on N. Israel, a Jewish-owned department store connected to Berlin *Konfektion*. A self-proclaimed haven for female consumers, N. Israel also took a public interest in women's issues. I explore how the firm used its printed publications to express support for the middle-class women's movement and the activities of Wilhelmine "new women." I will further demonstrate how this tendency correlated with efforts to associate the company with notions of *Kultur*, that is, the education and ennobling of people in line with the supposed highest manifestation of these ideals in

[174] Lorm, "Ein Gang." Pages lack numbering throughout the N. Israel album series. References will be indicated through essay author and title. In line with existing publications citing the albums, I have identified the relevant source by title rather than "Album [year]," using the album year instead as the year of publication (which is not printed in the volumes), to avoid confusion. In practice, the albums were published in December the previous year and continued to be distributed over the course of the new year.

the German linguistic and cultural sphere. Many Berlin fashion and department stores exhibited similar tendencies. N. Israel's approach was, however, materially and ideologically novel, blurring the perceived boundaries between the commercial and the cultural – and tradition and modernity. Through visually and verbally celebrating progressive women, the N. Israel series reimagined the department store publication but also contributed uniquely to emerging women's public spheres in printed media.

Sixteen annual albums appeared, beginning in 1899, each addressing a different theme.[175] As far as we can tell, they were all produced on the central corner of Berlin's Königstraße (today's Rathausstraße) and Spandauer Straße, where the N. Israel department store was located (Fig. 1).[176] Focusing mainly on those appearing after 1909, I suggest in my analysis how the "voice" of N. Israel may be traced in the albums. Leaning on Barthes, I deal with the album pictures as "connoted," rather than "denoted" (analogue), because, as components of a larger vision, they have now been coded with meaning, ostensibly by employees of N. Israel.[177] The publications were, as I demonstrate below, collaborative productions. Apart from invited guest editors as well as authors and photographers responsible for third-party content, their creators often remain unknown; most company records were destroyed, along with the store building (Fig. 28), during the Second World War.[178] In the absence of such crucial information, but also recognising their corporate nature, I treat the albums as the output of a composite unit or "person": the N. Israel company.[179] In so doing,

[175] See previous footnote concerning the real publication dates.
[176] A pair of plaques commemorate the department store and Wilfrid Israel, last member of the Israel family to head the firm. N. Israel was forcibly sold to the "aryan" Emil Koester AG in 1939. Wilfrid, who held dual British-German citizenship, left for the United Kingdom in the same year. Wilfrid died in 1943 when his passenger plane was shot down by the German *Luftwaffe* over the Bay of Biscay, apparently as he was returning from another rescue operation in Portugal. He was survived by his mother Amy and brother Herbert, both of whom migrated to the United States. See Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*; Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 227–56.
[177] Barthes, "The Photographic," 19–20.
[178] A relatively small collection of N. Israel company documents, most of which relate to later periods, can be found the Leo Baeck Institute, New York. See Israel Family Collection, 1814–1996, AR 25140; MF 27; MF 684; AR 25140, LBI.
[179] N. Israel was apparently not a legally independent entity since it was in family ownership (sole ownership or co-ownership between family members; on other company structures see footnote 160). This is important for understanding the proximity of the company to their owners, which I emphasise, yet viewing the company as a collaborative venture is nonetheless pertinent when analysing the albums.

however, I suggest how the Israels, the family behind the N. Israel brand, may have played a central role.

The chapter begins with a presentation of N. Israel as a "Jewish" family firm, employer, and business enterprise. I subsequently illustrate how N. Israel navigated Wilhelmine culture as a Jewish business, constructing in the process its "corporate identity" (public image). Mirroring wider tendencies among Wilhelmine fashion houses and department stores, the N. Israel company actively aspired to be an institution of *Kultur* through its albums. The third section deals with the relationship of the albums to the emerging women's public sphere through the involvement of female authors. In the main analysis, I use three sample essays to exemplify how the N. Israel series mediated certain ideals of womanhood, relating these to the image of the New Woman as a cultural type and to the women's movement. The fifth section summarises my earlier published research on "Jewish" portraits found in the publications, discussing how these feed into the overall picture. I am interested in the marketing value of the albums *and* in the ideological currents implicit in their rhetoric, both of which speak to the public self-fashioning of a Wilhelmine Jewish business dynasty. How did the albums reflect on the Israel family and their company, when understood in the context of German culture, fashion, and department stores, and Jewish business activity in Berlin *Konfektion*?

House of Israel: Family, Business, and Jewish Society

The N. Israel company was born out of the second-hand clothing trade, a typical Jewish occupation in early modern Germany. Israel (son of) Jacob (1710–1786) from Schneidemühl in the province of Posen migrated to Berlin in 1741, making him a contemporary of Moses Mendelsohn. Mid-eighteenth-century Berlin was a centre for the German enlightenment and a relatively new frontier for Jewish life.[180] Jews were allowed to settle only with special permission; Israel Jacob obtained his right of residency through marrying Rebecca, widow to Liebmann Moses, among Berlin's

[180] See Steven M. Lowenstein's discussion in *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family and Crisis, 1770-1830* (Oxford, 1994), 3–5.

established Jewish community. Now an "Extraordinary Protected Jew," Israel Jacob joined the business of Moses Meyer, the father of Rebecca's late husband, trading in used garments, muslin, and laces in the open-air market. By 1750, Israel Jacob had become the independent owner of a flourishing business. He passed the baton to his eldest son Jacob Israel (1753–1821), one of three children from Israel Jacob's second marriage to Gitel, the cousin of his first and by then deceased wife Rebecca.

The company named "N. Israel" began with the grandson of Israel Jacob, Nathan Israel (1782–1852), in 1815. Having been approved for Prussian citizenship in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, Nathan began renting a commercial property in Jüdenstraße (Jews' Street), in Berlin's medieval Jewish quarter. In conjunction with his marriage to Edel Levy in 1818, Nathan shifted his focus away from used clothing to the linen trade, settling his business in the Molkenmarkt. According to the N. Israel company album from 1902, it was "the founder's personal relationships with large and small-scale weavers of Silesia and Saxony [...that] underpinned the firm's greatness."[181] Nathan Israel also found success in combining retail and wholesale, catering to the needs of local clothiers and private customers as well as those of customers found in the provinces.[182]

Major societal transformations marked the directorships of Jacob Israel (1823–1894) and his son Berthold Israel (1868–1935), from revolutions in transportation and economic growth to the founding of the German Imperial state in 1871. N. Israel acquired important wholesale customers among Germany's new public institutions and cultivated close relations with the crown; the company was in charge of street decorations for the funerary procession of Emperor Wilhelm I in 1888,[183] and was a supplier for the German colonial administration in East Asia in the early twentieth century and to the German military administration during the First World War.[184] Very little information has

[181] Conrad Alberti, "Die Entwicklung Berlins und des Kaufhauses N. Jsrael," in Hermann Müller-Bohn, *Unser Kaiserhaus* (Berlin, 1902).
[182] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 236.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Correspondence from the Berlin trade police commissioner to the Royal Clothing Office of Prussian Guards Corps (28 October 1904), "Orders and titles are awarded to the businessman Jakob Israel

survived about N. Israel's once extensive international export activities. Domestically, the company strengthened its regional links through training apprentices from provincial businesses; "[t]he apprentices of today grew into the customers of tomorrow," observes H.G. Reissner, once a senior employee of the N. Israel firm.[185] Some trainees set up shop in Berlin in the environs of *Hausvogteiplatz*, further consolidating the influence of N. Israel in the booming local industry for ready-made garments.

During the "Berthold-era," from the 1890s to the mid 1920s,[186] the N. Israel company acquired its iconic form in Berlin's central municipal district. Adjacent properties were purchased, creating a complex of five to six stories, covering 7,500 square meters by 1906.[187] Ready-made fashion was added to the existing inventory of ready-made linen goods in 1895/6. After 1900, the store diversified further into furniture, interior decorations, household and kitchenware. N. Israel now competed with department stores like Hermann Tietz and Wertheim in central Berlin – though, due to its focus on textile wares, it retained its image as a "speciality department store" (*Spezialwarenhaus*).[188] N. Israel stored funds for its customers and employees, becoming an important creditor on the Berlin stock exchange.[189] At some point during the nineteenth century, it also began producing its own ready-made linen goods, cotton jersey underwear, and stockings.[190] The Wilhelmine store housed sewing workshops on its top floors, in addition to employing an unknown number of independent

(*03/23/1823) and his sons Hermann Nathan (*03/17/1863) and Berthold (*06/12/1868)," Polizeipräsidium Berlin, A Pr. Br. Rep. 030 No. 10848, LAB (henceforth "Orders and Titles"); various correspondence from 1917 among the police files on the Israel family, in ibid.

[185] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 236.

[186] Berthold co-owned N. Israel together with Hermann from 1893 and became sole owner after his brother's death in 1905. Formally director until 1934, Berthold handed over managerial responsibilities to his eldest son Wilfrid in 1925 and his other son Herbert would implement widespread company reforms in 1928. Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 239, 246; Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 82–3, 86–7.

[187] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 239; Benno Jacobson, *Das Theater* (Berlin, 1906).

[188] Göhre, *Das Warenhaus*, 147. Wertheim's first Berlin store in Rosenthaler Straße was also, according to the firm, a "reines Spezialgeschäft in Manufaktur– und Modewaren," a "pure specialist shop for manufactured and fashion goods." "Ursprung und Entwickelung der Firma A. Wertheim," in *Wertheim Berlin – Leipziger Straße und Leipziger Platz* (Berlin, 1928). URL: https://digital.wolfsonian.org/TD1988.91.4dup.

[189] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 236.

[190] According to Berlin police records from 1904, N. Israel knitwear was produced by renting looms from the firm August Marschel & Co in Chemnitz. See Correspondence from the Berlin trade police commissioner to the Royal Clothing Office of Prussian Guards Corps (28 October 1904), "Orders and titles" (see footnote 184).

seamstresses and middlemen.[191] N. Israel's trousseau became a best seller; Wilhelmine and Weimar era prospective brides knew N. Israel as the place to stock up on whites (Fig. 2). Bourgeois but not elite, the N. Israel department store apparently kept things classy but affordable.[192]

A story of innovation and growth, the history of N. Israel is also one of continuity and tradition. During four consecutive generations (six in total, if counting Nathan Israel's predecessors), the company stayed in the ownership of the Israel family – some of its competitors were listed on the stock market but N. Israel kept its financial independence, which would become crucial when Nazi pressure on Jewish businesses began to mount after 1933. Contrary to other major department stores in the capital, N. Israel did not branch out to other cities, remaining in this way firmly under family control. The company history often assumes biblical undertones as one of transmission from fathers to sons for more than a century, not least in the account of H.G. Reissner, the firm's foremost chronicler.[193] This patriarchal continuity shaped a business tradition through the Jewish heritage of the Israels. The Israels eagerly channelled company profits toward Jewish and non-Jewish philanthropic causes, honouring the Jewish religious prescription to practice *tzedakah* or charity. Extensive employee support schemes were in force from 1894 until the forced sale of the company in 1939.[194] From 1815 to 1907, N. Israel was closed on Saturdays – in many ways the most lucrative days, since Sunday business was illegal. The practice was discontinued by Berthold Israel, who invoked his late father's will to allow opening on the Sabbath if considered necessary for reasons of competition and if compensated for in charitable giving. [195] Throughout its existence, N. Israel kept its doors closed for Jewish High Holidays.

[191] For a note on N. Israel's employment of homeworkers see the letter from Royal Police Authorities for Berlin-Mitte to an unknown recipient (7 October 1912), in ibid.
[192] On the social stratification of German department stores see Göhre, *Das Warenhaus*, 90–1; Uwe Spiekermann, *Basis der Konsumgesellschaft: Entstehung und Entwicklung des modernen Kleinhandels in Deutschland 1850–1914* (Munich, 1999), 366–8; Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Cambridge, MA., 1996), 64; Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 38–9.
[193] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel."
[194] Ibid., 241; see footnote 176.
[195] Ibid., 242.

The roles of the Israel women reflected, however, not continuity but change. In the early modern period, Jewish endogamy was a natural intracommunal phenomenon and a presumed safeguard against assimilation, but, as noted, it was also a means of fostering business relations. A successful match could, as with Nathan Israel's forebears, be a pathway to residency and citizenship and to the making of family firms and careers (an unwise match could, similarly, undo generations' worth of work). Under Nathan Israel, business and family were housed under the same roof; from 1815 to 1838 the firm employed family members and relatives only, reflecting the typical business structure of small-scale ethnic enterprises. It is safe to assume that Nathan's wife Edel was in some way involved in the family business; even after the expansion of the company workforce in 1838, and despite the move of Jacob Israel and his wife Minna Adler into a separate apartment around 1845, Jacob's sister Bella continued to play an important role as matron of the company boarding house for N. Israel apprentices.[196]

Amy Israel (born Solomon) was a different story. Like her husband and first cousin Berthold Israel, she was a grandchild of Nathan Marcus Adler, former Orthodox Chief Rabbi of the British Empire. Having grown up among the Anglo-Jewish elite, Amy's lifestyle resembled that of an Enlightenment-era salon hostess; "[s]he was widely read, liked the company of actors, musicians and intellectuals, and, in Berlin, terrified the more sedate wives of businessmen by quoting from contemporary French poets," relates Naomi Shepherd.[197] Amy's lavish soirées for Berlin's cultural elite must have been the talk of the town. Always yearning for and frequently returning to England, however, Amy was apparently too buried in her escapism to concern herself centrally with the affairs of the company. She did insist on having her own "boutique" on the department store premises, to the great frustration of her husband Berthold, it seems. The shop was, according to Shepherd, filled with all sorts of "theatrical kitsch [...] that the Israel clientele would not buy," and operated at a loss.[198] Even if we factor in the possibility of gendered or cultural biases from contemporary

[196] Ibid., 236.
[197] Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 44.
[198] Ibid., 87.

witnesses against Amy – Shepherd's interviewees, including former N. Israel employees, were mostly German and generally unsympathetic toward Amy's eccentricities – the nature of her (unwelcome) involvement in N. Israel points to the diminishing roles of Jewish women in family-run firms, following business growth and Jewish embourgeoisement. Yet the fact that she was able to continue this hobby for several years, in spite of pleas from Berthold to do otherwise, testifies to the continued mixing of family and business affairs among German Jews and to the influence that Amy exercised in both arenas.

The distancing of the Israel women from day-to-day business paralleled, as in other Jewish enterprises, the expansion of the company's workforce from outside the family. Between the retirement of Jacob Israel and the end of his son Berthold's occupancy as head of N. Israel during the Nazi era, the company went from employing around 250 persons to a staff of around 2,000.[199] In the Wilhelmine period, formal employees numbered around 1,000, with around half of these being women.[200] During the First World War, N. Israel seems to have recruited 132 more women between 1914 and 1916, despite the stagnation of the retail sector, probably in order for the company to fulfil its orders from the wartime administration more effectively when male members (still covered by company insurance schemes) were drafted, and to compensate for an initial loss of 80 employees at the beginning of the war. Amid widespread financial hardship and unemployment, it possible that N. Israel emerged increasingly as an employer of women during the war.[201] At least at one point

[199] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 237, 240; Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 22, 45.
[200] Apart from this figure being mentioned in the brief company history in the album for 1906 (Jacobson, *Das Theater*), it is suggested by the average number of staff covered by company sick funds each year in the 1900s–1910s, based on data compiled by the Berlin statistical authorities. The number of employees included in the insurance stayed just below 1,000 before the 1910s, increasing just above it by 1913 (jumping from 958 members in 1911 to 1,035 in 1913). The membership statistics indicate the gender distribution for 1914–1916, but not from the prewar period, meaning changes in the ratio of males to females can only be traced during the First World War. H. Silbergleit, ed., *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin* 32 (Berlin, 1913), 1908–1911, 491 (1907), 495 (1908), 499 (1909); H. Silbergleit, ed., *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin* 33, 1912–1914 (Berlin, 1916), 521 (1911), 526 (1912), 530 (1913); H. Silbergleit, ed., *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin* 34, 1915–1919 (Berlin, 1920), 530 (1914), 532 (1915), 534 (1916).
[201] The numbers are derived from the company sick funds. Silbergleit, *Statistisches Jahrbuch* 34. While it is possible that the wartime number of insurees increased because new categories of workers from existing personnel were given insurance cover, it is more likely that most if not all formal workers were already included, given that the size of the sick fund membership in the 1910s matches roughly the size of the overall N. Israel workforce, as stated in the Wilhelmine N. Israel albums. Male membership in the sick funds also

during the Wilhelmine period, the store's sewing and finishing rooms occupied around 250, mostly female, workers.[202]

Given the tendency of large department stores at the time to employ a majority female workforce – and certainly given the impression created by the N. Israel albums – as discussed further below, the gender distribution of workers at N. Israel is somewhat surprising. Wertheim's flagship store in Leipziger Straße employed 2,000 women among its 3,200 strong staff; by 1914, Wertheim had 7,800 employees insured for cases of sickness, over 6,000 of these being women.[203] This difference between the two companies reflects general differences in their structure. Wertheim was more geared toward retail, with the majority of its employees working in sales and customer service – both thoroughly feminised fields by the Wilhelmine period. The activities of N. Israel were more segmented. Apart from a significant wholesale department, the company had other departments with positions typically occupied by men, in areas such as dispatch, import and export.[204] N. Israel also employed a large Jewish workforce. In the 1920s, around a quarter of N. Israel staff were Jewish, whereas the equivalent proportion at Wertheim before the Nazi period was just over one percent.[205] While N. Israel was therefore by no means exclusively Jewish, it exhibited a clear preference for Jewish employees. Employing Jews generally meant employing Jewish men, who often possessed extensive commercial experience (or connections to Jewish companies, at least) and were considered the main providers in bourgeois families. The large proportion of Jewish personnel may have tilted the gender balance at N. Israel away from feminisation – just as it caused N. Israel to become a hub of Jewish vocational life in Berlin.

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increased by 52 persons between 1914 and 1915 but dipped again by 22 in 1916, therefore increasing only by a few dozen between 1914 and 1916.

[202] This figure, mentioned in correspondence concerning N. Israel's contracts with the German colonial authorities in 1904, seems reasonable in light of the size of the company's facilities, covering around 3,000 square meters; see Jacobson, *Das Theater*. It is possible, however, that N. Israel gradually outsourced more and more of its ready-made linen production; according to another letter from the Israel family's police files, the firm only had 31 in-house workers available for the finishing of linens and under garments in 1912 – sharing 11 sewing machines between them. See Correspondence from the Berlin trade police commissioner to the Royal Clothing Office of Prussian Guards Corps (28 October 1904), "Orders and titles"; letter from Royal Police Authorities for Berlin-Mitte to unknown recipient (illegible) (7 October 1912), ibid.

[203] Göhre, *Das Warenhaus*, 65; Silbergleit, *Statistisches Jahrbuch... 1915–1919*, 530.

[204] This dynamic is evidenced in photographs, found for instance in Lorm, "Ein Gang."

[205] Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 82; Ladwig-Winters, *Wertheim*, 111.

How "Jewish" was *Kaufhaus* N. Israel in the eyes of the Jewish and general public? The company name was conspicuous, especially compared to the names of some Jewish-owned firms that carried neutral connotations, such as *Kaufhaus des Westens* (KaDeWe). The Israels had abandoned strict Jewish orthodoxy by the turn of the century, [206] which may have triggered resentment among more observant members of the Jewish community. At the same time, Berthold made clear his continued religious commitment through serving on the Assembly of Representatives for the Jewish community (*Gemeinde*) in Berlin until the suicide of his brother Hermann in 1905, after which he took up a position on the board of the conservative ("liberal") synagogue in Lützowstraße.[207] Berthold chose to remain visibly Jewish and take a leading role in the Jewish community. He helped further to promote and finance Jewish settlement in Palestine, a tradition continued by his son Wilfrid Israel.[208] Among their varied philanthropic activities, four generations of Israel men were active in *Magine Rëim* (מָגִינֵי רֵעִים), a Jewish friendly society to assist the unmarried in the event of poverty and illness.[209] Following Hitler's rise to power, furthermore, N. Israel became "for the Jewish community, a stronghold of resistance," argues Shepherd – and the final director, Wilfrid Israel, apparently came to understand its response to the persecution of Jews in line with "the firm's 'tradition.'"[210] As Nazi intrusions on Jewish livelihoods became increasingly difficult to manage, Wilfrid devoted himself and his company to the rescue of hundreds of N. Israel's employees from Germany, simultaneously playing a covert role in orchestrating the *Kindertransport* – the operation to secure refuge for some 10,000 unaccompanied Jewish children in the United Kingdom by 1940.[211]

The clearest evidence for N. Israel as a "Jewish" firm is found in the interwar period. The Weimar Republic saw an unprecedented development of the German consumer economy alongside rising levels of antisemitism during the First World War and its aftermath. These factors, among others,

[206] Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 41.
[207] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 242.
[208] Ibid., 242; Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, passim.
[209] "Zeittafel der Familie und des Hauses Israel, Berlin," Family History AR 4790, 1823-1943, Israel Family History, 1823–1943, Israel Family Collection (AR 25140), 1:4, LBI; Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 242. On Magine Rëim, see *Grundgesetze und Verfassung der Gesellschaft Magine-Rèim zu Berlin* (Potsdam, 1845).
[210] Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 148.
[211] Ibid., passim.

accelerated an inward turn or "dissimilation" among the Jewish community, which Shulamit Volkov argues had started in the Wilhelmine period[212]; new expressions of Jewish culture and community were born, with Berlin department stores as active participants in their making.[213] Advertisers and commercial enterprises increasingly turned their eyes to Jewish consumers as an emerging ethnic market. "Nathan Israel was among the stores engaged in processes of seduction by mobilizing Jewish words and symbols," argues Kerry Wallach[214]; in the Jewish press, for instance, the store's name and slogan was featured alongside a picture of a *menorah*.[215] While the desire to reach Jewish customers was already there in the 1910s – a persistent advertising campaign for N. Israel appeared, for example, in the Jewish periodical *Ost und West* between 1911 and 1913[216] – it gained further momentum in the 1920s. Female Jewish consumers were targeted especially; "[w]ith images of athletic women," notes Wallach concerning the interwar years, "N. Israel tempted consumers with the power of sexy, sporty attire, which, modelled in the Jewish press, seemed suitable for consumption by Jewish women."[217]

Among the most curious of N. Israel's marketing choices was its advertising to Jewish feminists. Few companies advertised in the bulletin of the Jewish Women's League (the *Jüdischer Frauenbund*, or the JFB) founded in 1904 by Bertha Pappenheim, but one of these was N. Israel.[218] The company did spread its net wide among Weimar female consumers, observes Wallach, promoting its brand in several Jewish and non-Jewish women's periodicals.[219] N. Israel was nonetheless generally selective in its advertising campaigns – in *Der Confectionair*, a trade journal

[212] Shulamit Volkov, *Germans, Jews, and Antisemites: Trials of Emancipation* (Cambridge, 2006), 256–75. Volkov attributes this development both to the external influence of antisemitism and to an internal process of renewed Jewish self-awareness, exhibited in Jewish organisational activities, Jewish religious life, and the German-Jewish encounter with eastern European Jewry.
[213] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*; Brenner, *Renaissance of Jewish Culture*; Wallach, "Kosher Seductions," 117–137. For arguments that connect emergence of modern Jewish cultures/identities specifically with consumer culture, see Reuveni, *Consumer Culture*.
[214] Wallach, "Kosher Seductions," 133.
[215] An advertisement from the Berlin *Gemeindeblatt* in 1928 is reproduced in Wallach, "Kosher Seductions" 136, and Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 6.
[216] *Ost und West*, 8–12/11, Aug–Dec 1911; 1–12/12, Jan–Dec 1912, 1/13, Jan 1913.
[217] Wallach, "Kosher Seductions," 135.
[218] Ibid., 134. The JFB bulletin did not begin to appear until October 1924.
[219] Ibid.

with a broad international readership including potential new clients for a wholesaler like N. Israel, the company's advertising was virtually non-existent. Further, while the JFB had a large following among Jewish women, N. Israel could have chosen less contentious forums than the JFB's publications to reach Jewish women readers (and perhaps it did so, in addition). [220] Still, the firm opted to associate itself with the Jewish women's movement, contributing financially in the process to the activities of Jewish feminists.

The history of the N. Israel enterprise mirrors the historical development of Jewish economic activities, Jewish gender roles, and Jewish culture in Wilhelmine and Weimar Berlin, in their relation to broader German society. The Israels were natives of local German and German-Jewish culture while belonging to the cosmopolitan European and British-Jewish elite. Their company secured a place among the great fashion houses (*Konfektionshäuser*) Gerson, Hertzog, Manheimer, and Levy, influencing the way Berliners dressed and decorated their homes, strengthening German domestic and international trade, and providing employment for up to two thousand Berliners (and many more off the books). The department store participated in processes of modernisation through employing a large number of women and through advancing consumer culture, evidenced especially in its contributions to the development of a Weimar Jewish consumer culture – despite the store's lack of obviously Jewish merchandise such as kosher foods. Seemingly combining these tendencies, N. Israel identified the Jewish feminist as a distinct audience for its marketing. The N. Israel albums speak to the firm's priorities during the Wilhelmine period: to shape its public image and apparently to either emulate or influence the values of its customers. The context for these publications can be found in the nexus between Jews, international commerce, and German culture.

[220] The *Jüdische Rundschau*, for instance, incorporated segments for women titled *Jüdisches Frauenblatt*, *Zionistisches Frauenblatt* and *Frauen-Beilage*.

Connecting Corporate Identity and *Kultur*

Department store publications were an established phenomenon by the early twentieth century, including a range of genres and formats from advertising pamphlets to full-fledged novels. Contrary to most specimens of department store fiction in the style of Zola and others, these publications were produced by or for the stores themselves with specific aims in mind. In some cases, they were provided as gifts for staff; in others, they served as tokens of customer loyalty. Most commonly, they presented the department store in all its glory, often with prolific illustrations. The Jordan Marsh company of Boston, for instance, issued an elaborate company history in 1910, complete with a commentary and series of photographs.[221] A Siegel, Cooper & Co publication from 1898 similarly showcased (in text) what a customer might expect to see at New York's "Grandest Emporium of Commerce."[222] In Berlin, the clothier Rudolph Hertzog had been producing annual "agendas" since the 1880s, many featuring verbal or visual portrayals of the store.

Compared to some other stores, N. Israel was rather late in the game. The company's first album, appearing in late 1898 (for the year 1899), followed the German Emperor and Empress' recent travels to Palestine but also featured an illustrated history of the N. Israel firm; a title page pictured his majesty Kaiser Wilhelm II in "tropical" attire, one of the many types of clothing available at N. Israel.[223] Encased in thick, greenish black leather, with the company name and "Album 1899" imprinted in golden lettering above and respectively below the embossed decorative image of a lion and sun, the publication was, like its sequels, a serious and costly production (Fig. 3). N. Israel chose the Kaiser couple's trip as the appropriate moment to join the race – an impulse that may have been connected to the Israels' personal investment in settler Zionism. The department store album provided a format that had established its currency as a promotional medium and that would allow

[221] Jordan Marsh Co., ed., *The Story of a Store* (Boston, 1910).
[222] Siegel-Cooper Co., *A Bird's Eye View of Greater New York and Its Most Magnificent Store* (New York, 1898), title page.
[223] *N. Israel: Berlin C. – Album 1899* (Berlin, 1899); *N. Israel Berlin C.: Haupt-Katalog Sommer 1905* (Berlin, 1905), 104, JMB.

N. Israel to convey to the public what distinguished its brand from that of its competitors. This first publication suggested that an encounter between Europe and the "Orient" was part of it, and that N. Israel, ostensibly as a Jewish firm, somehow embodied this encounter. The lion, as a national Jewish symbol in the Lion of Judah and a prevalent motif on many European coats of arms, captured this connection in a striking manner.[224]

N. Israel albums were a "Christmas gift" to "all customers of the company," if specific issues are anything to go by.[225] Appearing in December ahead of the new year to which they were dedicated, their publication coincided with both Christian celebrations and the Jewish festival of Chanukkah. While many department stores chose a similar schedule to release their albums and agendas – like the N. Israel productions, many incorporated a calendar for the coming year – N. Israel and some of its competitors signalled an awareness of the needs of different groups of consumers, with dates for Protestant as well as Catholic and Jewish holidays often listed on album back covers.[226] Employees apparently received their own copies, since many have been preserved through the store's former staff – employees were, of course, also important customers. Issues from 1904 and 1907 were delivered to the Berlin police authorities, in a gesture no doubt intended to foster good will but also continued business with German authorities.[227] The N. Israel albums served as a companion to other important Christmas promotions, cultivating the store's diverse customer relationships during the busiest commercial season of the year.

[224] The cover image, in this instance, when paired with the company name, functioned almost as a logo. The lion and sun reappeared in the N. Israel's promotions of oriental carpets and some company calendars illustrated by the signs of the zodiac; however, it did not appear centrally in any album after 1899. See *Haupt-Katalog Sommer 1905*, 112; Meinecke, *Die Deutschen Kolonien*, calendar supplement. Compare also with the Rudolph Hertzog agendas, which instead of horoscopes in some cases decorated its calendar pages with images borrowed from Christian mythology.
[225] "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 24, no. 48 (2 December 1909). The same timeline is suggested by letters accompanying copies of the 1904 and 1907 albums sent to the Berlin chief of police; see Correspondence from N. Israel to von Borries (15 December 1903; 7 December 1906), "Orders and titles."
[226] Some Hertzog agendas did the same.
[227] Correspondence from N. Israel to von Borries (15 December 1903; 7 December 1906), "Orders and titles." More issues may have been sent, but these are the only ones to have left a paper trail in the files of the Berlin police headquarters in the Imperial period.

Following its initial instalment about the Kaiser in Palestine, the N. Israel series expanded into a wide range of themes. Several of the early albums are "patriotic" in focus, displaying Germany's naval power, its royals and nobility, and its glorious Imperial capital, Berlin. The 1901 album, which featured von Zedlitz's account on the Israel store's contents as a supplement, is titled *Die deutschen Kolonien (The German Colonies)*. The book includes, among other things, a full-page amateur drawing depicting a pseudo-historical scene of maritime conquest, personally signed by none other than Germany's most famous anti-feminist, Kaiser Wilhelm II himself, imperial regent and apparently aspiring artist, too. Other volumes pick up on themes of technology, travel, and hygiene, while another, *Das Theater (The Theatre)* from 1906, surveys the modern stage arts including dance, the cabaret, and variety entertainment. Many of these topics resonate with those found in the agendas of the (non-Jewish) Rudolph Hertzog and demonstrate the interest of N. Israel in associating itself with notions of Germanness, progress, and productivity in the eyes of those consuming its merchandise.

Speaking in 1926, Frank Chitham, director of Harrods (London) asserted that advertising should "have a far wider function than merely selling goods—its greater mission in future will be to advertise the store as well as—or instead of—its merchandise."[228] Department store albums were an ideal medium for constructing a distinct store "identity." Historical research (focused mainly on Britain and the United States) has situated this kind of corporate branding in the interwar period, yet without much focus on department store publications.[229] The N. Israel albums and other volumes with similar features clearly belong in the context of company promotion and, as richly illustrated volumes, within the larger visual culture conjured up by department store architecture, interiors, fashion, advertisements, billboards and promotional stunts. "[...T]he albums aimed to inform and educate the sensible female consumer while feeding the fantasy of global mobility," decodes Paul

[228] Chitham's statement reflects, according to Peter Scott and James Walker (who cite it), the shifting advertising philosophy among early twentieth-century British department stores from the presentation of merchandise to company branding, inspired by the successes of another London store, Selfridges, in this area. Peter Scott and James Walker, "Advertising, promotion, and the competitive advantage of interwar British department stores," *Economic History Review* 63, no. 4 (2010): 1110.
[229] This chronology is presented in ibid., especially 1109–10.

Lerner in his succinct treatment of the N. Israel publications, which emphasises how German stores such as N. Israel used cosmopolitan and touristic themes to enhance their image as a condensed "world" within and a portal to a wider world beyond.[230] As shown further below, however, the N. Israel albums were so much more than "promotional" in the mere sense of advertising.

Many prewar German department store albums had surprisingly little "commercialised" content, especially compared to some of their American counterparts; they went well beyond the established maxim of department stores, "ohne Kaufzwang," without compulsion to buy, in the case of the N. Israel albums, including minimal direct advertising – separate catalogues were issued for the purposes of direct marketing. The N. Israel publications, like those of Rudolph Hertzog, mimic, rather, in their appearance deluxe editions and coffee table books.[231] The hard covers, some in gold-decorated cerise velour or in leather, others with elaborate *Jugendstil* or art nouveau artwork, were clearly intended for display (Fig. 5; 6; 7; 8). The calendar segments ensured meanwhile that these would not remain mere decorations; readers would return to them time and again to make their own annotations, being, on the one hand, reminded by the promotional pictures, embedded in the calendars, of their desire for a new tablecloth or evening gown, and, on the other hand, drawn in once more by compelling texts and images. These were modern artifacts, designed to enhance the cultural capital of commercial institutions.

Various studies have suggested the importance placed by German department stores on resonating with Wilhelmine culture, especially in view of prevailing controversies surrounding department stores and their role in ushering in modern mass culture. "In the Wertheim store, [architect Alfred] Messel crafted an image of cultural continuity that belied the role of department stores in [...societal] disruptions," argues Kathleen James.[232] The Gothic-style edifice erected in Berlin's Leipziger Straße between 1896 and 1907, echoes Kevin Repp, constituted a "successful melding of traditional cultural

[230] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 60, 58.
[231] Other examples include, Berthold, "Streifzüge."
[232] James, "From Messel to Mendelsohn," 256.

sensibilities and modern commercial prowess" that would inspire department store architecture throughout the Wilhelmine period.[233] "The store's refined dignity," adds Paul Lerner, "was [...] meant to mollify critics of Germany's consumer culture, who feared the cultural effects of crass commercialism."[234] Messel's design received high praise from Wilhelmine commentators, contrary to Oscar Tietz's nearby "aquarium" – an uninterrupted wall of display windows, which was seen by some as a monstrosity of American capitalism.[235] "In Germany," satirises Repp, "[...] advertising had to be 'impressive but not obtrusive' if it was to appeal to the delicate aesthetic sensibilities of shoppers in the Land of Poets and Thinkers."[236]

Firms like N. Israel who also produced their own clothing had additionally to consider the misgivings of the middle-class public surrounding *Konfektion*. Little could be done to alleviate the anxieties of those in the tailoring profession who felt their career prospects declining. Companies could, however, influence the impression that their activities amounted to a debasement of culture, with a few different pathways for changing the conversation. First, they could cultivate an association with Paris, the undisputed cradle of European fashion. Foreign or not, *couture* was an accepted form of applied art, and trend-setting Wilhelmine elites continued consistently to hold French styles as the benchmark for good taste. Some clothiers sought, accordingly, to insert the *chic* into German sartorial culture, Gerson, for instance, through dedicating an entire department in its flagship Berlin store to interior decor designs of Paul Poiret (1879–1944), the king of Parisian *couture*. "Le superflu est une chose necessaire,'" "The superfluous is a necessity," declared von Zedlitz in the same spirit in the 1901 N. Israel album, quoting Voltaire.[237] "Not only the modern Parisian woman pays homage to this principle, but the modern woman in general, whose endeavour it is to resemble the Parisian,

[233] Repp, "Marketing, Modernity," 29.
[234] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 147.
[235] Repp, "Marketing, Modernity," 30, 37; Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 146. The N. Israel store front, drastically remodelled with the store's expansion between 1895 and 1900, was not exceptional but did cement the store's image as grand and reputable, with large shop windows and, from around 1900, a gothic pillared entrance. Company chronicler Conrad Alberti attributes the N. Israel architecture to Ludwig Engel, not to be confused with the great Berlin-born architect Carl Ludwig Engel (1778–1840) from an earlier generation. Conrad Alberti, "1815–1898," in *N. Israel Berlin C.– Album 1899/ Die Palästinafahrt Kaiser Wilhelm II.* See also photographs in Alberti, "Entwicklung Berlins."
[236] Repp, "Marketing, Modernity," 40.
[237] Lorm, "Ein Gang."

[...] from whom she has been handed down the most beautiful, elegant and fragrant of fashions; lace gowns, which form a much-admired attraction in the atrium of the [N. Israel] House [...]."[238] N. Israel and virtually all of its competitors sent representatives multiple times each year to Paris to scout for the latest trends. [239]

A second possible avenue for increasing a firm's cultural capital, pursued by some in parallel to the above, was to develop a collaborative relationship with the *Deutscher Werkbund*, the German Association of Craftsmen. A leading voice in the German movement for design reform, the *Werkbund* was founded in 1907 with the purpose of reorienting Germany's industries toward the artisanal in an effort to bolster their international competitiveness. In the realm of clothing reform, the movement's principle of *Sachlichkeit* offered a nationalistic alternative to the aesthetic and sumptuous tendencies of French fashion. Importantly, this shift resulted in the *Reformkleid*, the German reformed dress, which, "worn between 1898 and 1910 [...]," argues Julia Bertschik, "corresponded to a fundamental critique of woman's status in society [...]."[240] As addressed in Chapter 3 below, the Wertheim department store fostered a long-standing relationship with the *Werkbund* and the German applied arts' community in general. *Konfektionshaus* Gerson, while cultivating its French connection on the one hand, also became a key supporter of patriotic clothing reform, especially in the hands of the (likewise Jewish) Freudenberg family during the First World War.[241]

The N. Israel albums subtly touched on many of the strategies employed by the company's competitors, as explored further below. [242] Von Zedlitz unambiguously characterised the "huge

[238] Ibid.
[239] Gerson did so as early as 1871. Kessemeier, *Ein Feentempel*, 17. See also Ganeva, "Elegance and Spectacle," 122.
[240] Julia Bertschik, *Mode und Moderne: Kleidung als Spiegel des Zeitgeistes in der deutschsprachigen Literatur (1770–1945)* (Cologne, 2005), 92.
[241] Kessemeier, *Ein Feentempel*, 33–4, 52.
[242] Patronage of the fine arts by many Jewish and non-Jewish department store owners and clothiers could also be interpreted as a "strategy" in this context. The N. Israel company had a collection of modernist artworks, including works by Otto Eckmann (1865–1902), which were exhibited at the Berlin Museum of Decorative Arts (*Kunstgewerbemuseum*). According to the 1901 N. Israel album, the promotional and educational spectacle was a success, "arous[ing] the admiration of the greater public." Lorm, "Ein Gang."

commercial palace" as hiding a "piece of cultural history," in one of the series' rare promotional texts, while a Wertheim photographic album published a few years later made the same point, only through glossy black-and-white shots of the company's revered Leipziger Straße store and its interiors.[243] Much like those of other major Berlin companies, the N. Israel publications resorted to "cultural" and "civilising" themes as a way of endowing the department store with cultural as opposed to merely commercial attributes. The Hertzog agendas and N. Israel albums, in particular, constitute elaborate artifacts that go far beyond a literal promotion of a consumer enterprise. These were efforts to create printed equivalents of the Wertheim store – a culturally successful, synchronous display of luxury and restraint, embraced by the German public as something more than "just" a store building. Germans, like Jews, had been a "people of the book," at least since the time of the Gutenberg press. Communicating a corporate identity through a bound anthology was surely the most culturally appropriate yet progressive way to win over German audiences of different persuasions.

And yet the N. Israel volumes pushed the boundaries of the store album concept in important ways. While Hertzog too, among others, harnessed new print technologies, including striking colourised in-lays of reproduced artworks in their agendas, N. Israel departed from more conventional formulae in venturing into the graphically experimental (see for e.g. Fig. 4; 19; 26; 32). An important tool in its kit was letterpress halftone, a relatively recent innovation which had revolutionised the large-scale printing of illustrated works.[244] The firm's publications epitomise halftone's potential to create something visually *avant garde*. Images are embedded, not separate. The typeface is typically but not always centered, the monochromatic illustrations arranged in relation to bold section headings. With the additional financial burden from including pictures removed with this new technique, the visual is allowed to take a controlling interest in the discourse. Colour, shapes, composition – magnified by raised or impressed cover lettering on the fabric front – playfully join scenes of people

[243] Ibid.; *Wertheim album* (Berlin, [c. 1904]), 11. URL: https://digital.wolfsonian.org/WOLF073172.
[244] Sarah Mirseyedi, "Side by Side: The Halftone's Visual Culture of Pragmatism." *History of Photography* 41, no. 3 (2017): 286–310; Neil Harris, *Cultural Excursions: Marketing Appetites and Cultural Tastes in Modern America* (Chicago, 1990), 304–17.

and landscapes in deposing the accompanying text from its place of authority. Cut-outs of photographic portraits superimposed on one another unite with duplicated artwork in a mad gambol. The eagle eye will detect the tiny data points of halftone that compose the eclectic assemblage (Fig. 9; 10).

In their physical form, then, the albums mediated between tradition and modernity, simultaneously contributing to emerging visual cultures. Stand-alone testaments to an abiding German tradition in print and bookbinding, their collages and montages transformed existing pictorial material in ways unlike anything seen in equivalent publications of the time. Rigid covers enveloped and disciplined a chaotic array of impressions, as if mirroring the disciplining of a fragmentary modern culture, of which department stores and ready-made fashion were seen as carriers. The name of a consumer company imprinted on top, the albums made the case for consumer culture as a legitimate expression of modern German culture, alongside other forms of civilised or civilising activity surveyed by the company albums, including the technological, artistic, scientific, and geo-political in Germany's expanding overseas empire. In suggesting that the modern free market constituted a culturally modernising force, the albums placed N. Israel and its owners at the forefront of modern German culture.

The apparent effort to reconcile cultural paradigms that many perceived as contradictory can indeed be seen as reflecting the position of the Israels. As German Jews with family histories embedded in Berlin and also in Britain, the Israels were no doubt confounding to many Germans. Yet as the Israels demonstrated in their personal lives, it was possible to be patriots and lovers of German culture while also being cosmopolitans and internationally successful business owners. The N. Israel albums vividly captured these sentiments, reprising familiar cultural themes but adding to them a modernist artistic flare.[245] Later, more feminised issues would push the envelope on the concept of *Kultur*

[245] The choice to purchase secessionist artworks in the name of the N. Israel firm further suggests the Israels had a taste for modernist aesthetics, which they wished to associate with their store brand. See footnote 242 above.

further still by challenging the conventions of German cultural production, this time through ideas about gender. With a name like "N. Israel," the department store was directly associated with its owners in the public imagination. The company albums provided an avenue for these owners to influence what exactly their family company stood for.

The N. Israel albums and the Women's Public Sphere

The album for the year 1906 marks a shift for the N. Israel series; from this point onwards, women move from being conspicuously absent to being portrayed as central protagonists of a new century. American-born dancer Isadora Duncan (Fig. 11) and her school for modern dance, first established in Berlin's Grunewald in 1904, take the metaphorical stage, together with other ground-breaking performing artists of the era. The following year, N. Israel ventures into the topic of children's education, photographically surveying the world of innovative educational institutions, including Berlin's female-led Pestalozzi-Fröbel Haus.[246] The album for 1909, as seen further below, assigns a chapter to the women's movement. The 1910 issue is entirely focused on the "Woman and her World," providing a visual and verbal panorama which, according to the trade journal *Der Confectionair*, "surpass[ed...] everything of this kind that the N. Israel created to date[.]"[247] The 1912 album shows a plethora of women as illustrations on the theme of hygiene, a topic of central interest to many bourgeois women, while the 1913 proceeds once again full throttle into feminine spheres with a volume dedicated to the evolving female self.[248] The final instalment of 1914 lands in more neutral territory with its discussion of work and leisure; its pictures, however, include many female subjects, including female employees of the N. Israel store.

[246] The issue for 1908 *Below and Above the Earth* (*Unter und über der Erde*) takes a detour with its exploration of man's (or, indeed, men's) conquest of the skies, earth, and its sub-terranean regions through technological innovation.
[247] "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 24, no. 48 (2 December 1909).
[248] For a brief mention of the 1911 album, see the discussion further below.

These "woman albums," which acknowledge and foreground women and "feminine" topics to various degrees, bear witness to changing currents in Wilhelmine Germany society. Women had gained access to parts of the nation's political life through the reformed Law of Association in 1908 and women were admitted into Prussian universities in the same year. The growing visibility of women in education, in the professions, and in bourgeois and labour activism, was a timely and popular topic of conversation. Female consumers were, moreover, now recognised as an important economic force. An increasing number of commercial publications catered to female readers, creating an feminised, bourgeois, alternative public sphere.[249] N. Israel had asserted itself as a "women's paradise" through von Zedlitz in its first volume published in the new century[250]; now it was gearing its corporate image more and more towards this trope while adjusting the meaning of said trope to align with the times. Using pictures and texts, N. Israel was shaping the company brand but also the gender ideals of Wilhelmine culture, as explored later in this chapter. In addition, however, the albums were participating in the creation of an emerging women's public sphere.

The relationship of the N. Israel albums to the public sphere is not straightforward. The Habermasian definition rests on an idea of citizens interacting in a way that public opinion is created, separate from both state *and* economy. Yet as a number of scholars have shown, there are many caveats to Habermas' model, including its sole focus on the male, bourgeois public sphere and its male-centric definition of citizenship.[251] Habermas' construct was based on ideal conditions (as he perceived them). A critical assessment of modern and contemporary public spheres will invariably include a consideration of the role of commercial interest; and the involvement of a commercial business does not necessarily mean the functioning of the public sphere is undermined – even if it often is. Wilhelmine Germany newspapers and periodicals, while usually accepted as public forums for different societal groups, were commercial endeavours looking to maintain and increase their

[249] I use "feminised" here to distinguish it from the women's public sphere, because, although the two overlapped, a part of the public sphere had become thematically feminised through an influx of publications geared toward women, without necessarily involving women's voices or perspectives.
[250] The 1901 album was, like the others, released in the previous year, in this case in December 1900.
[251] See for e.g., Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere"; Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825–1880* (Baltimore, 1990).

circulation. Similarly, there are few historical contexts, if any, where a group of citizens could truly "confer in an unrestricted fashion,"[252]; there were always entry barriers, whether based on class, gender, ethnicity, or politics. Editors and owners shaped the content and political agendas of specific newspapers, just as the albums of N. Israel were shaped by the priorities of the company's owners and its senior employees.

As a corpus, then, the N. Israel albums contributed to public debate with their keen interest in current affairs, within a circumscribed realm of topics that the company perceived as relevant to its mission. With some issues likely printed in the thousands, the publications were able to reach a wide audience, defined not by gender, class, religion, ethnicity, or even political loyalties, but ostensibly through consumer habits or employment – connections that may, of course, have been contingent on one or several of the aforementioned factors. In some sense, the potential readers of the N. Israel albums constituted a more diverse "public" than the audiences of many other individual publications at the time. Moreover, the firm's varied clientele included prominent members of Wilhelmine society, some with the ability to influence public policy. The albums could thus in principle, depending on the nature of the production process, "mediate between state and society."[253]

As far as the albums' ability to reflect a "freely" functioning public sphere is concerned, they include some anonymous authors acting as company representatives and not as private "citizens." Similar but more complicated in nature are contributions such as those of von Zedlitz, and Conrad Alberti (born Konrad Sittenfeld), a well-known author and cultural critic – and what some might describe as a textbook "self-hating Jew." Alberti's essays, from the early issues, focus on the history of Berlin and that of the N. Israel enterprise.[254] A disciple of Zola, Alberti's work reveals, according to Katherine Larson Roper, the author's ambivalence toward Germany's modernisation as well as his

[252] Habermas, "The Public Sphere," 49.
[253] Ryan, *Women in Public*, 11.
[254] Alberti, "1815–1898"; Alberti, "Entwicklung Berlins"; Konrad Sittenfeld, *Gross-Berlin* (Berlin, 1904). See also the promotional "Plauderei" (chinwag) texts by Alberti as a supplement to Müller-Bohn, *Unser Kaiserhaus*.

personal struggle to come to terms with his Jewishness.[255] Over the course of his literary career, Alberti made numerous public claims that can be classed as antisemitic.[256] Yet in the N. Israel albums, Alberti is full of praise, probably because he was hired to make the company look better than its competitors on the basis of the author's past literary repertoire. There are, in other words, components in the N. Israel albums that are not compatible with the Habermasian model since their authors were on contract, but these should not distract us from the main contents.

The N. Israel series incorporated women into public discourse and cultural production. The first album visibly to feature women, *Das Theater* (1906), included twelve fairy tales authored by up-and-coming German-Jewish author Else Ury.[257] As subsequent volumes became increasingly feminised, the cast of authors gradually diversified further in 1910; the issue *Die Frau und Ihre Welt* (*The Woman and her World)* was the first to commission a group of authors, in this case to provide a universal view of "woman's world" from different angles. Incredibly, eight out of thirteen were female. Famous dancer Gudrun Hildebrandt shared her expertise on dance while Czech soprano Emmy Destinn wrote about women in music. Italian Lina Cavalieri, another star of the opera and a recognised aesthetic icon, shared her insights on the topic of beauty. German activist Käthe Rahmlow contributed an important essay about women in politics, and other authors addressed the themes of women in the field of literature, women at work, in society, sports, the visual arts, women of the world, and feminine ideals. In the volume for 1911, Marie von Wedel, an established author, was the only woman assigned an essay in a collection of writings on the evolution of transportation – to comment on the "feminine" topic of fashion and its intersection with the history of transportation.[258] The 1912 issue about hygiene, probably of greater interest to bourgeois women readers than the aforementioned, featured four women among eleven authors, including Hedwig Prager, a professional physician – presented with her professional title "Dr" – and Anna Plothow, a feminist

[255] Katherine Larson Roper, "Conrad Alberti's 'Kampf ums Dasein': The Writer in Imperial Berlin," *German Studies Review* 7, no. 1 (February 1984), 66–7, 68, 71, 75.
[256] Ibid., 75; Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 36.
[257] Jacobson, *Das Theater*.
[258] The volume also included, however, pictures by London-based suffragist photographer Rita Martin.

and journalist working for the *Berliner Tageblatt*.[259] Somewhat disappointingly, the second of the two most female-focused N. Israel albums, for the year 1913, included one or two female contributors and ten male writers.[260] Finally, the 1914 album had twenty essayists, but only one of these – a Southeast Asian princess – was a woman.

While most of the female contributors were known to the public, it is striking that some were not famous as writers or known for making public statements. Judging from the albums themselves – since there are, unfortunately, few sources that illuminate how they came about – we may also note the extent to which authors seem to be expressing their own views, rather than a heavily moderated company agenda; the first essay for 1910, authored by Thorwald Andersen, for example, idealises native Polynesian women while criticising western beauty ideals, whereas Cavalieri, in the same volume, celebrates the American woman, the ultimate western *belle*, as "[m]ore beautiful, on average, than women from other countries," directly contradicting Andersen's essay.[261] As demonstrated in greater detail below, the textual components in the N. Israel albums vary in their perspectives and emphases. This suggests that N. Israel's essayists, women included, were able to navigate their respective subjects with relative freedom.

1910 was clearly a high point in the series' employment of female voices, although several subsequent issues included important contributions by women. Broadly speaking, the N. Israel albums drafted women to write about issues connected to the imagined bourgeois female and domestic domain. From 1910 onwards, individual women were invited to join in the construction of a discourse surrounding a given album theme, beginning with the area they knew best: women's activities and achievements. For professional women, these assignments would have been an important acknowledgement of their authority within their respective fields, particularly when placed

[259] Hedwig Prager, "Hygiene der Schönheit," in *Die Hygiene im Wandel der Zeiten* ed. N. Israel (Berlin, 1912); Anna Plothow, "Hygiene und Kinderfürsorge," in ibid.
[260] The volume includes one female author and one author writing under what appears to be a mischievous pseudonym "Lucie Fer." See N. Israel, ed., *Die Frau im Jahrhundert der Energie 1813–1913* (Berlin, 1913).
[261] Thorwald Andersen, "Die Frau der verschiedenen Völker," in *Die Frau und Ihre Welt*, ed. N. Israel (Berlin, 1910); Lina Cavalieri, "Die Schönheit," in ibid.

alongside recognised male thinkers and celebrities. Women like Käthe Rahmlow, writing as feminist activists, welcomed the partnership, perhaps because the public image of N. Israel as reputable, patriotic, and/or progressive suited their agenda, or because they saw potential in the store's customers as an audience for texts which, as we shall see, affirmed the middle-class women's cause. Nonetheless, in many cases, women's involvement in the N. Israel albums would have meant more as endorsements of women's creative and professional careers in principle than as stepping stones in the careers of individual female contributors, many of whose international fame far exceeded that of the N. Israel company.

A possible exception to this rule were women working in the literary field, including figures like Else Ury. Having risen to the public's attention with her recent children's book *Was das Sonntagskind erlauscht* (1905), Ury was still early in her career. Although women had made inroads into the press and literature, many still faced struggles to get published. Female authors relied heavily on quantitative commercial success and favourable relationships with male publishers to make it professionally. Women writers had to find a "publisher whose publishing profile suited what the author had to offer," with the publisher acting "as mediator between author and public, between the literary manuscript and its eventual production, distribution and circulation," to borrow from Helen Fronius, whose work focuses on German women writers in the eighteenth century.[262] By the early twentieth century, surprisingly little had changed; the publisher remained, still, "the linchpin of a literary career."[263] The N. Israel albums were not a medium for women to launch their literary careers, since, in their promotional function, the albums relied on familiar faces and celebrity appeal. They did, however, help authors like Ury to stay in the public's attention while disseminating their work to a cross-section of Berliners.

[262] Helen Fronius, "Der reiche Mann und die arme Frau: German women writers in the eighteenth-century literary market-place," *German Life and Letters* 56, no. 1 (January 2003): 3.
[263] Ibid.

The fact that N. Israel incorporated the work of female authors is noteworthy, especially if we contrast them with the company agendas of a close rival, Rudolph Hertzog. The Hertzog agendas, which ran for over two decades longer than the N. Israel albums, acknowledged the involvement of few, if any, female writers – certainly none in the years when N. Israel's woman albums were published. The Hertzog publication for 1910, devoted its main feature to "The Painters of Beautiful Women," apparently, in concert with the N. Israel albums, in celebration of women's increasing visibility in Wilhelmine society.[264] The women of the agenda were, however, neither central agents nor producers, in practical or rhetorical terms, but rather the muses of male artists.[265] The 1912 agenda similarly mirrored the N. Israel albums in its feminised impression, with a graphic queen of spades and her parrot surrounded by swirling vegetation printed in gold on the front cover; yet the contents showed no evidence of female ability, only an appreciation for women as aesthetic objects. This comparison demonstrates that N. Israel could have taken other more well-trodden routes, but chose instead to make some bold choices, not least in giving women a virtual platform.

Women also contributed to the visual appearance of the N. Israel albums. Some of the photographic portraits used as illustrations can be traced to Atelier Elvira, a female-run photographic studio in Munich.[266] Elvira was famous for its association with prominent members of the German women's movement. The atelier's founders Anita Augspurg (1857–1943) and Sophia Goudstikker (1865–1924) were not only supporters of the women's cause but from the radical end of middle-class German feminism. Partners in personal and professional life, Augspurg and Goudstikker would also have been viewed by many as stereotypical "new women," with their short, "masculine" hair and dandyesque appearance.[267] Despite embodying characteristics that many Germans associated

[264] *Rudolph Hertzog Berlin C. Agenda 1910* (Berlin: [n/a], 1910).
[265] Seidenhaus Michaels & Cie also published a "Damen-Almanach," ladies almanac, in the same month as the Hertzog agenda and the 1910 N. Israel album were issued, in December 1909. See the reviews in "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 24, no. 48 (2 December 1909).
[266] See discussion in Palmén, "Modern Confections," 658–60; Ingvild Richardsen, *Die modernen Frauen des Atelier Elvira in München und Augsburg 1887–1908* (Munich, 2022).
[267] Franz Häußler, *Fotografie in Augsburg 1839 bis 1900: Mit einem Bildteil aus den Fotoschätzen des Stadtarchivs Augsburg* (Augsburg, 2004), 154–55. See also the group portrait including Augspurg and Goudstikker reproduced in Edgar Haider, *Verlorene Pracht - Geschichten von zerstörten Bauten* (Hildesheim, 2006), 147.

negatively (and often falsely) with feminism, the photographers of Elvira had achieved a public reputation as leaders in fashionable portrait photography among German royals and aristocrats, giving their enterprise legitimacy as a named associate in the N. Israel albums. Because some albums specifically sought to picture members of the women's movement, moreover, Elvira, as the go-to establishment for many members of the women's movement, was a natural place from which to source visual material. The fact that N. Israel showed a thematic interest in the women's movement, as explored further below, created professional opportunities for women photographers, some of whom specialised in portraits of female activists, to have their work publicly exhibited and credited.[268]

Elvira was one of the few female-run photography firms among those credited in the N. Israel albums.[269] While it was responsible for but a small proportion of the illustrations, the atelier's contributions constituted an important addition. I have argued elsewhere that it was usually the manner in which third-party visual material was used that was decisive, not the origin of the material or its intended purpose but its creators – employees of N. Israel determined in what form and context the images would feature, making their input more central to the final appearance.[270] Elvira is of exceptional importance, however, because of its female ownership and connections to the women's movement. As I discuss in an earlier publication, images from Elvira exemplify women's increasing control over how they wished to be represented, apart from the male gaze.[271] The fact that N. Israel chose to use these photographs adds an interesting touch to the firm's participation in the making of the women's public sphere. The albums disseminate the creative output of women professionals, both visual and literary, including them in the shaping of culture and public narratives.

[268] Another example is British photographer Rita Martin, who took pictures of suffragists. Her images are included in N. Israel, ed., *Von der Sänfte bis zum Aeroplan* (Berlin, 1911).
[269] Besides Martin (previous footnote), the work of Erna Pap, Budapest, is featured in the 1910 album.
[270] Palmén, "Modern Confections,"
[271] Ibid., 657–60.

The final question about representation is a central one, which draws us back to the concept of the public sphere and its perceived limits. The writers and creatives commissioned by N. Israel comprised almost exclusively academics, authors/journalists, professionals, or members of the German or international nobilities.[272] Even within the most egalitarian volume, *Die Frau und Ihre Welt* (1910), there is a clear bias toward the aristocratic and middle-class intellectual viewpoint. This, I would argue, is the main tension that challenges the albums as elements of the public sphere as understood in the light of feminist historical scholarship of recent decades, which "push[es] the boundaries of the public by holding that sphere to the highest standards of openness, accessibility, tolerance of diversity, and capacity to acknowledge the needs of a heterogeneous membership."[273] The preference for upper-class views and tastes stems from the aspirations of a commercial firm – and perhaps also a Jewish one, looking to gain acceptance in Wilhelmine German society. For Habermas, it was the profit-seeking tendencies of the modern economic development that threatened the integrity of the public sphere; in the case of the N. Israel albums, it is less a matter of commercial interest interfering with the process, their commercial origin notwithstanding, than an elite bias undermining the public sphere in its ideal, most democratic form, as imagined by later scholarship.

The N. Israel albums were not an open forum where anyone could voice their opinions – but neither were most other publications of the period which would have been perceived as representing the "will of the people." They are not comparable to the easy-access forums formed by reader pages or advice columns in newspapers, for instance, which could create feminised communal as well as "confessional and therapeutic space[s]."[274] They do, nonetheless, compare favourably to women's magazines as a "public stage for women," to borrow from Tomoko Tamari's work on early twentieth-century Japan.[275] N. Israel apparently allowed its named contributors, whether male or female, a substantial degree of creative freedom, often at the expense of narratives that may have been more

[272] Jews were probably slightly overrepresented among N. Israel album authors, but no more than Jews were overrepresented among the educated elite more generally.
[273] Ryan, *Women in Public*, 12.
[274] Tomoko Tamari, "Women and Consumption: The Rise of the Department Store and the 'New Woman' in Japan 1900–1930" (PhD diss., Nottingham Trent University, 2002), 207–10.
[275] Ibid., 208.

beneficial for the company, especially since, as we shall see, they promoted personal inner growth over material consumption. Nevertheless, all album contributions, regardless of the gender of the author, whether verbal or visual, were subject to the editorial authority of the N. Israel company and its employees. The influence of this anonymous cohort in constructing larger narratives found in the albums is teased out in the following analysis.

Envisioning New Women and Feminists

Similar to other promotional materials produced by department stores in the early twentieth century, the N. Israel albums participated in the construction of contemporary gender ideals. Because they employed different media, their inherent discourses about women's roles in public life, and the ideal female types which they evoked, came about through the interaction between the text and the pictures, as this section demonstrates. I highlight two primary iterations of the "modern woman" emerging from the three albums with the most conspicuous woman-related content, from 1909, 1910 and 1913: the New Woman and the Feminist or women's rights advocate, which the albums frequently conflate. By sampling an essay from each album, I do not assume to provide a "representative" picture of the woman albums, but rather to highlight the range of texts and also structural similarities across the relevant issues. The examples will serve as illustrations for how N. Israel staff apparently created a sense of cohesion from an eclectic set of components, thus influencing their overall meaning.

The albums' first point of entry into more feminised content was through the theatre. Berlin department stores fostered closer relations with the dramatic arts, with ticket sales and through staging performances on their premises; many, including N. Israel, rendered Berlin's theatres, concert halls, and circuses at the back of company albums. Department stores and the stage arts were a particularly fruitful alliance, not least because of the theatre's established cultural credibility.[276]

[276] On the "theatricalization" of European fashion marketing from the late nineteenth century onwards, see Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre and fashion,* 5–6, 121, 123; Ganeva, "Elegance and Spectacle," 126.

The stage, moreover, was a site of fashion display and fashion innovation. Famous actresses and female performers were fashion's new live mannequins, brought to the consumer by the nascent illustrated press and gradually through cinema.[277] Although acting, music, and dance were fields that had accommodated women for longer than many other professions, a new generation of female performers were more visibly defying cultural expectations through their independent and sometimes gender-fluid public personas. The N. Israel albums showed a keen interest in these icons of a new and growing popular – and inherently cosmopolitan – culture of fashion and performance, including figures like Isadora Duncan (Fig. 11), whose loose-fitting, classical yet ground-breaking style inspired more "liberated" orientations in early twentieth-century high fashion.[278] Yet more surprising additions, some without obvious commercial incentive, came in subsequent volumes.

I. Theodor Kappstein, "Ellen Key" (1909)

We begin in 1909, with the album *Führende Geister der Gegenwart (Leading Minds of the Present Age*). The volume is a collection of essays written by Theodor Kappstein (1870–1960), a professor at Humboldt University in Berlin. The album cover (Fig. 8) is representative of Kappstein's focus on contemporary men of influence; the triumph of the human spirit is pictured as an apolline male, muscular and dynamic, charging by chariot out of the *Jugendstil* frame torch in hand, his masculine form summarising humanity's leap into a new era. Nine out of ten individuals presented are men, each representing a separate category of societal innovators like "the historian," "the bacteriologist," "the painter and sculptor," "the miracle man of theatre" – and the inevitable Kaiser. The final modern type is "die Frauenrechtlerin" (the women's rights activist). The essay in question is an eight-page segment supposedly about Ellen Key (1849–1926). The author, however, uses his discussion about Key as a pretext for educating his readers about the German women's movement.

[277] Bertschik, *Mode und Moderne*, 168–79.
[278] For a further discussion on the thematic connections between the N. Israel albums and fashion, see Palmén, "Modern Confections."

Ellen Key was an author and orator, whose writings frequently intersected with debates about the Woman Question. Born into an aristocratic Swedish family, Key's most influential works *Barnets Århundrade* (*The Century of the Child*) (1900) and *Missbrukad Kvinnokraft* (*The Misuse of Women's Strength)* (1896) foregrounded a child-centered pedagogy and women's roles as educators. Among other issues, Key advocated raising the female marital age to 20, as well as endorsing women's legal equality, suffrage, and right to divorce.[279] In some respects, she conceded, she was a "woman for the women's cause."[280] Yet she regarded equal rights feminism as an oversimplified solution to life in industrialised society. Women and men, she maintained, had inherently different strengths, and society could only reach its full potential if the sexes specialised, i.e., if they performed separate gendered functions in society and in the family.[281] In her native Sweden, Key was generally rejected among feminists for her idiosyncratic worldview. In Germany, her views on religion brought her into conflict with the likes of Gertrud Bäumer, one of the central figureheads of German feminism.[282]

Kappstein's take on Key is curious. Casting Key as the archetypal feminist, he describes her influence using evocative words like "shackles," "prejudices," "indiscriminate equality," "right":

"Everything in the women's world today, which calls – sometimes even cries – for social and political liberation from the shackles of old prejudices, all efforts to achieve indiscriminate equality between the two sexes with regard to professional life and the academic or technical and practical education for it, but especially efforts to radically reform secondary and elementary school education, as well as to change the social attitudes concerning the unconstricted right of the female section of the population to satisfy their need for love; all these demands, longings and desires look confidently toward the spirited, witty and eloquent Swede."[283]

[279] Ellen Key, *Barnets Århundrade* (Stockholm, 1900), 7; Ellen Key, *Missbrukad Kvinnokraft – Kvinnopsykologi*, ed. Björn Sjövall (Stockholm, 1981 [1896]), 5, 88–9, 140–1.
[280] Ibid., 5.
[281] Broadly speaking, Key's feminism fits best the label of "difference" or "relational" feminist (Karen Offen's term), the latter being defined by its definition of women's rights "as women (defined principally by their childbearing and /or nurturing capacities) in relation to men." Offen, *European Feminisms*, 21, 22.
[282] Tiina Kinnunen "Debating Individualism and Altruism: Gertrud Bäumer, Ellen Key and the ethical foundations of modern life," *Women's History Review* 20, no. 4 (2011): 497–507.
[283] Theodor Kappstein, "Ellen Key," in *Führende Geister der Gegenwart*, ed. N. Israel (Berlin, 1909).

There are many possible reasons why Kappstein and N. Israel found Key an appealing figure – she reappears on several occasions in the N. Israel albums.[284] As a scholar and professional biographer, Kappstein seems quite familiar with Key, whose ideas gained a following among European elites. Not "tainted," if you will, by some of the public's negative associations with the women's movement, Key was seen as a philosopher, pedagogue, and cultural commentator. Her emphasis on "motherliness," nonetheless, resonated strongly with the bourgeois German women's movement, which called on its members to practice "*geistige mütterlichkeit"* ("spiritual motherliness") as a way of expanding the sphere of the middle-class woman into public life. Key was fluent in German, and her works, translated into over a dozen languages, enjoyed wide circulation in Germany.[285] Although not German herself, Key influenced and resonated with middle-class Wilhelmine culture.

From the point of view of N. Israel as the publisher, Key's particular views on gender may have suited some of its larger objectives. As explored in the following chapter, representatives of the German clothing industry underscored women's innate proficiency for work in the clothing business, based especially on women's congenital "good eye" for fashion and beauty. Key argued in a similar vein that by "striving for beauty [...] woman satisfies [...] a natural urge,"[286] a notion which could readily serve N. Israel both as an employer and as a consumer company offering fashion, furniture, and interior decor. Key contended, furthermore, that the proliferation of women across professional fields was a "misuse of women's power," since she thought that women were born to be homemakers. The general impression of the N. Israel albums, as we shall see, contradicted Key's extreme views in this department, which Kappstein did not, in fact, engage with. Nonetheless, the centrality of visuality in Key's idiosyncratic feminism suggests how she might have been, for N. Israel, in some respects a woman after its own heart.

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[284] Hanna von Pestalozza, "Ihre Seele," in N. Israel, *Die Frau im Jahrhundert* includes a picture of Key, while other albums quote or reference Key in text.
[285] Key's *Beauty for All* (*Skönhet for Alla*), for instance, was never fully translated at the time but a version was published by German newspapers in 1910. Reinhard Dräbing, *Der Traum vom "Jahrhundert des Kindes"* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990), 516, cited in Barbara Miller Lane, "An Introduction to Ellen Key's 'Beauty in the Home,'" in *Modern Swedish Design: Three Founding Texts* ed. Kenneth Frampton, Helena Kåberg, Barbara Miller Lane, and Lucy Creagh (New York, 2008), 28.
[286] Ellen Key, *Skönhet för Alla* (Stockholm, 1897), 6.

Key was, furthermore, not only a celebrity but a self-proclaimed "individualist and anti-Christian."[287] While many of Germany's foremost feminists operated under an explicit protestant ethic, Key, as a secular and cultural figure, offered an alternative to placing Christianity at the heart of national identity. Key embodied both the personal pursuit of cultural refinement – she (and Kappstein) cited Goethe and Nietzsche among her chief inspirations – and many of the apparent contradictions that the N. Israel series was committed to reconciling; "Ellen Key is unmarried – but a rearing motherliness is her nature," explains Kappstein, "she is a noblewoman (from her mother's side), and yet a fierce socialist without being a dreary partisan egalitarian; she is a cosmopolitan and still full of yearning for her homeland, treasuring above all the quiet life in its countryside."[288] Key's cosmopolitanism and connections to the *Kaiserreich* seemingly allowed her to be embraced by N. Israel as part of a visionary Germany.

Key was additionally an outspoken philosemite. While lambasting Christian sexual ethics, she believed Jewish tradition to be closer to "natural law" and medical (scientific) observation.[289] She greatly admired Jewish thinkers including Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza; "Spinoza became her religious experience," relates Key's contemporary biographer John Landquist (1881–1974), "and in him she found her peace."[290] Key was, moreover, enthralled with Rahel Varnhagen, the famous Jewish salon hostess of enlightenment-era Berlin. In her biography of Varnhagen, published a year before Kapptein's essay, Key compares her idol to an "indestructible influence [... of the kind] from which our own liberation proceeds."[291] As a social darwinist and believer in eugenics, Key upheld Varnhagen as evidence for the Jewish people as "the typical example of the strength of a pure race."[292] Likely familiar with these issues, Kappstein places a great deal of importance on Key's connection to Varnhagen, describing her as "[t]he Berlin predecessor on [Key's] path." For Kappstein, Varnhagen personified a fight against the many impediments faced by her sex in

[287] Key, *Barnets Århundrade*, ix.
[288] Kappstein, "Ellen Key."
[289] Key, *Barnets Århundrade*, 11.
[290] John Landquist, *Ellen Key* (Stockholm, 1909), 25.
[291] Ellen Key, *Rahel Varnhagen: A Portrait* (New York, 1913), 1.
[292] Ibid., 3, 15.

eighteenth-century Berlin; "Women's rights activists have thoroughly cleaned up these restrictive circumstances of the bad old days!" he exclaims triumphantly. [293] After this, he makes a concluding excursion into the personalities of Wilhelmine middle-class feminism, bringing his positioning of Key as "German" full circle.

Kappstein's treatment of Key tells us a great deal about how he sought to portray the women's movement. Key was a woman of gravitas that could hold her own in a room full of men. Kappstein was clearly an admirer. Through her iconic figure, Kappstein gave a favourable account of the activities of contemporary German feminists, connecting these to Key's cultivating mission, which he traced, in turn, to her inspirational Jewish salon hostess of a bygone Berlin. At the same time, his choice reinforced both doctrines of gender difference and "motherliness," making a thinker strongly associated with these doctrines the symbol of women's unique contribution to knowledge and innovation among a leading cultural and intellectual, and otherwise male, cohort. In doing so, Kappstein exhibited a sensitivity toward the dominant currents of German feminism while rejecting its central figures as its representatives. His was a distinct interpretation of the women's movement, one marked less by the practical achievements of women activists and more by the movement's intellectual – and thus more "masculine" – contributions to modern German culture.

Yet the essay consists not just of Kappstein's text, but a series of remarkable illustrations. Around two thirds of the overall page space is taken up by pictorial matter. We expect to find images documenting Key's life, perhaps a few picturing German feminists (which we do, as seen in Fig. 15). Key is, however, featured only once up front (Fig. 12). Her large vertical photographic portrait is centered, encased by Kappstein's extolling words. Her grey, wavy hair is drawn back into an inconspicuous knot while her dark robe merges her stout figure with the background, emphasising her vacantly gazing face bathing in natural light, absorbed in deep thought as she holds a pen to an empty book page. Her portrayal brings to life one of Kappstein's "Geister" – simply translated as

[293] Kappstein, "Ellen Key."

"minds" but connecting to the popular Hegelian idea of the *Geist*, the absolute spirit guiding human history or the independent sum of human contributions to civilisation. [294] As the female embodiment of the *Geist*, Key's mind is her secret weapon, not her looks. She is a "New Woman" in a particular sense of the word, as a woman who is asserting herself in male territory, taking her place in the public sphere – yet without upsetting the delicate balance of bourgeois Wilhelmine culture too much.

The second spread of illustrations is pre-empted only by the title's disclaimer that we are dealing with "the Frauenrechtlerin;" it is utterly dominated by five large and undated images, the first of which is captioned "English 'Suffragettes' distribute propaganda leaflets for women's voting rights." Two bonneted activists walk beside a busy pavement, covered in banners and placards promoting "Votes for Women," one of the women confidently locking eyes with a curious male passer-by. The public is drawn to the spectacle, unfolding miles away from Key's serene study. Given that Kappstein's essay is titled "Ellen Key," however, we assume we are witnessing the female foot soldiers to Key's commandership (which, in fact, we are not). Beginning with this image, then, the editorial staff at N. Israel are associating Key and German feminism with the broader phenomenon of women's rights activism as a movement to launch middle-class women into public life. Meanwhile, they are also defying in this way Key's more reactionary views – in any case already obscured by Kappstein's progressive text – as well as central characteristics of German feminism, such as its relative lack of interest in the question of suffrage.

A case for comparison is found in the 1910 album, *Die Frau und Ihre Welt*. Käthe Rahmlow's essay about "Women in Politics" focuses on women's political involvement as a duty in light of recent legislative reforms, not as a principle of equal rights. The illustrative header on the introductory page, however, displays two heavily retouched facial crops of Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel (both denoted "Mrs. Pankhurst" even though Christabel never married) in "prison clothes"

[294] Relevant works include Georg Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Bamberg, 1807); Georg Hegel and Karl Michelet, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie* (Berlin, 1833–1836).

separated by an oval shot of the Women's Social and Political Union drum and fife band (attributed by N. Israel to the "London suffragettes") (Fig. 14). The function of the two political detainees as an embellished decorative feature in the design makes for a surreal impression. While Rahmlow is engaging in a separate discourse of her own, these photographic images contribute with the striking admission that women across the Channel were willing to endure imprisonment for their liberation – and that N. Israel had no problem publicly honouring these women in print, and even making them seem more respectable, perhaps inadvertently, by suggesting that even radical feminist troublemakers embraced conventional marital norms.

These examples may reflect a lack of understanding of (and interest in) European feminisms by the album creators, who were looking to create a compelling design. Isn't a feminist just a feminist, after all? Yet although seemingly arbitrary, the illustrations also exhibit an understanding of the universality of the women's cause; even Helen Lange, leader of the moderate wing of German feminism, admitted that "the national must give precedence to the international; for the woman question is an international problem."[295] The British origin of these and several other images in the N. Israel albums may be a relevant factor.[296] Britishness was an indivisible part of the multi-faceted identities of the Israels, whose connections to the United Kingdom extended into business as well as personal life. Berthold, Amy, and their three children all held British citizenship.[297] While it is not known whether any of them supported the British women's movement or its more radical factions, they were exposed to liberal Anglo-Saxon media more than most Germans and likely sympathetic

[295] Helene Lange, *Higher Education of Women in Europe*, trans. L. R. Klemm (New York, 1897), 3.
[296] Many are attributed to the British photographic agency Topical (1903–1957).
[297] The family did not apparently hide their cosmopolitan identities even in times of war; according to a (cited) report by the German consulate in Davos, the family had exclusively spoken English among themselves during a holiday in neutral Switzerland during the First World War (which they did normally), and the press reported that the Israels had socialised among "Englishmen and foreigners" (Berthold was quoted denying that there were Englishmen among their international group of fellow travellers). Initial accusations prompted a police investigation into the eligibility of the company to continue contracting with the German army, with the Imperial ministry of war concluding that Berthold had "demonstrated a regrettable lack of German-patriotic sentiment" in his "preference for England," but that, in the interest of protecting the company's employees, the working relationship could continue if Berthold refrained from such actions in the future. Report by Military Attaché [Copy] (16 February 1917), "Orders and titles"; Correspondence from Küntzel (*Kriegsministerium*) to Berthold Israel [Copy] (21 May 1917), "Orders and titles"; various newspaper clippings (1916), "Orders and titles."

to British liberalism. It is reasonable to assume, then, that the N. Israel albums were influenced by the cosmopolitanism of the Israels, linked to their Jewish identities, particularly as the album pictures tend to "internationalise" the verbal narratives, creating new discourses that transcend them.

Following on from the British suffragettes, and a collection of portraits of German feminists (Fig. 15), the illustrations to the Kappstein essay go even more rogue as we are introduced to a cavalcade of female characters forging their way into professional careers and paid employment. First, we are photographically brought into a surgical demonstration at the university of Geneva, where "crowds of women" students (the caption has it) populate the lecterns.[298] Subsequently, we are shown Gertrud von Petzold, "England's first female ministerial preacher," right beside "the first female university professor: Marie Curie at the university in Paris," above a contemporary court scene of pioneering female French defence lawyer Ms. Miropolski at work in what appears to be an artistic production (Fig. 13). Subsequent images show unnamed woman carpenters, typesetters, bookbinders, and a female painting apprentice. Perhaps the most captivating of all is a portrait accredited to German press photographer Filip Kester annotated "Woman in the difficult job of diver." The subject's petite frame disappears into a heavy booted diving suit as she poses on a pier, her smiling face looking disproportionately small next to the tubed metal helmet in her hand.

The term "New Woman," coined by feminist Sarah Grande in 1894, is not used in the N. Israel albums as it did not come into wide use in Germany until the 1920s.[299] The pictures from 1909, nevertheless, very much evoke the ideal of the "liberated" modern woman familiar to Wilhelmine Germans through plays, books, and caricatures.[300] A cultural transgressor more than an icon, the

[298] Kappstein, "Ellen Key."
[299] Ganeva, *Women in Weimar Fashion*, 35; Carol Diethe, "Nietzsche and the New Woman," in *German Life and Letters* 48, no. 4 (1995): 428–440.
[300] In the German historiography, most literature on this figure concentrates on the 1920s, during which the New Woman was additionally associated with sexual reform and liberation. On the new woman as a "social reality," see Atina Grossman, "*Girlkultur* or Thoroughly Rationalized Female: A New Woman in Weimar Germany?" in *Women in Culture and Politics: A Century of Change*, ed. Judith Friedlander et al. (Bloomington, 1986), 62–80; Atina Grossman, "The New Woman, the New Family and the Rationalization of Sexuality: The Sex Reform Movement in Germany 1928 to 1933" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 1984). On New Woman as a visual type, see Gesa Kessemeier, *Sportlich, sachlich, männlich: das Bild der "Neuen Frau" in den Zwanziger Jahren* (Dortmund, 2000).

Wilhelmine New Woman was widely condemned as an unnatural "shemale" (*Mannweib*), a traitor to her sex.[301] Yet often presenting conservative and feminine unlike her more provocative Weimar counterpart in androgynous dress and *Bubikopf* (bobbed hair), the *belle epoque* New Woman also personified the hope of some Germans for women's emancipation, not primarily through her appearance but through her activities, in this case through professional and vocational life. This modern female type was brought to life in a striking way in the visual accompaniments to Kappstein's essay. The N. Israel albums for 1910 and 1911 subsequently pictured women engaging in perhaps the activity perhaps most characteristic of all of the New Woman type: riding a bicycle (Fig. 21).

The photographic nature of the pictures is impactful. Upon their invention and subsequent proliferation in reproduced form, photographs were unique in their presumed quality as replicas of the subject at hand, void of human artistic interference. These were snapshots of "reality," created by mechanical means. The New Woman had a considerable presence in literature, paintings, and the press, but she was still a rare sight in pre-Weimar Germany. The bourgeois sexual division of labour was cemented in eighteenth-century constructs of the *Geschlechtscharaktere*, gender attributes and capabilities believed to be congenital and indicative of women's primary maternal role.[302] While women's organisations were reasonably popular, few middle-class Wilhelmine women pursued careers or salaried work.[303] N. Israel's photographic compilation seemed to imply the opposite; "new women" were *everywhere*, appearing like mushrooms across European soil. The photographs apparently provided incontrovertible proof that women were changing the European cultural landscape and propelling progress across all spheres of previously male-coded activity.

[301] David Ehrenpreis, "Beyond the Femme Fatale: Female Types in Wilhelmine visual culture" (PhD diss., Boston University, 1998), 6, 250–315.
[302] Hausen, "Family and Role Division"; Hausen, "Geschlechtscharaktere."
[303] Even in the roaring 20s "[t]here was no fundamental questioning of male and female stereotypes," according to Ute Frevert, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Revolution* (New York, 1989), 185. A larger number of young women worked in sales and white-collar jobs, but the vast majority retired or struggled to find employment after marriage.

The Kappstein essay sheds light on a tendency found in later N. Israel albums too, namely, to suggest that "new women" and feminists can be treated interchangeably as representations of modernity and women's contribution to modernity. Precise wordings in Kappstein's essay condition the reader to view these two groups as embodiments of the same modern, female "type"; he ends his text with an exhortation to "women and girls [...] to create new values (not just new words) and to develop a *future type* that enriches the collective and makes them happy."[304] Kappstein implies that his female protagonists are the *prototypes* of a new womanhood. The visual editors at N. Israel, meanwhile, expand this vision from women activists to include women entering diverse fields of paid and professional work. The text makes these women appear as "feminists" while the images accredit feminist activists with notions of work and productivity (thus enhancing their societal value).

The Kappstein piece exemplifies the evocative visual "language" that contributes to the N. Israel publications' distinctive character. These are "albums"; celebrations of beauty and visuality, which happen also to contain text. The visual rhetoric, constructed by N. Israel, seeks to create cohesion, aesthetic value and added meaning. While it is true in principle, as Barthes points out, that, in captions, "the text constitutes a parasitic message designed to connote the image [...]," the N. Israel albums demonstrate how images can inhabit a world of their own, in this case emerging from the tension between the albums' promotional ambition to capture the cultural and artistic and the choice to frame the visual and artistic using texts and verbalised themes. The frequent disconnect between the images and the words of the essays – often placed pages apart, if linked at all – strongly suggests that the authors were not involved in the visual production. Kappstein's essay highlights this complicated but informative dynamic in a striking manner.

This distinctive style of communication taken together with the albums' progressive undertones makes them stand out among contemporary publications. Most popular women's weeklies and periodicals like *Der Bazar* and *Die Modewelt* were rather limited in scope, featuring "lightweight"

[304] Kappstein, "Ellen Key." Emphasis added.

content such as fashion advice, craft ideas, practical tips for housewives, and entertaining short stories. Configuring the modern woman primarily as a consumer, these publications tended to reinforce widespread bourgeois ideas about femininity as connected to beauty, visuality, and domesticity. Meanwhile, the general bourgeois press exhibited sporadic interest in "exotic" behaviours of modern women, including photographs of women in "masculine" jobs; such images, however, were rarely accompanied by verbal endorsements of the women's movement. Until the turn of the century at least, the major illustrated magazines *Gartenlaube* and *Illustrirte Zeitung* offered sympathetic (albeit not propagandistic) written portrayals of women's organisations.[305] Yet as Ulla Wischermann shows, "this attitude was not emphasized in any way by optical means."[306]

A close equivalent to the N. Israel albums is the Hertzog agenda titled "Dedicated to the Woman!" – in many ways a predecessor of the former. Dating to 1898, the agenda is a calendar with text inserts about important women in recent history but includes also a three-page essay titled "The Contemporary German Women's Movement and its champions."[307] "The women's movement," the text reads, "is making steady progress; much has already been achieved, yet more will be achieved."[308] Portraits of three university-educated women, including educator and activist Käthe Windscheid, accompany the essay, which deals with the accomplishments of the German women's movement and its individual members. Because the publication predates the most conspicuous N. Israel woman albums by a decade, it does not exhibit the same level of visual sophistication or eclecticism; its images are conventional in both their appearance and function (Fig. 16). Together with the N. Israel albums, however, the Hertzog example demonstrates how some Berlin department stores used their company albums to promote "feminist" ideas and ideals, just as British and American stores used other means to collaborate with and advance women's movements in their

[305] Ulla Wischermann, *Frauenfrage und Presse: Frauenarbeit und Frauenbewegung in der illustrierten Presse des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1983), 175.
[306] Ibid., 172–4, 5.
[307] The agenda was published with the international feminist congresses in Berlin in 1896 and in Brussels in 1897 still in recent memory.
[308] "Die deutsche Frauenbewegung der Gegenwart und ihre Vorkämpferinnen," in *Agenda 1898– "Der Frau Gewidmet!" Rudolph Hertzog Berlin Breitestr. 15* (Berlin, 1898), 102.

respective countries. Only N. Israel among German firms did so apparently, however, around the 1910s, when the Wilhelmine women's movement was at the height of its popularity but was also more contentious and politicised than ever before in the history of Imperial Germany.

To summarise the analysis so far, the N. Israel album for 1909 presented feminism as one of the most important phenomena of the period, emphatically defending the movement's claim to social and cultural reform. So did the Wilhelmine feminist press, but almost never with pictures. The Ellen Key essay was an unequivocal expression of support for the contemporary cause of middle-class women, while the rest of the album, all by Kappstein, made no statements to contradict these sentiments. Distributed to N. Israel customers and employees, this material had the potential to reach readers of far more diverse backgrounds than niche publications of the women's movement. Accompanied by prolific illustrations, the albums were a powerful vehicle for propaganda, of a calibre rarely seen in the Wilhelmine period. Issues such as Kappstein's for 1909 thus contributed to emerging *feminist* public spheres, since they portrayed women's growing presence in public life as proof of society's progress – their one major shortcoming being that this position was not reflected in the gender of the author chosen by N. Israel.

II. Antonie von Gaffron–Oberstradam, "Die Frau im Beruf" (1910)

The second example is drawn from the album chronologically following Kappstein's from 1909. Perhaps realising they had struck gold with a single essay on the women's movement, N. Israel developed its visual concept further in 1910. The album *Die Frau und Ihre Welt* examines women's contributions to different areas of European modern life, featuring an even more impressive international array of female pioneers in the professions, the fine arts, music, and entertainment. In Rahmlow's piece on women in politics, the illustrations celebrate not only the aforementioned British suffragists but radical feminists like Minna Cauer, Habsburg novelist Bertha von Suttner, Finnish female members of parliament, and Fèdak Sary "the famous operetta singer, [who] also plays an important role in Hungarian politics," among others. The *Woman* is singular in this context and

the *World* her oyster, all (selected) activities of contemporary women being the reflections of a new female type and her ever expanding realm of influence.

The sample essay by Antonie von Gaffron Oberstradam (1833–1908) begins with the potent words "Poets are prophets. – Not quite ten years ago Charles Everard Blunt wrote: Yes, my dear, the women's movement is unstoppable and whoever takes a stand against it is a fool."[309] Von Gaffron, a poet and author who passed away in 1908 in her mid-seventies, apparently had her piece published posthumously by N. Israel two years later – perhaps an indication of the extensive preparation that went into publishing what was the first N. Israel multi-author volume and the firm's most visually ambitious production to that point, which built and expanded on the spiritual legacy of Kappstein's chapter about Key.[310] Legally known as Brehmer through marriage (I will use a double-barrelled version), N. Israel denoted the apparent expert on women's work by her aristocratic family name as opposed to her chosen designation, once again underscoring the company's connections to Imperial German high society.

Charles Blunt, whom Brehmer-Gaffron so enthusiastically claimed as "prophetic," was, in fact, a pseudonym used by her son Arthur Brehmer (1858–1923), likewise a poet and the first editor-in-chief of the *Berliner Morgenpost*.[311] Brehmer took his role as a clairvoyant seriously, for in the same year, in addition to also contributing to the N. Israel album alongside his mother, he edited an illustrated volume *The World in a Hundred Years* that could compete with any contemporary work of science fiction.[312] "In a hundred years all great inventions of modernity will be perfected, and the two great movements of modernity – the women's movement and the labour movement – will have

[309] Antonie von Gaffron-Oberstradam, "Die Frau im Beruf," in N. Israel, *Die Frau und Ihre Welt*.
[310] Elisabeth Friedrichs, "Brehmer geb. v Gaffron, Antonie," *Die deutschsprachigen Schriftstellerinnen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts: Ein Lexikon* (Stuttgart, 1981), 39.
[311] See Rudolf Falb and Charles Blunt (Arthur Brehmer), *Der Weltuntergang Roman* (Berlin, 1899); Franz Brümmer, "Brehmer-Gaffron, Antonie," and "Brehmer, Arthur," in *Lexikon der deutschen Dichter und Prosaisten*, 6th ed. (Leipzig, 1913), 340; Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900*, 88, 90–91. Brehmer also used the alias "Robby Jones" and additionally co-authored a poetry collection with his mother under his real name (ibid., 93).
[312] For his essay in the same album, see Artur [sic] Brehmer, "Die Frau in der Kunst," in N. Israel, *Die Frau und Ihre Welt*. It is not clear why N. Israel spells the author's first name differently, but varied spellings of names were not unusual in this period.

achieved their goals," reads the segment about women, illustrated by images showing an old man beaming over the growth of his foetal offspring in a laboratory ("The Joys of Fatherhood in 100 years: Homunculus! Homunculus!") and a "Sunday afternoon excursion to the moon" in an open aircraft that defied all laws of physics.[313] The words are those of Ellen Key who, in addition to predicting the successes of feminism and socialism a century forward in her essay, expected that all adults regardless of gender would participate in a people's parliament – except outlaws, who would be "deported to the planet Mars, earth's newly conquered colony."[314]

Brehmer ("Charles Blunt") was evidently considered an authority on matters related to women and modernity, not just by his mother but by the editors at N. Israel; quotes from his literary pseudonym decorated the margins of other N. Israel essays in the "woman album" from 1910 (a design feature of that particular issue). For the 1913 album *Die Frau im Jahrhundert der Energie 1813–1913 (The Woman in the Century of Energy 1813–1913)* Brehmer also wrote an introductory essay about women during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era.[315] His involvement reveals, through examples such as his futuristic volume from 1910, the extent to which N. Israel authors belonged to a professionally close-knit, elite circle of liberal commentators, many, like Brehmer, connected to Berlin's great publishing houses.[316] Key was a similarly revered expert within this confined and cosmopolitan cohort, to which the N. Israel company and its owners were professionally if not personally linked. Brehmer-Gaffron (the mother), too, quoted Key as part of her presentation in the 1910 album, maintaining that it was only when several generations of women, "with the same rights to education as men, with the same encouragement of the home and society[,] will have used their

[313] Ellen Key, "Die Frau in Hundert Jahren," in N. Israel, *Die Welt in Hundert Jahren*, ed. Arthur Brehmer (Berlin, 1910), 117.
[314] Ibid., 118.
[315] Artur [sic] Brehmer, "Der Weg der Frau," in N. Israel, *Die Frau im Jahrhundert.* For quotes included in the N. Israel series attributed to "Charles Blunt," see Andersen, "Die Frau"; Cavalieri, "Die Schönheit."
[316] Brehmer, who was also the *feuilleton* editor for the *Berliner Zeitung*, makes a colourful appearance in the memoirs of Herman Ullstein, who describes him both as a creative genius and "the most erratic of men." Herman Ullstein, *The Rise and Fall of the House of Ullstein,* trans. William Gibson (London, [1943]), 66.

gifts for discovery, invention, and creativity" that it could be conclusively determined whether there were, in fact, "limits to women's intellectual ability."[317]

While Brehmer-Gaffron's disposition was not explicitly futuristic, the N. Israel series as a whole shows a keen interest in futurism, at least as it was displayed in the present. Readers could marvel at the department store's electric delivery vehicles in one album, while surveying its integrated hoover system – a revolutionary cleaning device, which sucked dust rather than spreading it into the indoor air – in another (Fig. 20).[318] Further albums and articles illustrate Germany's conquest of the skies through Zeppelin's airships, a giant leap into modern, commercialised air travel.[319] Most "futuristic" site of all, perhaps, combining all the miracles of modernity was the woman cyclist. This paradigmatic New Woman, pictured by N. Israel on two occasions (seen for e.g., in Fig. 21), represented technological advances in bicycle safety, innovations in clothing design and, above all, the changing social and political status of women. In the context of the album series, the Brehmer-Gaffron piece situated the women's movement among the great processes of modernity and held up its accomplishments as proof that humanity had reached a new level of civilisation.[320]

Brehmer-Gaffron dedicated her essay to another avatar of the familiar female archetype associated with modernity, "Woman in the Professions." She gives examples of women pioneers, from French actress Sarah Bernhardt to British-American physician Elisabeth Blackwell, suggesting, once more, that the New Woman was more than just a literary cliché. As pointed out by Atina Grossman, "[t]he New Woman of the 1920s had existed [only] as a Bohemian rarity and literary convention before the First World War."[321] As a published author and member of the intrinsically cosmopolitan aristocracy, Brehmer-Gaffron likely drew on her own experience of living at the frontlines of women's

[317] Gaffron-Oberstradam, "Die Frau im Beruf."
[318] Sittenfeld, *Gross-Berlin*; Jacobson, *Das Theater*.
[319] Kappstein, *Führende Geister*; N. Israel, *Von der Sänfte*.
[320] While space will not allow for a more in-depth analysis of Brehmer's essays in the N. Israel series, it will suffice to say that his mother offered a more pointed and explicit critique of women's lack of rights and opportunities.
[321] Grossman, "Girlkultur,", 65.

modernity, as an elite, educated, and professionally active woman. From the outset of her essay, however, she also connected her exemplary "new women" explicitly with the irrepressible force of feminism and made a positive pronouncement on the movement as a whole. In taking a birds-eye view, moving focus from the local into the international realm, Brehmer-Gaffron consolidated her case, inviting readers to allow themselves to be swept away by an already unstoppable stream.

In one of her more specific points, Brehmer-Gaffron makes an argument for women's equal mental capacities. Proposed by classical thinkers from François Poullain de la Barre (1673) to Mary Wollstonecraft (1792), the idea of women's capacity for rationality was the basis for arguments in favour of female education by enlightenment-era feminists. Even if women were now formally allowed into any field of work, Brehmer-Gaffron explains, "the man behaves in a negative manner against any expansion of the professional sphere of the woman" due to fears of wage suppression and competition.[322] These fears – though, as Brehmer-Gaffron admits, not unfounded – are, she reasons, the real source of the inaccurate conclusion that women are naturally unsuited for certain professions. Dismissing the bourgeois stereotypes of the rational man *versus* emotional woman, Brehmer-Gaffron confronts antifeminist mockers: "[L]o and behold, it is precisely in mathematics, astronomy and physics that women have excelled the most."[323]

Her perspective, while undoubtedly feminist (and bourgeois), is particular. The Wilhelmine women's movement focused on developing women's education and "cultural" work for women, with an emphasis on areas where women's perceived strengths could be expressed. Paid and professional work was not necessarily a desirable outcome. Among the pioneers of the social work profession, for instance, Alice Salomon (1872–1948) and Bertha Pappenheim (1859–1936) were critical of the introduction of wages for (female) social workers. Pappenheim, lamented that, by the late 1920s: "[...w]elfare work ha[d] transitioned from a calling [*Berufung*] to a job [*Beruf*] for many

[322] Gaffron-Oberstradam, "Die Frau im Beruf."
[323] Ibid.

– a cash cow."[324] Salomon, meanwhile, commenting in 1913, warned of the "fiasco" which would ensue if volunteers were to be replaced by salaried staff.[325] Brehmer-Gaffron's contribution, by comparison, stands closer to the Anglo-Saxon feminist tradition in rejecting binary gender as the basis for the choice of career. Reminiscent rather of German women activists of her own generation, moulded in the liberal revolutionary currents of 1848, Brehmer-Gaffron charges forward like an aging radical with nothing to lose.

Finally, we must address Brehmer-Gaffron's definition of jobs. With an exclusive focus on the higher professions, arts, and entertainment, Brehmer-Gaffron is operating in mostly elite spheres of experience. Her ignorance of the long history of contributions by women of the lower classes in formal economies suggests she lacked socialist leanings. Yet the "feminist" flavour of her text remains. The bulk of German feminism was middle-class in orientation, seeking primarily to "mobilise" the strengths of those women who felt redundant due to the structure and expectations of bourgeois society. Activists infrequently valorised economic independence or the financial value of women's contributions.[326] The professions – or professionalism – and the arts offered the most significant opportunities for "higher" cultural productivity. Similarly, professional work offered the best chance to challenge the central male prerogative for rational thinking and therefore the acquisition and production of knowledge, thus dealing a metaphorical blow to antifeminist physicians, psychologists, and sociologists engaged in the "knowledge wars"[327] to keep women within their "naturally" prescribed realm.

Once more, the illustrations by N. Israel add a whole new perspective. Taking their cue from Brehmer-Gaffron's rubric, the pictures interpret the theme far more liberally than the author. The photographic portraits of three professionally successful women sit atop an ornamental corsage

[324] Bertha Pappenheim – Prof Dr. Türk, "Aussprache" BJFB 5, no. 8 (August 1929), 10.
[325] Alice Salomon, *Zwanzig Jahre soziale Hilfsarbeit* (Karlsruhe, 1913), 78.
[326] From the perspective of social work activism, see Iris Schröder and Anja Schüler, "In Labor Alone is Happiness," *Journal of Women's History* 16, no. 1 (2004): 127–91.
[327] Offen, *European Feminisms*, 57, 107, 130, 181, 188–196.

above the title, including the American Hetty Green "the world's greatest financial genius" – expressed conspicuously in neuter gender (Fig. 17).[328] The image which attracts most attention, however, is "Germany's first female master blacksmith," a convincing character standing by her workstation, donning fully covering high collared dress, heavy duty apron and a work bonnet. Apparently a pioneer in her field, the woman nonetheless remains anonymous. The following page depicts the planting and "renting out" of potatoes by a group of smiling babushka-type figures above the text, which moves organically around the contours of a "Female Tree Cutter from Munich" carrying a heavily loaded contraption on her back, two young female construction workers, and a weathered middle-aged woman, a "Veteran of Work" whose unpolished manners during an interrupted mealtime become eternalised, as she brings her knife into her gaping mouth (Fig. 19).[329]

Across the page, manual labourers continue to dominate, while Brehmer-Gaffron inhabits the parallel universe of Elisabeth Blackwell's revolutionary children's hospital, employing only female staff. German agricultural workers and a facial profile of a Hungarian (gypsy) "Market woman" command the upper third of the page while the lower half is a photomontage of a "Nordic female fisher," "Franconian bobbin lace makers," and a haggard looking "Italian vegetable saleswoman." Not until a few pages ahead do we, indeed, find nurses and childcare professionals exercising their expertise as well as female members of the British army medical corps – but no Elisabeth Blackwell, alas. One spread pairs hospital scenes on the one side with "English colonial students" being taught the arts of hut building, open-air cooking, and dairy production on the other. The monochrome illustrations are graphic and dominating, pieced together to create a vivid and eclectic landscape, with the text fitted into the left-over crevices. Two adjoining pages form an exception, with a string of rounded portraits of women professionals topping an otherwise text-heavy display.

These last-mentioned images are some of the most curious found in the N. Israel series, notwithstanding their comparatively insignificant size and presentation. A curtain of dangling beads

[328] Gaffron–Oberstradam, "Die Frau im Beruf."
[329] Ibid.

garnishes the background for the five representatives of "novel female jobs," as they are denoted in the caption (Fig. 18).[330] On the left, a Madame Teratsin in St Petersburg rents out wailing women to funerals. Next to her, we are shown a woman founder of a home for "degenerate" aristocrats. Signorina Madrassi, beside her, delivers bridesmaids to weddings, while Signora Brignone has a snake farm in Bovalino, which supplies snakes of "every kind." Finally, on the right, a certain Vjera Kommissarovska has established a tattoo studio in St Petersburg. Women, it would seem, were engaging in the most diverse kinds of work, not only in typically male domains but in innovative and eccentric forms of business. Once again, the creativity and productivity of an international female cohort is seen as changing culture, in this instance, popularising body art, providing commercial solutions to family celebrations, and breeding exotic pets.

Two observations stand out as especially pertinent. First, this ensemble of exceptional elite women, charming but visually inconspicuous, is the only representation for women in the world of business. For all the different areas covered by the woman albums, there is no essay dedicated to women in business or entrepreneurship, and few saleswomen or other white-collar women employees appear as part of the albums' main pictorially abundant features.[331] The extent to which the commercial is avoided is almost comical; in 1910, music, literature, theatre, dance, beauty, and the visual arts all receive their *own* sections beside Brehmer-Gaffron's condensed exposé about women in the world of work, despite the fact that female office workers and sales staff epitomised the New Woman as a social phenomenon and as a symbol of the feminisation of the European public sphere in the era of the first department stores. Perhaps it was recognised that women struggled to break into the male-dominated world of business, that their contributions tended to be supplemental, or perhaps it was thought that the artistic and intellectual realms offered better opportunities for the creation of "objective women's culture" – to reference the contemporary work of Berlin sociologist Georg

[330] Ibid.
[331] Some pictures are found in the promotional calendars in different issues, and a couple more in the main text of N. Israel., ed., *Arbeit und Erholung* (Berlin, 1914).

Simmel, who doubted such a phenomenon was possible.[332] The omission of women creatives in the fashion business suggests some of these factors were at play. At the same time, the albums proceed in their characteristic emphasis on the cultural, disentangling the department store from its reputation as a profit-driven institution, this time through a carefully curated view of women's public activities.

Second, there is the awkward inclusion of working-class women. The urban industrial worker – most notably the pitied domestic worker in the garment trade – is visually and verbally absent. Instead, dominant illustrations picture the countryside, farming, and fishing, equating "work" with physical labour and therefore diverging from Brehmer-Gaffron's account about intellectual, artistic, and professional women. The photographic collage technique cuts around the edges of geographically disparate female figures, causing them to blend and overlap, with the effect of synthesising and essentialising the female labourer (Fig. 19).[333] The artistic editors exercise control over the construction of a new narrative using the creations of diverse photographers. The female subjects appear not as themselves but, indeed, as the "veterans" of work, as idealised forerunners of professional women without any relation to the phenomenon which they purportedly illustrate. The visuals pay tribute to a romantic and middle-class liberal idea of work as edifying and contributory, hermeneutically related to and deployed by contemporaries in conjunction with German conceptions of *Kultur* as a productive pursuit.

Brehmer-Gaffron's comments about clothing are, finally, revealing.

"[E]ven today people bizarrely assume that studying is actually only for ugly women and that studies in themselves uglify and masculinise women. There is certainly something to it. Our educated women in Germany usually do not exactly impress with their charm, and since they had little to expect from themselves in way of attractiveness anyway, they have not tried to enhance it, but have sought to become as similar as possible to

[332] Georg Simmel, "Female Culture," in *Georg Simmel: On Women, Sexuality, and Love*, trans. and intr. Guy Oakes (New Haven, 1984), 65–101.
[333] Other groups of women, including ethnic women and royals, are subjected to a similar treatment in the N. Israel albums; see the discussion in Palmén, "Modern Confections."

their male colleagues in dress and appearance. Fortunately, we have already moved past this transition period of the 'masculine woman,' and it has long been recognized that the diminished attractiveness of women is in no way a consequence of the work, but rather merely a consequence of the conditions under which the work is done. [...] Work will no longer blur gender traits in women, it will transfigure her beauty and 'surround the woman's head like a halo.'"

Brehmer-Gaffron addresses a key argument made by opponents of women's rights, namely that the inclusion of women into public life will lead to the masculinisation of women. As one of the major developments prompting changes in women's attire, women's increasing professionalisation and salaried work was a central source of tension. Brehmer-Gaffron's response rests on the assumption, shared with those to whom she is responding, that women's beauty and physical attractiveness, as innate feminine gender traits, should be preserved in accordance with common attitudes among the German upper classes. The *Mannweib* or "shemale" is an unfortunate aberration, she asserts, resulting from work environments that do not accommodate women and femininity. The professional New Woman in her more evolved – and therefore more attractive – expression, Brehmer-Gaffron suggests, is, on the other hand, evidence for the legitimacy of the women's cause.

There may be a generational element to Brehmer-Gaffron's stance; similar views, however, were not uncommon among middle-class feminists of younger age groups. While consumer culture was criticised for its materialism and exclusion of women from leading professional positions,[334] members of the women's movement were clear about one thing: they were not asking women to be like men. The *Reformkleid*, the German liberty dress, gained modest popularity in progressive circles, whereas trousers were mainly worn by the fictional New Woman. "Indeed, through the period the most militant champions of women's rights deliberately embraced modishness as a means of providing a living retort to the labels hung upon them by hostile witnesses," argue Joel H. Kaplan and Sheila Stowell.[335] This was in reference to the United Kingdom, home of the notorious

[334] For e.g., Vilma Carthaus, "Frauenkleidung," *Die Frau* 1/21 (October 1913): 10–11.
[335] Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre and Fashion*, 153.

suffragettes and their bifurcated "bloomers." The moderate Wilhelmine movement was all the keener to live out precisely the philosophy expressed in the N. Israel essay: to embrace their femininity as a step toward silencing opponents and reaching their goals.

It should be noted in this context that N. Israel seemed relatively unconcerned with the issue of dress reform, in spite of its publicity potential as a shared interest with the *Deutscher Werkbund.* "Hygienic" dress – one of the areas of dress reform– is addressed in an essay in the 1912 album, while a photographic portrait of designer, leading dress reform advocate, and *Werkbund* member Anna Muthesius (1879–1961), pictured in a self-made dress creation, illustrates an essay in 1913 (Fig. 22), which, alas, does not offer further details about Muthesius' artistic career.[336] Another album essayist in 1913 notes how the "[t]he dress of Hellenic women breathes the grace, beauty and joy of that time and the spirit of its freedom [...]"[337]; yet the number of occasions that N. Israel associates dress reform with women's emancipation are few and mostly subtle. Brehmer-Gaffron's overview of women's professional achievements conspicuously overlooks women in the applied arts, as does the essay about the visual arts in the same volume. This omission is noteworthy, especially given the demonstrated interest of N. Israel in both the currents of modernism and the women's cause. It may be that the firm saw its brand as more strongly associated with other ideas than those of the *Werkbund*.

We need also to consider, however, the tension that perpetually characterised the relationship between design reform and consumer businesses; enterprises such as N. Israel relied on volume while the *Werkbund* principally opposed mass production, promoting instead the elite ideal of clothing production through artistic tailoring. N. Israel was a quintessential consumer company; "a temple dedicated to the service of beauty," according to chronicler von Zedlitz, which endeavoured to make beauty accessible to every woman through products in different price ranges. The company's

[336] Alice Altmann, "Hygiene der Kleidung," in N. Israel, *Hygiene im Wandel.* Muthesius photograph is found in Karl von Höft, "Ihr Geist," in N. Israel, *Die Frau im Jahrhundert*.
[337] Erich Salten, "Ihr Wesen," in N. Israel, *Die Frau im Jahrhundert*.

shopping catalogues echo the fact that N. Israel stood for basic quality but not extravagance, which was also reflected in its relative lack of reformed clothing lines.[338] It is easy to imagine why an endorsement of the women's cause as coupled with more generic ideas about beauty, as presented by Brehmer-Gaffron, would be a better fit for a firm like N. Israel. Not only would it resonate with many progressive German women – probably even more so than ideas about dress reform – but it would reinforce the notion that N. Israel, in its "service of beauty," was an ally of the New Woman. The truly liberated woman, per Brehmer-Gaffron's portrayal, would no longer *need* to be mannish but would fully embrace her femininity in everything that this entailed for bourgeois Germans, including, in this case, rejecting "ugliness" as inherently unfeminine. Meanwhile, as far as consumer businesses were concerned, the marriage between commerce and the women's cause was only possible if women continued to consume – rather than, as per Anna Muthesius' example, designing and sewing their own garments.

It is, nevertheless, noteworthy that the N. Israel series does not resonate more strongly with Brehmer-Gaffron's suggestions. Taken as a whole, the album illustrations far from reinforce conventional ideas about women's beauty and fashionability, depicting an array of women's attire. Some images press into particularly controversial territory with portraits of famous women with cropped hair, a handful dressed in gender-bending outfits. The examples from the world of theatre are striking; a photograph of sculptor Gertrude Whitney (denoted "Mrs. Henry Paine-Whitney") performing the role of the Judean princess Herodias dressed as a sultan in a feathered turban, pictured in the album

[338] Other Berlin stores such as Gerson and Wertheim designed their own reformed wear for women. Wertheim was also the only Berlin retailer to sell creations from Liberty & Co., London, a leading international supplier of "artistic" and reformed gowns for women. N. Israel had specialised knowledge in one area considered central to the area of female dress reform: undergarments. Parallel to the feminisation of the album series, the company engaged increasingly with consumer markets interested in reformed underwear: already in 1905, the store's summer catalogue featured "reformed" jersey and dark cloth bloomers and a reformed corset "Johanna," made from fabric and straps. By the Christmas of 1912, the company offered over a dozen options for reformed pinafores, five different reformed corsets, and displayed sports jackets for women on its front cover. The evolution is most striking in the department for swimwear: in 1905, the "reformed" women's bathing suit in an empire cut exists as one among numerous options. By 1912, all ladies' swimwear is much simplified, with several styles including visible knee-length trousers. N. Israel thus sold reformed fashion before it became mainstream in select areas of German women's wardrobe, but it did not market itself as a specialist in catering to less conventional fashion tastes. On Wertheim and Gerson, see Kessemeier, *Ein Feentempel*, 52; "Liberty Abteilung," in *Wertheim album*, 13; on N. Israel, see *N. Israel Hauptkatalog* (Summer 1905), JMB; *N. Israel Weihnachts-Katalog* (1912), JMB.

from 1910, is especially compelling.[339] More surprising additions include examples of female dandyism in the photographic portraits of Russian author Zinaida Gippius (spelled Sinaida Hyppius in the album, Fig. 22) and Dutch translator Elisabeth Otten (named Else in the album), both subjects dressed in androgynous outfits.[340] Neither receive a comment beyond their captions. Yet their mere presence in the exhortative woman albums, as representatives of their sex active in their respective professional fields, without expressions of disapproval over their idiosyncratic appearances, is as unexpected as it is intriguing.

When seen, therefore, in the larger context of the N. Israel series, Brehmer-Gaffron's article highlights the distinct contribution of the company. The author's apologetics for the professional woman target specific fears about the women's movement that related to the blurring of the sexes, understood through the performative function of dress. Her fixation on de-coupling feminism from the image of the *Mannweib* follows the conventions of early twentieth-century European feminisms and their desire to operate as far as possible within the confines of normative culture. The N. Israel series, as a whole, echoes Brehmer-Gaffron's sentiment of beauty as an essential female trait by celebrating a plethora of contemporary beauty icons. Yet contrasting these elements, the woman albums also branch into realms of the strange and unfamiliar in their desire to attract the reader's curiosity and celebrate society's progress. Brehmer-Gaffron makes a radical case for women's role in professional life; N. Israel produces more fluid definitions of femininity and womanhood still, even compared to feminists such as Brehmer-Gaffron. In more ways than one, the N. Israel album portrayals constitute exotic dream scenarios that allow the customers of the department store to imagine a future beyond gendered conventions of Wilhelmine society – even as N. Israel remained cautious about manifesting these dreams in its store inventory.

[339] Elly von Brelin, "Die Frau und die Gesellschaft," in N. Israel, *Die Frau und Ihre Welt.*
[340] Höft, "Ihr Geist," in N. Israel, *Die Frau im Jahrhundert*; Fritz von Skowronneck, "Die Frau in die Litteratur," in N. Israel, *Die Frau und Ihre Welt.*

III. Gustav Langenberg, "Ihre Schönheit" (1913)

The final sample essay, "Her Beauty," is found in the 1913 album *Die Frau im Jahrhundert der Energie 1813–1913*. This volume exhibits N. Israel's continuing interest in women's affairs, but its tone is different to the earlier, fully woman-centered album for 1910; this time around, as mentioned, almost all authors are male. The selected text forms part of a wider survey of the past century based on woman's various traits (her beauty, her intellect, her strength etc.) and the evolution of these traits as the modern woman is formed, emerging triumphant by 1913. The essayist Gustav Langenberg – who may or may not be the internationally famous French/British/American painter Gustave Langenberg (1859–1915) with a Germanicised name, possibly to emphasise his German birth – explores female beauty as the "creative force of [...] life," beginning in 1813 with the women in the life of Napoleon Bonaparte and culminating in the culturally and professionally productive women of the early twentieth century.[341]

The piece begins by equating beauty with power, suggesting how prominent women like Josephine Bonaparte influenced world events through their charms over the past century; without female beauty, Langenberg contends, "the world would be without a history"; there would be no art, no literature, and no acts of heroism.[342] His train of thought follows that of several other authors in the 1913 album, who, with a noticeably different emphasis compared to the album for 1910, frequently see women's "power" as found in women's relation to men – that is, in their beauty as a force affecting male agency. Leo Heller's essay "Her Power," found in the same volume, conceptualises this tendency as "Cherchez la femme," the French literary trope of "look for the woman," as a key to understanding the path of history.[343] Woman, these authors suggest, is innately equipped to "handle a man."[344] While not following this reasoning through to its most extreme conclusion, the

[341] Gustav Langenberg, "Ihre Schönheit," in N. Israel, *Die Frau im Jahrhundert.*
[342] Ibid.
[343] Leo Heller, "Ihre Macht," in N. Israel, *Die Frau im Jahrhundert der Energie*.
[344] Ibid.

album suggests, then, that the "femme fatale" or "honey trap," who manipulates men through seduction, is a natural development of the "female" essence.

Like the rest of the album, Langenberg's essay is deeply committed to demonstrating what makes women different from men as a basis for celebrating femininity – even if, as shown above, the text assigns women undue influence in some areas and can therefore be seen as taking on misogynistic undertones. In its occupation with gender difference, the essay is far more concerned with protecting bourgeois culture than, for instance, the 1910 woman album. It views women's "duty to beauty"[345] as an essential part of keeping the female sex distinct from the male sex, and therefore maintaining basic building blocks of bourgeois civility. The sexes are viewed as separate yet interdependent, reinforcing the sexual division of ideal bourgeois society and the complementary roles of men and women. Yet in celebrating women's influence and "power," the album is also distinctly uninterested in the realities of women's disempowerment – Brehmer's introductory essay even denounces the working-class women of the French revolution as bloodthirsty "furies of hate."[346] Langenberg and most of his co-authors are proponents of the values of societal elites with their gendered and classist perspectives.

What is surprising, then, is the passionate and peculiar defence of women's emancipation with which Langenberg proceeds:

"With the further development of our culture and with women's struggles for freedom – which will earn them the freedom for which they strive alongside men – it is [...] nonsense to speak of the débacle of beauty, as is so often the case now. Work ennobles. And when woman conquers the field of intellectual and political work, her beauty will undergo a spiritualisation that will only serve her to her advantage. The alarm call that beauty will suffer and perish as a result should no longer daunt us. The doll-like sweetheart will doubtless disappear. [...H]owever, woman's beauty will always gain more from character. The beauty of our women will experience

[345] Langenberg, "Ihre Schönheit."
[346] Brehmer, "Der Weg der Frau."

the consolidation as will Woman herself through her increased knowledge and increased will and increased ability. The *Mannweib* type that wanted to exert its influence among women's rights activists is by no means the type of the future. On the contrary, it is the type of a very short, passing time, [...] and already today among the campaigners for women's justice and women's rights we see women whose beauty captivates us as much as their spirit, their energy, and their womanliness."[347]

The reader will find resonances with the previous sample essay by Brehmer-Gaffron, who foresaw a future in which "[w]ork [...would] no longer blur gender traits."[348] The time of the manly woman has passed, readers are reassured, and Wilhelmine Germans can confidently march towards liberal modernity, knowing that women will emerge from it more beautiful than ever. The progress of *Kultur*, Langenberg and Brehmer-Gaffron both suggest, is manifested in women's growing engagement in public life, especially, as Langenberg sees it, in the realms of politics and intellectual thought. Having progressed from the premise of beauty as women's seductive power, Langenberg concludes with an unforeseen beauty ideal: the educated, productive and, above all, *free* woman. By referring to "women's struggles for freedom" he adds to his argumentation the images of captivity vs. liberation, echoing other contributions to the 1913 album, which use the same allegory to characterise women's emancipation. The cause to further women's rights becomes a noble and restorative pursuit rather than the distortion of a "natural" state. Women's beauty is consequently "spiritualised;" it transforms, according to Langenberg, from a sweet but simple "Gretchen type" beauty into something greater than – but probably still correlating with – conventional physical attractiveness.

Similar to that of Brehmer-Gaffron, Langenberg's liberalism holds on to certain values of bourgeois culture while discarding others. Female domesticity is seen as disconnected from the "modern" – or, to borrow from Erich Salten in the same album, as a state which produces "shrivelled and sickly souls, hindering [women's] development"[349]– while female beauty is shining ever brighter in

[347] Langenberg, "Ihre Schönheit."
[348] Von Gaffron–Oberstradam, "Die Frau im Beruf."
[349] Salten, "Ihr Wesen."

modernity. Conveniently for N. Israel, these portrayals of the women's cause, which corresponded with the understanding of many bourgeois feminists, were also inherently compatible with the further development of consumer culture. The suggestion that women can take steps to enhance their physical attractiveness was and is one of the basic premises of modern marketing to female audiences. While Langenberg and others frame this idea in cultural and spiritual terms, the implication is still that beauty can be conjured through intentional actions; in her 1910 essay, Cavalieri takes a literal approach, assisting readers in this journey to empowerment through practical pointers such as a recipe for a facial tonic which she attributes to the Empress Elisabeth of Austria-Hungary.[350] Langenberg, meanwhile, presents American women among his leading, modern beauty types, "proud, self-assured, confident [...] who can only develop so freely in a free land."[351] His choice to promote America as an ideal setting – paralleled in Cavalieri's piece – is striking, not least due to widespread German antipathy toward American culture and its perceived influence through the commercialisation of German public life.[352]

In the context of department stores and their perceived role in promoting materialism, contributions such as Langenberg and Brehmer-Gaffron's appear almost self-reflective on the part of N. Israel. They place inner refinement or *Bildung* as the highest goal, achieved in this case not through learning but through work. Not only do they suggest productivity as a core value for a consumer company – otherwise deemed by critics as belonging to the "unproductive" part of the economy – they refract this idea through the evolving modern woman, simultaneously courting female audiences and seeking to advance the ideology of bourgeois self-improvement as a solution for women's emancipation. While not necessarily penned by Jewish authors, these essays mirror the beliefs of many Jews in the power of education, hard work, and cultural pursuits as paths to equality and societal acceptance. The universal relevance of *Kultur* as a transformative force finds here a different

[350] Cavalieri, "Die Schönheit."
[351] Langenberg, "Ihre Schönheit."
[352] If the author was indeed the painter Gustave C. Langenberg, this perspective would be explained by the fact that the artist spent significant time in the United States during the final years of his life, during which the 1913 N. Israel album was also produced.

application in women's struggles to become better and freer versions of themselves. As a self-proclaimed female haven, N. Israel implicitly takes on the role of patron of the women's cause, in educating, encouraging, and equipping women, both intellectually and practically, on their path to citizenship. The focus of the reader is drawn away from consumption and its negative connotations to consider modernity, in all its expressions, as positive.

Because the essays connect inner virtues with external appearances, they also resonate with contemporary discourses surrounding luxury and their gendered dimensions. "[I]f discussions of luxury expressed deep misgivings about social change," explains Warren G. Breckman, "the Wilhelmine response was not simply a retreat from 'reality' into antimodernism."[353] Wilhelmine commentators sought rather to "discipline" the phenomenon of consumption,[354] which often meant policing women's behaviour and physical appearance. Langenberg and Brehmer-Gaffron neither concern themselves with the question of luxury nor do they suggest ostentatiousness in dress as the problem or its avoidance as a solution. They do, nonetheless, imagine dress as a central aspect of women's engagement with public life, with potential to turn public opinion either toward or against the women's cause. In either case, women are encouraged to exercise control over their stylistic choices so as not to appear offensive or distasteful to Wilhelmine culture, thus attracting unwanted attention to middle-class women's efforts to progress in society.

These themes, meanwhile, tie into questions about Jewish visibility, particularly as discussions about Jewish visibility were linked to gender.[355] Antisemites from the nineteenth through to the twentieth century portrayed Jewish women as prone to ostentatious displays of wealth through jewellery and fashion.[356] In Weimar Germany, notes Kerry Wallach, women "became prime targets of inner-Jewish accusations and were charged with various forms of excess or accused of disloyalty whenever their

[353] Warren G. Breckman, "Disciplining Consumption: The Debate about Luxury in Wilhelmine Germany 1890–1914," *Journal of Social History* 24, no. 3 (1991): 486.
[354] Ibid.
[355] Wallach, *Passing Illusions.*
[356] Ibid., 103–5.

fashion choices reflected objectionable stereotypes."[357] On the most basic level, these accusations were not always or explicitly about the issue of Jewish wealth, although they often promoted modesty for women for this reason. They connected, rather, to broader concerns about promoting acculturation and the misguided belief that antisemitism could be bridled through the distancing of oneself from negative stereotypes.[358] So widespread were these convictions among German Jews that even early twentieth century Jewish feminists cautioned Jewish women to avoid extravagant attire, thus perpetuating the very images they sought to reverse.[359] While trying to dissuade women from attracting negative attention, Weimar Jewish men and women championed, as Wallach has shown, much like the N. Israel albums, the cultivation of "true refinement" and "inner wealth."[360]

A related issue was the prominence of Jewish women among the minority of Wilhelmine women leading what we might call "New Woman lifestyles." Jewish women were overrepresented among female creatives and professionals, especially among the university educated, and "Jewish women were at the forefront of modern urban life in their 'traditional' [i.e. commercial and administrative] jobs, leading the way into careers that were later considered the prototypes of 'new' female occupations."[361] As predominantly urban and educated, Jewish women formed a visible part of modernist and bohemian movements, with some, including famous examples like Berlin-Jewish poet Else Lasker-Schüler, embracing lifestyles that would have been considered counter-cultural in a traditional bourgeois context.[362] Finally, there were many Jewish women among the leaders of the

[357] Ibid., 103.
[358] Ibid., 102–10.
[359] Marion Kaplan, "Sisterhood under Siege," in *When Biology Became Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany*, ed. Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossmann, and Marion Kaplan (New York, 1984), 190–1.
[360] Wallach, *Passing Illusions*, 106–9.
[361] Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 160. On Jewish university women, see Harriet Pass Freidenreich, "How Central European Jewish Women Confronted Modernity," in *Women and Judaism: New Insights and Scholarship*, ed. Frederick E. Greenspahn (New York, 2009), 131–52; Harriet Pass Freidenreich, "Gender, Identity, and Community: Jewish University Women in Germany and Austria," in *In search of Jewish Community*, ed. Michael Brenner and Derek J. Penslar (Bloomington, 1998), 154–5; Harriet Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish, and Educated: The Lives of Central European University Women* (Bloomington, 2002).
[362] On Lasker-Schüler, see Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien, "'Ich War Verkleidet Als Poet... Ich Bin Poetin!!' The Masquerade of Gender in Else Lasker-Schüler's Work," in *The German Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (1992): 1–17; Bertschik, *Mode und Moderne*, 119–23.

nineteenth and early twentieth century German women's movement.[363] In some circles, at least after the First World War, the New Woman was claimed or connoted as Jewish or as a Jewish invention[364] – even though the vast majority of Jewish women continued to marry and have children, and relatively few worked for pay.

The self-presentation of the New Woman was, as such, relevant not only for the success of the women's movement, as Langenberg and Brehmer-Gaffron implied, but an issue of potential Jewish interest. Antisemitism and antifeminism were frequent bedfellows, making publicly active Jewish women especially vulnerable to hostile attacks, even within the relative safety of Wilhelmine society. Moreover, the apparent "masculinisation" of Jewish women may have appeared to complement the contentions of some central European anthropologists, cultural critics, and psychoanalysts who equated (male) Jewishness with effeminacy, feeding antisemitic stereotypes well into the twentieth century.[365] The N. Israel albums offered an inconspicuous way to address Jewish audiences in a way that was as impactful if not more so than if the suggestions had come through standard Jewish communal channels, while simultaneously serving the cause of fashion. And yet the company used this influence in surprising ways; not to encourage conformity with conventional (bourgeois) gendered behaviours, but to suggest, rather, that a specific (in this case, more restrained) external appearance could function as a license to contravene social conventions. Which is, perhaps, precisely what we should expect from a company specialised in consumer commodities.

Moving into the visual realm of Langenberg's essay, we are shown what seem to be examples of the evolving female self, ranging from the beautiful Josephine Bonaparte to the striking Japanese poet

[363] Irmgard Maya Fassmann claims that as many as a third of the leaders of the Imperial German women's movement (she counts 60 in total) would have been "of Jewish descent," excluding the leaders of the JFB. Irmgard Maya Fassmann, *Jüdinnen in der deutschen Frauenbewegung 1865-1919* (Hildesheim, 1996), 13–4.
[364] Buerkle, "Gendered Spectatorship," 630–1; Guenther, *Nazi Chic?* 83–5; Makela, "Flapper Dress," 200–1.
[365] On perceptions of Jews and masculinity see Benjamin Maria Baader, Sharon Gillerman and Paul Lerner, eds., *Jewish Masculinities: German Jews, Gender, and History* (Bloomington, 2012); Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct*; Otto Weiniger, *Sex and Character* (New York, 1906 [1903]); Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus, "Introduction: Some Methodological Anxieties," in *Modernity, Culture, and 'the Jew,'*" ed. Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus (Cambridge, 1998), 3–6; Ritchie Robertson, "Historicizing Weiniger," in ibid., 23–39; Sander L. Gilman, *Freud, Race, and Gender* (Princeton, 1993), 12–92; Wallach, *Passing Illusions*, 36–7.

Yosutoga (Fig. 25), an embodiment of Langenberg's cultivated modern woman. Our first encounters include reproductions of painted royal portraits, arranged in circular series, and fine art pieces cropped around their contours, organically enveloped by the shape of the text. Virtually all royal subjects are French, and representations of Josephine Bonaparte dominate; the eye-catching first page pictures the French Empress at the "*Kaufhaus"* in Rouen with her entourage, nonchalantly gazing away while a merchant, desperate for her attention, produces various fabrics for her approval (Fig. 23). Of all the possible illustrations the editors could have chosen, this picture references in an interesting way the power of the female consumer and the historical service of department stores in fashioning beautiful women in modernity. From the very onset, then, this essay connects consumer culture with the New Woman through a creative use of classical iconography, using Bonaparte as a prototype of a new type of woman.[366]

From further artworks showing French royals and major life events of the Bonaparte household, the pictorial companions to Langenberg's commentary shift mid-way to "modern beauty types," depicted through the medium of photography. The women pictured form an international array, each named or unnamed character labelled crudely (but not incongruously with contemporary culture) an ethnic beauty "type." European women in entertainment dominate and the French component is conspicuous. Centre stage on top of a page we find the captivating Mistinguette (1873–1956), France's best-selling belle of entertainment (Fig. 24). Three "Parisian beauties" command the lower half of the page in an exquisite *intérieur*, complete with an oriental carpet and an antique-style wooden desk mounted with what appear to be electrified candelabras. A woman standing and wearing a sumptuous, embellished overcoat and plumed headdress forms the focal point. Icons of a new kind, these modern women of the bourgeois cultural scene exhibit a level of taste and

[366] A focus on the Napoleonic era runs through the 1913 volume and can be understood both as an idealisation of post-revolutionary times, which brought human rights in general, and more specifically Jewish civil rights, and in light of the revival of Napoleonic aesthetics in the Wilhelmine period. Empire and Biedermeier furniture was commonplace in Wilhelmine bourgeois households, while the high-waisted "Empire" silhouette was making a comeback in womenswear. The N. Israel album for 1913 thus united Wilhelmine women with members of their sex from a century prior through the cyclical tendencies of fashion.

sophistication previously an aristocratic prerogative. These female celebrities symbolise the democratisation of luxury with rising standards of living and, in the context of a department store album, its availability to the masses at modern retail stores. Simultaneously they have entered public awareness through their professional and artistic accomplishments as performers – a point which the author Langenberg elucidates in his text.

The editors at N. Israel have in this instance followed the script more closely than on some other occasions; the essay's women from different countries appear as "yardsticks of [a nation's] cultivation," based, according to Langenberg, on the level of their physical attractiveness.[367] N. Israel has taken the liberty, however, to choose which women should be considered "beauty types," from their physical characteristics to fashion choices. The images include women with different hair colours and skin complexions, and even a few non-white women, including one from Ceylon (Sri Lanka) (Fig. 25), a country not mentioned in the text. These pictures indicate how N. Israel was in a position to influence both gendered behaviour and contemporary beauty ideals through its albums and, in combination with Langenberg's conception of beauty, to suggest how the beauty and fashion industries were partners with the traditional arts in Germany's progression toward new levels of *Kultur*.

To bring together the three sample essays and their respective albums, there are clear differences but also similarities in how they reflect on the N. Israel company. Brehmer-Gaffron's contribution diverges from the majority of album pieces written by *female* authors in its explicit feminist-inflected rhetoric; many women authors were either assigned topics that did not easily lend themselves to this or the essayists chose to remain in less controversial territory. Langenberg and Kappstein's radical exposés, meanwhile, exemplify the importance of male support for the success of the women's movement, while also signifying how bourgeois male privilege came with freedoms to express oneself in public that women were not in the same way able to enjoy socially or culturally. Shared

[367] Langenberg, "Ihre Schönheit."

by all three essays is their simultaneous treatment of women as active subjects and objects of desire, through a combination of image and text. The albums produce modern, aspirational female "types" that are both productive and beautiful, but in the process they essentialise the female gender, subjecting the images of women of diverse backgrounds to the albums' guiding, bourgeois and western worldview.

Integrated and "exotic" Jewish Women

Among the women featured in the N. Israel albums, a handful are Jewish. These photographic portrayals of Jewish women exhibit two main tendencies: they either exoticise "oriental" Jewish women or celebrate European New Women of Jewish descent.[368] In the former case, three separate images all appear to be referenced by the single heading "Tunisian Jewess," an ethnographical descriptor in an essay discussing and illustrating "Die Frauen der verschiedenen Völker" ("Women of the World") in the 1910 album *Die Frau und Ihre Welt* (Fig. 26). In the latter case, a number of Jewish women, including Alice Salomon and Dorothy Levitt [b. Levi] (1882–1922) (Fig. 21) appear among modern female pioneers in public life, in areas such as activism, literature, painting, and competitive car racing (see image of Levitt). European or western Jewish women form a relatively small proportion of the vast range of women portrayed in the series. The women selected to illustrate "new womanhood" tend to be thoroughly acculturated and, importantly, they are never referred to as "Jewish."

The two contrasting approaches to female Jewish visual subjects have called for an in-depth visual analysis, published in a separate paper. I argue that, in having been curated and sometimes modified and merged together as a new creation, the images serve agendas besides their original function. Two of the "Tunisian Jewess[es]" are shown through full-body portraiture, in traditional clothing

[368] The word "oriental" does not occur in the essay but is based on my interpretation concerning the apparent function of the images. In being placed as part of an ensemble together with veiled Muslim and Moor women, while other pages combine images of women of native peoples vis à vis women of the far east, "Tunisian Jewess" becomes an illustration of the more general type of the "oriental" woman.

typical for North African Jewish women in the nineteenth century, including trousers and conical headdress (Fig. 26). These pictures were among many ethnic "type" images deposited at European image agencies and circulated in the form of souvenirs and postcards – the photographic subjects and the clothing they wore appear often to have been chosen not because they were representative of Jewish women from a particular region but for their intrigue and appeal to western observers.[369] Already tendentious in their original form, graphic designers at *Kaufhaus* N. Israel have "connoted" the images further through merging them with other photographic illustrations as part of a series of collages, the purpose of which seems to be to showcase the beauty and diversity of women around the world.

The fact that there are three separate images of Jewish women among a number of ethnicities, typically represented by single images, may suggest N. Israel had greater access to "Jewish" as opposed to other "ethnic" materials. Non-European Jews as subjects may have been of special interest to photographers or image agencies, Jewish or non-Jewish, due to their real or imagined connections with European Jews. The inclusion of "Jewish" images in this very circumscribed context may also have sought to appeal to the customers of N. Israel, many of whom were Jewish. Like other members of the middle classes, Imperial German Jews engaged eagerly in travel for leisure, an activity of growing importance for western bourgeois culture and for consumer markets in tourism and travel commodities. European colonialism expanded the possibilities for Jewish "heritage tourism," with encounters with Jews in traditional societies or their photographic portraits evoking nostalgia for ways of Jewish life lost in western society.[370] The Israels were passionate about travelling; Berthold prepared for his marriage to Amy Solomon with a voyage around the world, while his son Wilfrid made multiple extensive trips, including two to Palestine.[371] The image of the Middle-Eastern Jew further resonated with Zionist ideas about "muscle Jews," the strong and agile

[369] Palmén, "Modern Confections," 663–74.
[370] On German-Jewish travel cultures (with focus on the United States) see Nils Roemer, "Mapping Modernity: Jews and Other German Travelers," in *Crossing the Atlantic: Travel and Travel Writing in Modern Times*, ed. Thomas Adam and Nils H. Roemer (Arlington, 2011), 131–48.
[371] Reissner, "Kaufhaus N. Israel," 239, 245.

imagined counterparts to European Jews, who embraced the primal connection of Jews to the earth.[372]

The treatment of European Jewish women compared to "ethnic" Jewish women vastly differs in the N. Israel albums, even if the former too become "pawns in a new landscape constructed by the graphic designer."[373] The labelling is crucial; usually it is done by first and family or married names, and never with religious or ethnic identification. One of the portraits of social worker and feminist Alice Salomon, appearing in Kappstein's essay about Ellen Key (Fig. 15), is discussed at length in my published analysis.[374] Like the other images, she represents not herself but the "Frauenrechtlerin"– a cultural, rather than an ethnic "type" – and, in the wider context of the essay illustrations, a quintessential New Woman. Salomon's studio portrait can with some certainty be traced to Munich's feminist Atelier Elvira.[375] While some "new women" featured in the albums are shown in full figure, revealing their physical prowess in action or interesting dress choices, Salomon appears in 1909 in facial crop, in a style of photographing intended for private or professional use and uninterested in documenting the subject's – in this case notably unremarkable – sartorial choices. The picture of Salomon and those of a small cohort of coreligionists demonstrate the presence of Jewish women in spearheading European modernisation. Simultaneously, the albums fully integrate their visual facsimiles, and therefore Jews by and large, into the European cultural landscape.

The rhetorical function of the "oriental" Jewess(es) is more subtle but no less significant. The essay to which it belongs sets non-western women as exemplary figures for European women, lambasting the apparently detrimental effects of European culture on the female physique and hence on the reproductive health of nations. Appealing to the readers' aesthetic sense and attraction to the exotic, the images depicting Tunisian Jews along with the other illustrations seem concurrently to give a

[372] See for e.g., Max Nordau, "Muskeljudentum," in *Reden und Schriften zum Zionismus*, ed. Karin Tebben (Berlin, 2018), 136–7.
[373] Palmén, "Modern Confections," 666.
[374] Ibid., 657–63.
[375] Ibid., 659 –60, 663. See page 77–6 of this dissertation.

face to the idealised, strong woman of traditional societies. Their "Jewish" (trousered) dress makes them particularly potent symbols of female athleticism to European audiences compared to many of the ethnographical pictures. Appearing in an essay introducing an entire album about women in modern European society, the Tunisian Jew serves as a traditional archetype for turn-of-the-century clothing styles that encourage female mobility and reject imposed definitions of the "feminine," indirectly showcased in the portraits of progressive female figures throughout the N. Israel series. I argue, borrowing from Marjorie Garber, that the trouser-clad "orientals" "form […] a 'phantom' presence arbitrating the tensions between bourgeois German society and liberal feminist notions of gender"[376] – no less noteworthy because the subjects in question are, in fact, identified as *Jewish*.

A final note must be made about the "oriental" Jewish woman and her commercial relevance. Her dress corresponded closely to trends in European *couture* precisely around 1910. Following the roaring success of *Ballet Russes*' performances in 1909 and 1910, with stage and costume designs displaying a vivid and visually exhilarating "oriental" scenery to European audiences, orientalism took the fashion world by storm with Frenchman Poiret at the helm (Fig. 27). Generally speaking, the N. Israel company focused on fulfilling everyday needs rather than on the luxuries of high fashion. True to Imperial German tastes, its womenswear tended to be relatively muted and far removed from the extravagant "harem pants" donned by the French and international elites. However, Amy Israel at least did not care much for German minimalism. Just as Wilhelmine Berliners were (in addition to her husband Berthold) apparently uninspired by Amy's extravagant boutique, they were likely unimpressed by her conspicuous habit of wearing trousers.[377]

Together, the "oriental" Jewish woman and European Jewish New Woman resonate with the corporate identities of Jewish-owned department stores like *Kaufhaus* N. Israel, as institutions characterised both by modern European culture and the enchanting "Orient."[378] N. Israel took great

[376] Ibid., 674; Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London, 1993), 316.
[377] Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 87, 44.
[378] As I note in an earlier publication (Palmén, "Berlin Jews," 113), the Jewish New Woman figures are not New *Jewish* Women, because they are not out as Jews in their given context as professionals and activists

pride in its eastward trade connections, describing how its emissaries made "painstaking and troublesome journeys" to bring the Orient to the heart of the German capital.[379] Interiors draped in luscious fabrics, potted palm trees, and intricate lamps hanging low like clusters of ripe fruit contributed to the exotic ambience in many of Berlin's commercial palaces. N. Israel used Moorish aesthetics in some of its marketing and, perhaps most strikingly, implied the store's connection to the Orient in its first album about the Kaiser and Kaiserin in Palestine. As early as 1899, then, N. Israel was styling itself as a mediator between these two worlds – a role effectively embodied in the "Tunisian Jewess" over a decade later.

Epilogue: The New Woman as the Store Incorporate

In its last hurrah before war, N. Israel devoted its publication for 1914 to *Work and Leisure*. The album's international and male-dominated cast of writers excavate themes such as "Man as a Work Machine," an anatomical dissection of the human body to demonstrate humanity's natural endowment for physical activity, and "Art as Occupation and Enjoyment," a configuration of artistic production as labour. Its romantic vision of a balanced lifestyle and the empowering potential of work is intrinsically bourgeois; the idealisation of labour, even its fetishization, was the distinct luxury of someone who could choose not to. "Work! Work! Glorious work, roaring through, disrupting, building the world!" chanted by one poet in the album, was hardly heard from the mouths of factory workers.[380] At the same time, the preoccupation with edifying labour was a final stopover

nor are they "outed" as Jews by N. Israel. Their behaviour, while unusual, does not constitute an explicit revision of their Jewish identities. See Wallach's discussion in *Passing Illusions*, 23. On the New Jewish Woman, see Freidenreich, "How Central European Jewish Women Confronted Modernity"; Harriet Pass Freidenreich, "Jewish Identity and the 'New Woman,'" in *Gender and Judaism: The Transformation of Tradition*, ed. Tamar M. Rudavsky (New York, 1995), 113–22, especially reference to "New Jewish superwoman," 120; Harriet Pass Freidenreich, "Die jüdische 'Neue Frau' des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts," in *Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte als Geschlechtergeschichte*, ed. Kirsten Heinsohn and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Göttingen, 2006); Claudia Prestel, "The 'New Jewish Woman' in Weimar Germany," in *Jüdisches Leben in der Weimarer Republik/Jews in the Weimar Republic*, ed. Wolfgang Benz, Arnold Paucker, and Peter Pulzer (Tübingen, 1998), 135–56; Atina Grossman, "Die Sexual-reform und die 'Neue Frau': Wie jüdisch waren sie?" in *Was war das deutsches Judentum? 1870–1933*, ed. Christina von Braun (Berlin, 2015), 264–74.

[379] Lorm, "Ein Gang."

[380] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Evoë labor!" in N. Israel, *Arbeit und Erholung*.

in the efforts of N. Israel to reconcile modern commercial business with German culture, a culture strongly influenced by Protestant ideas about simplicity and hard work. The department store emerges as a patron of work, and production and consumption as two "natural" components of life in a civilised society.

The illustrations, once again, elaborate on these ideas. The human powerhouse in action, turning the wheel of a milling machine in the shadow of smoking factory chimneys or ploughing the fields in the rural Schwarzwald, provides a final context in which the commercial company may be reconciled with German tradition. Photographic pictures of N. Israel staff in the segment "Das Hohelied der Arbeit" ("Song of Praise to Labour") shed any remaining ambiguity.[381] The "citadel of work," referenced by von Zedlitz thirteen years earlier, appears monumental among scenes of industrial toil (Fig. 28). All three images of N. Israel employees, from the store's departments for linen production and shipping correspondence, portray women. They recall von Zedlitz's observation that N. Israel, a beacon of productivity, has also become a "women's paradise," an institution where women can not only shop to their heart's desire but be professionally fulfilled and contribute to society. Across the page we find two depictions of archetypal "new women" – five female clerks, immersed in their work "In the Bank of Independent Women," and two women operating a telephone switchboard. The reader is led to assume that these, too, are scenes from *Kaufhaus* N. Israel – an entirely realistic assumption, given that the store had its own bank.

In this chapter, I have argued that the primary purpose of the N. Israel albums was to influence public impressions of the store. The albums exemplify the efforts of Wilhelmine department stores to market themselves as institutions of culture, a project which had particular saliency for Jewish businessmen due both to pressures from antisemitism and to the fact that, as Germans and successful business owners, many combined in their person liberal economic thinking with a love for German culture. For N. Israel, the situation gained urgency after 1905, when Berthold's brother Hermann

[381] B. Schidlof, "Das Hohelied der Arbeit," in ibid.

Israel, co-owner of the family company, became the target of a homophobic and probably antisemitic public campaign. A series of court cases barbarically probed the sexual orientation of the businessman – who was married to a woman – implying a proclivity on his part toward same-sex acts, which were illegal under Imperial German law. The affair threatened the future of the N. Israel company and ended in tragedy as Hermann committed suicide later that year.

The albums offered an avenue to re-instilling customer confidence in N. Israel and its owning family. The trope of the "women's paradise" provided a ready-made narrative to cast the department store as new kind of commercial and cultural phenomenon, which, given recent gains for the women's cause, Wilhelmine society now seemed more open to receiving. The proliferation of publications geared toward female readers provided ideas and proof of concept. The women's movement was at the height of its popularity and producing a flurry of printed pamphlets and feminist periodicals of its own. Innovations in the reproduction of photographic images supplied the technical means to create compelling designs from photographic portraits of female celebrities now widely available. Within a few years, images and descriptions of women and womanhood dominated the N. Israel series, while bourgeois and elite women took on prominent authorial roles. Although these combined tendencies peaked in 1910, subsequent albums continued to integrate women as central agents of modern life. In 1914, the "spirit" of the firm finally manifested in its photographically rendered female staff.

I have related the albums' portrayals of women to the rhetorical and visual construct of the New Woman. Most studies of this modern female type focus on the interwar period, when, as Gesa Kessemeier writes, she went from being a "utopian conception to a mass phenomenon."[382] The N. Israel New Woman operated not in the documentary realm but in the aspirational sphere, even if the albums seemed to suggest otherwise. She also lacked many of the characteristics which we typically associate with her kind from 1920s advertising, in that she did not become a "modern feminine

[382] Kessemeier, *Sportlich, sachlich, männlich*, 27.

[subject] through the purchase of cars, corsets, and cigarettes"– that is, through consumption.[383] The multi-faceted and sometimes contradictory images of the New Woman found in the N. Israel publications define the figure by her activity in public and professional life – as a producer rather than a consumer. It is her rejection of domesticity (portrayed by the albums as an unproductive state) that makes her a New Woman and an expression of female modernity, not her fashion or shopping tendencies. The context strongly suggests her affiliation with a consumer enterprise; yet this affiliation is with the institution of N. Israel not with specific merchandise.

In being closer in style to inspirational and political rhetoric than advertising, then, the N. Israel albums reflect in a compelling way the efforts of a commercial store to craft its public identity in Wilhelmine society. It is precisely the albums' general evasion of commercial themes – sometimes *ad absurdum* – that becomes their promotional essence in the Wilhelmine cultural context. Yet what this means in practice is that they simultaneously produce ideological discourses, the relevance of which go far beyond commodity culture. If interwar retailers implied that women could consume their way to freedom and use different products to fashion their public selves, the N. Israel albums encouraged women, much in line with Wilhelmine middle-class feminists, to take up the projects of personal and societal cultivation – suggesting, nevertheless, through context, that doing the latter was consistent with also doing the former. The N. Israel New Woman is a figure not only of commercial but of cultural and political relevance.

As part of the company's vision of modernity, women take on active and public roles. As explored above, the photographic illustrations in particular make for potent propaganda suggesting this shift is already taking place across Europe and the West. Moreover, by portraying women's movement into public and male-coded domains, the N. Israel albums construct an international community of "new women," making exceptional German women seem less isolated and erratic in their behaviour.

[383] The quote relates to research on interwar British and U.S editions of Vogue magazine. See Penny Tinkler and Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, "Feminine Modernity in Interwar Britain and North America: Corsets, Cars and Cigarettes," *Journal of Women's History* 20, no. 3 (2008): 113.

This effect is achieved at the expense of women's individuality and by glossing over differences not only of nationality but of race, class, and religion – of which many feminist activists were acutely aware. Yet no publication of the Wilhelmine women's movement exhibited such a keen understanding of or interest in the power of images to influence people's opinions, making the N. Israel albums an unusual (commercial) contribution to "feminist" literature of this period. The albums suggested the possibility of cross-national and inter-ethnic solidarity among women while gathering an international encyclopaedia of modern female role models. These images and narratives fed the imagination and sense of empowerment of an increasingly restless generation of young middle-class German women among a growing urban middle class.

Moreover, by connecting the image of the New Woman with the women's movement, the N. Israel albums remove any doubt about their political intentions. While the middle-class German feminists publicly distanced themselves from politics as a group – having been forced to do so until 1908, when women's party-political involvement was legalised – several of N. Israel's portrayals politicised the German women's cause, connecting it to the international suffrage movement. Many authors in the albums, further, idealise the women's movement not just as a movement of women doing philanthropic work but as a movement for gender equality, setting other more liberal and social democratic nations of the West, including Britain, the U.S., and the Nordics, as exemplary models where gender equality (and therefore culture) has progressed further than in Imperial Germany. The illustrations add to these political statements by incorporating Jewish women into their panoramic modern landscapes, thus promoting not only egalitarianism (understood here loosely) but also notions of ethnic pluralism.

The argument that "marketing practices have also helped the social and political position of women" is, as marketing researcher Pauline Maclaran points out, supported by historical facts.[384] Marketers like department stores have paid attention to women's wishes and wants when many parts of society

[384] Maclaran, "Marketing and feminism," 463.

have not, and some have placed their marketing powers at the disposal of the feminist cause.[385] The N. Israel albums, as we have seen, served subtly to brand the Berlin store but did not commodify the ideas they presented, unlike marketers in more developed consumer economies. They also did not form a mouthpiece for the women's movement, because known figures of the movement were most likely not involved in their production. The album presentations were utopian, dream-like, and sometimes disconnected from the views of German feminists; much like present-day advertising, they "sell" ideas and feelings, without, however, necessarily having a clear understanding of the ideologies they are presenting, but also without typically connecting these to physical goods. They market the N. Israel store explicitly only to a limited extent while marketing the women's movement and progressive feminine ideals up front. The albums exemplify how marketing can simultaneously serve multiple purposes, including the commercial and the political – especially as the non-commercial, in this case, takes precedence over overtly commercial contents.

Given N. Israel's manifold connections to the Jewish community, detailed earlier in this chapter, the readers of the company albums would probably have been disproportionately Jewish. The albums' ideas about women would have resonated with some bourgeois Jews while rubbing others the wrong way; the response among Jewish audiences may, therefore, have paralleled the response among the store's other German, mostly middle-class, customers. In eliciting different reactions, the albums would have cemented the store's following among certain groups while potentially alienating others; importantly, their approach to the women's movement was divisive and worked in some ways against the albums' efforts to increase the store's cultural currency in Wilhelmine society. This – together with the fact that no other contemporary Berlin store seems to have pursued a similar campaign – suggests that the stances on women represented in the albums reflected or at least aligned with the values of the Israels, rather than being a mere marketing ploy.

[385] Ibid., 463–64. See discussion in the thesis introduction.

We should finally entertain the possibility that some elements of the albums were, in fact, intended for Jewish audiences. As observed by Lisa Silverman, "Jews undertook fleeting acts and subtly understood practices […] to signal their Jewishness to a certain audience."[386] During the Wilhelmine era, over a decade before "coming out" as Jewish in public became more commonplace in Germany, it seems feasible that consumer companies would court Jewish customers in general forums only in the most inferential of ways. Yet it was possible to signal different things to different audiences. Indeed, as Wallach has noted, "[w]ith its explicitly Jewish sounding name, [... Kaufhaus N. Israel] achieved the effect of marketing to Jewish consumers simply by pairing its brand name with any image."[387] The albums' extensive coverage of the women's movement seems, in this context, especially striking, since N. Israel ostensibly identified Jewish feminists as a market for its company between the world wars.[388] With its optimistic and predominantly liberal view on the future, N. Israel seemed to be gearing up for what it believed was the next logical step in the development of society. Needless to say, the First World War disrupted these expectations – and with it, the album series was discontinued.

To conclude, the N. Israel albums envisioned a range of modern female trajectories, many of their portrayals offering progressive projections of female futures. Anachronistic and often controversial in the Wilhelmine cultural sphere, these visualised impressions built a public foundation for the company that would serve it well with the growth of German and German-Jewish consumer culture under the democratic Weimar regime. As far as the Wilhelmine women's movement was concerned, the feminist cause seemed to have gained an unsolicited yet powerful ally in a Jewish department store and its owners. Moreover, with its celebratory portrayals of modern women, N. Israel contributed to the range of print and communications media developing from the nineteenth century onwards. Such materials, argues Hyaeweol Choi, "helped create an 'imagined community' of women who inspired and were inspired by stories of women's struggle and agitation beyond domestic and

[386] Silverman, "Revealing Jews," 137.
[387] Wallach, "Kosher Seductions," 133.
[388] Ibid., 134.

national boundaries."[389] Finally, the albums proclaimed strategic common ground between the objectives of first-wave feminism and the commercial fashion industry, personified in the image of the New Woman.

[389] Hyaeweol Choi, "The Nineteenth Century," in *The Routledge Global History of Feminism*, ed. Bonnie G. Smith and Nova Robinson (London, 2022), eBook, 105.

CHAPTER 2:

Der Confectionair: The Trade Press, the Woman Question, and the Jewish Public Sphere

On 25 November 1909, an article titled "Der Deutsche Frauenbund" appeared centrally positioned among Berlin news in the German trade journal *Der Confectionair*.[390] A new women's league had been formed in February, the anonymous author explained, in response to the *Reichsvereinsgesetz* that now allowed Imperial German women (and men) above the age of 18 to pursue party memberships and political activism. The *Frauenbund* endeavoured to "educate women in all national questions, to create and sharpen their understanding for the heartbeat of the fatherland, for current events and their significance."[391] The target audience was all women, defined, however, as "women of all bourgeois [non-socialist] parties, *without distinction as to class, without distinction as to confession*."[392] Educational lectures were advertised alongside lengthy gatherings, where women could learn and inquire about politics and "express their opinions" over tea.[393]

The news was that the *Frauenbund* had enjoyed enormous success. A twice weekly lecture series on economics for women – "the first and only one of its kind" – was running until 6 December. The organisers had expected around 70 listeners. With 600 tickets subsequently sold, sales had ended "due to lack of space in the lecture hall."[394] "All these facts offer indisputable proof not only for the right of the 'Deutscher Frauenbund' to exist, but also of the political *Bildungshunger* of German women of all classes," the article noted approvingly.[395] The *Frauenbund,* the writer suggested, was performing an essential national service through its education of women. Furthermore, the league unified women across political orientations, class, and denomination. Apart from the league's name and address, the only highlighted text was the clause about class and religious neutrality – the religious inclusivity being the conspicuous element in this context due to the league's self-

[390] "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 24, no. 47 (25 November 1909).
[391] Ibid.
[392] Ibid. Emphasis in the original.
[393] Ibid.
[394] Ibid.
[395] Ibid.

proclaimed bourgeois liberal orientation. *Der Confectionair* was pleased subtly to suggest to its readers that Jewish as well as non-Jewish women were being trained in the skills of citizenship. Contact details and opening hours for the *Frauenbund* offices were included for those interested in memberships and further events.

Why did *Der Confectionair* bring the *Frauenbund* to the attention of its readers? Trade publications, noted economist Jakob Friedrich Meißner in 1910, were on the most basic level "written for a single area of human interest, for the circumscribed work allotted to a specific profession, a single branch of knowledge [...]."[396] It was not obvious that a journal catering primarily to professionals and businesses affiliated with *Konfektion* should report on the progress of the women's cause. Trade publications, maintained Meißner further, would "deal with current events only if and to the extent that they affect and advance [...the] circumstances" in the relevant field.[397] They were not daily newspapers but offered, rather, derivative accounts, with editors scanning the "general" press for information about recent events before curating and analysing it for the benefit of a more select audience. What was the goal in advertising the work of the *Frauenbund*? How did the league's activities relate to the day-to-day work of commercial clothiers and garment manufacturers, if at all?

This chapter focuses on the strikingly abundant reporting on the Woman Question in *Der Confectionair* around the year 1910.[398] Widespread across Europe and beyond, the debate on the Woman Question was at the peak of its intensity in Imperial Germany precisely during these years. It encompassed a plethora of themes including questions of motherhood, marriage, women's work, education, legal autonomy, reproductive rights and gender-specific cultural mission, with positions

[396] Jakob Friedrich Meißner, *Die volkwirtschaftliche Bedeutung der Fachpresse. Eine volkswirtschaftliche Untersuchung*. (PhD diss., University of Bern, 1910), 1.
[397] Ibid.
[398] My research covers the complete or nearly complete volumes for 1902, 1909–1914, 1916–18, 1925–6. In addition, I have made use of two anniversary publications by *Der Confectionair* from 1911 and 1926 (with more specific citations further below), and the very first issue from 1886, which is reproduced in the former two.

underpinned by "competing myths"[399] about women's nature and ideal roles. *Der Confectionair* generally did not engage with such debates on a theoretical level. It did, however, publicise the activities of women's organisations in various ways and for various purposes. It also conveyed certain assumptions about women's traits and capabilities while promoting a number of educational initiatives. Some reports had obvious relevance to the clothing business; others, such as the case of the *Frauenbund*, no clear connection. Consistently, moreover, the Woman Question was not so much a question of "whether" in *Der Confectionair* but rather one of "how."

Der Confectionair is treated here as a reflection of and a mouthpiece for the Imperial German commercial clothing trade. The journal's pioneering nature, wide circulation, and professional connections to the industry made it the leading paper for clothiers. As an archive of the trade, *Der Confectionair* provides a unique albeit fractured window into the activities and ideological universe of a business community. Furthermore, with both the centre of *Konfektion* and the Leopold Schottlaender Verlag, the publisher of *Der Confectionair*, based in Berlin, the journal provides even greater access to the Berlin scene and its business elite. The chapter shows how *Der Confectionair* functioned as a platform for this predominantly Jewish group and how prominent businessmen were able to exert their influence on the industry through it. Meanwhile, *Der Confectionair* retained its independence as a commercial enterprise throughout the Imperial era, exercising editorial control over its contents and political orientation. The journal's woman-empowering content is positioned within these simultaneous endeavours of *Der Confectionair* to build a commercial business with its own identity and also to serve a professional (and "Jewish") field.

Nonetheless, even publications that claim to have a single focus or audience are rarely quite as exclusive or inclusive as that. As seen on a smaller scale in its advertising for the *Frauenbund*, *Der Confectionair* was not universal in its worldview but rather unmistakably middle-class. Without

[399] Elizabeth K. Helsinger, Robin Lauterbach Sheets and William Veeder, *The Woman Question: Society and Literature in Britain and America, 1837–1883*, vol. 1, *The Woman Question: Defining Voices, 1837–1883* (New York, 1983), xv.

making it explicit, the journal served class interests. At the same time, this default position included certain assumptions about gender and women, which *Der Confectionair* mediated to its readers through its tone and editorial choices. The chapter demonstrates how women employees and consumers centrally shaped the journal's contents. While belonging to the wider bourgeois press, *Der Confectionair* therefore helped not only to construct a public sphere for business but an unexpected women's public domain.

The chapter similarly characterises *Der Confectionair* as a Jewish space. "Not all spaces needed to be inherently or obviously Jewish (religiously or halakhically) in order to become Jewish spaces," argues Sarah Wobick-Segev in connection to Berlin-Jewish culture as it played out in places like cafés, restaurants, and hotels in the early twentieth century.[400] *Der Confectionair* was a literary forum, which like certain physical environments generated a sense of community between Jews while simultaneously furthering their integration into a shared community or culture. Just as individual Jewish newspapers and periodicals only catered to some Jews – and a particular café might only attract a specific crowd – *Der Confectionair*, too, catered to certain Jews. The case of *Der Confectionair* blurs the constructed boundaries between Jewish and general public spheres by showing that some publications that were open to general participation could at the same time serve Jewish interests and function as communal Jewish forums.[401] The chapter thus positions *Der Confectionair* and its journalism on the Woman Question at the intersection of professional, gendered, and ethnic/religious public spheres in printed media.

I begin with an examination of *Der Confectionair* and its connection to *Konfektion*. Three analogies illuminate this relationship: the *Sprechsaal* (forum), *Sprachrohr* (mouthpiece) and *Spiegelbild* (reflection). Drawing on these historical descriptions and using specific examples, I illustrate how the journal mediated not only between the commercial clothing trade and wider public but between a Jewish entrepreneurial niche and non-Jewish society, and among Jews in the fashion business. This

[400] Wobick-Segev, "German-Jewish Spatial Cultures," 39.
[401] See the discussion on pages 43–4 of this dissertation.

discussion is followed by an analysis of *Der Confectionair*'s approaches to the Woman Question, which highlights the publication's consistently supportive attitude to the middle-class women's cause. The chapter subsequently turns to the roles of women as readers and contributors – and, by extension, to the role of *Der Confectionair* in constructing women's public spheres. The chapter epilogue scrutinises the role of class, business, and ethnicity in defining the limits of the Woman Question as it was featured in *Der Confectionair*, seen through its reporting of female garment homeworkers.

Mirroring an Industry

In November 1926, the silent movie "Der Jüngling aus der Konfektion," ("The young man from Konfektion") began screening in Berlin. True to its genre, "Der Jüngling" was a humorous portrayal of life in the environs of *Hausvogteiplatz*. A work of "subtle art," wrote Artur Landsberger about the film in his review in *Der Confectionair*, referencing at once the film's high quality and fictional basis.[402] Berlin clothiers Manheimer and Michels were happy to overlook the caricaturesque tendencies of the genre for the sake of publicity, staging a fashion show at the movie premiere. A prologue by German-Jewish actor and poet Max Ehrlich, meanwhile, pointed viewers in a different direction with a rhyming monologue titled "'Der Konfektionär,' the mirror image of its field."[403] The trade journal provided a more documentary source of information, Ehrlich suggested, for those patient enough to look beyond the fast-paced clichés of *Konfektionsfilmen*.[404]

This idea of *Der Confectionair* as an extension of the German ready-made clothing industry – an unparalleled point of access to the inner workings of Berlin's quarters of *Konfektion* – permeated the journal's public image. Already in the Imperial period, *Der Confectionair* prided itself in being "the

[402] "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Konfektionär* 41, No. 93 (20 November 1926).
[403] The journal Germanised the spelling of its name to *Der Konfektionär* to align with the nationalistic mood during the first year of the First World War.
[404] Ehrlich's full prologue was reproduced in "Der 'Konfektionär – Leser hat das Wort!" *Der Konfektionär* 41, No. 102/103 (23 December 1926).

most widely circulated and read German journal of the textile industry" on the header of every issue. By the Weimar era, it could add to this description its dominance among textile trade journals on the European continent.[405] In 1911, *Der Confectionair* had thirty offices beyond Berlin, including in London, Lodz, Stockholm, Kobe (Japan), Alexandria (Egypt), New York, Moscow, Sydney, Rio de Janeiro, and, at one point, Swakopmund (German colonial Namibia).[406] From 1903, the journal included a regular export-themed edition to cater to international buyers from countries such as Britain, the US and Canada, who visited Berlin with great frequency; 3,000 copies of a special edition of "The German Dry Goods Journal" appeared in English. *Der Confectionair* sent delegations to world's fairs in the early twentieth century and produced a colourised publication to mark the 1900 international exhibition in Paris. It assumed a central role as a promoter of the interests of the Wilhelmine German garment trade, mediating business, and, in practice, representing *Konfektion* in the wider international arena.

Chief editor Benno Marcus' description of *Der Confectionair* as "mouthpiece [*Sprachrohr*] of the field" captures one of the journal's central, self-assumed purposes, namely to become the unrivalled messenger of an industry.[407] The German clothing and textile industries were the two vocational branches with the fewest trade journals per capita of workers in the industry, with one journal serving 17,782 tradesmen in the clothing trade and 22,260 tradesmen in textiles.[408] *Der Confectionair* was by far the most influential paper in this context, with subscribers numbering 15,000 in the mid 1920s. Thousands of copies were, furthermore, sent free of charge to European clothing businesses and department stores – a practice established with the very first issue in 1886 – with each copy passing through at least half a dozen hands within families and companies. By the interwar period, *Der*

[405] Erich Greiffenhagen, "40 Jahre 'Der Konfektionär': Der Werdegang der deutschen Textilzeitung," in Schottlaender, *Der Konfektionär 40*, 3.
[406] "Eigene Bureaux des 'Confectionair'" *Der Confectionair 25 – Gegründet 1886 – Jubiläumsnummer*. *Der Confectionair* 26, no. 3 (19 January 1911), ed. S. Karo (Berlin, 1911). Swakopmund appears in 1909 but is no longer featured in 1911.
[407] Benno Marcus, "40 Jahre textindustrielle Entwicklung Deutschlands," in Schottlaender, *Konfektionär 40*, 39.
[408] The calculations were made by Jakob Friedrich Meissner, who juxtaposed the number of trade journals in each field with the data from the German vocational census (*Berufsstatistik*) from 1907. Meissner, *Bedeutung der Fachpresse*, 18–9.

Confectionair could be found in hotel lobbies, restaurants, embassies, and on public transport – including airplanes and ocean liners – in Germany and across the globe.

While the paper's readership was diverse, its purpose was focused. During Marcus' chief editorship from 1924 to 1932, *Der Confectionair* had come to define the "the field" as the German textile industry in its broadest sense, following efforts by the firm to bring together textile producers and clothier/retailer-wholesalers as one professional community. This promised not only smoother business transactions but a rectification of the public reputation of modern commerce and the consumer economy. Importantly – though this was never made explicit – it also involved mediating between two industries, the clothing industry and the textile industry, one of which had a high concentration of Jews and one which did not.[409] *Der Confectionair*'s endeavours to encourage further collaboration between the two branches of industry therefore carried more than just potential economic benefits. A shared framework for textile production, an industry with a long history in Germany, and *Konfektion*, a modern invention, promised to break a tradition that had existed in the German clothing trade since the exclusion of Jews from medieval and early modern tailors' guilds; of a resistance to innovation, a restriction of Jewish participation in the local economy, and an active ignorance of the contributions of Jews to the national collective.

Notwithstanding this later broadening of *Der Confectionair*'s professional audience, the journal was intimately tied to the Wilhelmine fashion trade. Its evolving sub-heading may serve as evidence; first a "Trade Journal for Women's and Girls' Coat Industry" in 1886 (its full name was *Fachblatt für die Damen-, Mädchen-Mäntel und Costümbranche, sowie für Confections-Stoffe und Besatz-Artikel*), the paper had by the first decade of the twentieth century become the "Trade Journal for

[409] With a total of 24,326 Jews registered as working in the German clothing trade in 1907, compared to only 3,538 in the textile industry, Jewish participation in the former was almost seven times higher. Segall, *Beruflichen und sozialen Verhältnisse*, 38 (*Textil-Industrie*), 84 (*Bekleidungsgewerbe*). In Berlin in 1910, similarly, there were a mere 775 German-born Jews and 85 eastern European Jews working in the textile industry, compared to 7,916 German-born Jews and 1,565 eastern European Jews in the clothing trade – eleven times more in clothing, if the two Jewish groups are combined. Eschelbacher, "Ostjüdische Einwanderungsbevölkerung"; Klara Eschelbacher, "Die ostjüdische Einwanderungsbevölkerung der Stadt Berlin (Fortsetzung und Schluß)," ZDSJ 17 (January–April 1923), 10–20.

Manufactured Goods and Ready-made Clothing/Fashion Businesses" (*Fachblatt für Manufakturwaren- und Konfektionsgeschäfte*). As the name itself indicated, *Der Confectionair* was conceived as a publication for commercial clothiers. From the start, moreover, this definition included larger dry goods retailers and department stores. Beginning in 1902, the journal published a special supplement to cater to department stores; in 1903, the supplement was made the official journal of the newly founded *Verband der Deutschen Waren- und Kaufhäuser*, the Association for German Department and Retail Stores, under the title *Zeitschrift für Waren- und Kaufhäuser*, or Journal for Department and Retail Stores (becoming an independent journal with the same publisher only in 1920). In addition, the journal officially represented the *Detaillisten-Verband* [Retail Association] for the Rhineland and Westphalia, including therefore extensive reports from said regions. Throughout the Imperial period, *Der Confectionair* was considered the authoritative publication for the German fashion industry – an "industry" which, as we have seen, embraced a host of commercial businesses connected to fashion and ready-made apparel. In its roots, however, the journal sprang from the pioneering sectors of *Konfektion* in womenswear and outerwear, the original Jewish entrepreneurial niches in the Berlin industry, from which other sectors of ready-made clothing production had evolved.

The two men behind *Der Confectionair* were also themselves closely affiliated with *Konfektion*. Leopold Schottlaender, who hailed from a Jewish family in Bromberg, apprenticed in Greifenberg in Pomerania before working in the women's ready-to-wear industry in Breslau and then in Berlin.[410] In the capital, he worked as a salesman at V. Manheimer, one of the most prestigious fashion houses in Berlin – the firm would become one of *Der Confectionair'*s closest independent collaborators. Aged only 26, Schottlaender launched his namesake publishing house in Berlin as a basis for producing the trade paper *Der Confectionair*. He soon found a chief editor in Siegfried Karo, a member of "an old [...] Berlin family" who had similarly worked at V. Manheimer and exhibited a

[410] Biographical details about Schottlaender and Karo are sourced from the two special anniversary publications for *Der Confectionair*: *Der Confectionair 25* (from 1911) and *Der Konfektionär 40*, ed. Schottlaender (from 1926). Additional/ corroborative information has been drawn from Hagen, "Die Geschichte."

natural talent for writing and journalism.[411] While Schottlaender dealt with the business side of L. Schottlaender Verlag and *Der Confectionair*, Karo was the company's source of connections in the city. Throughout his career at *Der Confectionair*, Karo drew in staff from his wide network of private and professional contacts in *Konfektion* and beyond, many of whom would become pillars of the production team over years or decades of employment.

Der Confectionair covered an ambitious range of topics based on what its editors believed would interest the readers. Going from a twice monthly publication to twice weekly by the 1910s, the paper kept clothiers *ajour* of the state of the market and the bourse. Separate segments reported on news from Berlin and other cities and regions of significance for the German clothing and cloth industries, as well as international news and developments in export. Major fashion trends from Paris were a regular feature, sometimes on the front page. "New from the field" ("*Neues aus der Branche"*) recounted the latest in professional matters, including company news and updates on strikes. Display window dressing had its own supplement from 1890, which became a separate journal under the rubric of *Architectur und Schaufenster* in 1904. *Der Confectionair* was mainly geared toward business owners, bosses, and employers, but also included a "staff magazine" supplement from 1911.[412] In tandem with developing its leading publication, L. Schottlaender Verlag additionally diversified its production of professional literature, including more specialised journals for men's fashion, ready-made linens, as well as books and manuals on topics such as salesmanship and advertising.

Writing in 1926, Erich Greiffenhagen (later Eric Hagen), Schottlaender's son-in-law and successor, described *Der Confectionair* as "the forum [Sprechsaal] for the field as a whole."[413] The so-called

[411] Ibid.
[412] Greiffenhagen, "40 Jahre," 3.
[413] Ibid. While Greiffenhagen was referring to the journal's independence from all individual trade associations or lobbies – a point which was technically true but in fact questionable – his characterisation was an appropriate metaphor for the important communal function served by *Der Confectionair* since the 1880s. The word "Sprechsaal" is not a standard German expression but appears in the Wilhelmine German press, see e.g. AZDJ 76, no. 8 (23 February 1912), 96 [URL: https://sammlungen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/cm/periodical/pageview/3280469]. It is interpreted here to mean "forum."

"Fabrikanten-Tafel" or advertising section, Greiffenhagen notes earlier in his account, "created the nexus between distributors of *Konfektion* and *Konfektion* itself."[414] Prior to *Der Confectionair*, no such forum had existed; it revolutionised business relations within the trade. The founder, Leopold Schottlaender, framed this achievement in almost eschatological terms in 1911, as a defeat of those "who cannot tolerate the truth and only want to see shadows where light and brightness prevail."[415] "It was a struggle against unhealthy secrecy, a campaign against antiquated prejudices, outmoded views, and backward assumptions."[416] Schottlaender believed he had created a platform which, instead, encouraged connection and eliminated unhealthy rivalry. Schottlaender's passionate words, referring to the 1880s–90s, also took on a further dimension, however, given the major events of that period; in addition to other forms of opposition *Der Confectionair* had been up against not only those fearing increased competition from the founding of the journal, but also "antiquated prejudices" about Jews with the rise of political antisemitism and social darwinism in Europe.[417] While the defence of Jewish interests was never an articulated goal of *Der Confectionair*, the young enterprise, poised to give a public voice to a field perceived as "Jewish," was bound to be affected by the venomous currents sweeping through society. As such, *Der Confectionair* covered Jewish affairs and antisemitic incidents to a striking extent, as explored next.

Matters of religious freedom made several appearances, most with a specific focus on the rights of Jews in the commercial sphere. One lengthy piece from 1902, indignantly titled "Jewish holidays do not exist in the eyes of the law!," detailed the experiences of a Jewish commercial apprentice in Berlin who had been arrested for failing to attend his further education programme on the second day of the Jewish New Year.[418] The apprentice explained to the court that he had applied for leave of absence, but his request had been denied by the school. He was nonetheless fined and his appeal

[414] Greiffenhagen, "40 Jahre," 2.
[415] "Fünfundzwanzig Jahre 'Confectionair,'" in *Der Confectionair* 26, no. 3 (19 January 1911).
[416] Ibid.
[417] See, for example, Steven M. Lowenstein et al., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, vol. 3, *Integration in Dispute 1871–1918* (New York, 1996), chaps. 7–8; Shmuel Almog, *Nationalism and Antisemitism in Modern Europe 1815–1945* (Oxford, 1990).
[418] "Neues aus der Branche," *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 44 (30 October 1902).

against the sentence was rejected by the higher court. “It is a perverted world!” exclaimed the author in *Der Confectionair*, speaking anonymously for the journal itself. Mennonites were exempt from bearing arms, in accordance with their beliefs, “while devout Jews, for whom it is the greatest sin to work on the high holidays (New Year and Day of Atonement), are forced to do so by the state.” Commerce has been “shackled” by laws prohibiting business on Sundays, “but Jews are not allowed to refrain from work on two or three days a year”! The article further advised readers on how to avoid legal trouble from workers aggrieved by the loss of income from business closures on Jewish high holidays, based on a court case against a Jewish apron manufacturer in Breslau. “If Jewish traders want to avoid having to pay wages on the high holidays,” they had merely to ensure that company work regulations were worded clearly to state that no employment and therefore no wages were offered on Jewish high holidays.

A few months later *Der Confectionair* published an extensive reportage about the restriction of “Israelite” commercial judges. The article began with the words: “From Mannheim, that is, from a city and a state, in which anti-Semitism has not yet found its way, we have received the following communication: [...].”[419] Without explanation, the list of candidates for commercial judgeships drawn up by the Chamber of Commerce had been altered to exclude the three frontrunners who were Jewish, with three non-Jews proposed instead. This decision was subsequently rescinded, with three new Jewish candidates, named by *Der Confectionair* (and identified as “Israelite”), proposed after the original candidates declined the honour, citing that “they did not want to repeat the experience.” With its introductory sentence, the article framed the events as both antisemitic and as an infringement of the liberties and rights of Jews. While both here and in the earlier controversy surrounding Jewish high holidays the issues at hand may have upset any fervent German liberal – Jewish or not – there was a more obvious explanation to such additions in *Der Confectionair*. The journal appeared as a mouthpiece for Jews in the commercial realm – after all, non-Jews in the

[419] “Neues aus der Branche,” *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 49 (4 December 1902).

fashion trade had great incentive not to intervene in such affairs, which were likely to undermine some of their fiercest competition.

In the same year, *Der Confectionair* took on the public defense of *Kaufhaus* N. Israel in a high-profile case involving embezzlement.[420] Incorrect information was circulating in the general press, the article claimed, without, however, providing clarifying details. *Der Confectionair* portrayed N. Israel as the true injured party, let down by an employee with a long history at the firm. "As in many other similar cases, it is only due to the personal qualities of the cashier that things did not work on this one occasion," the journal underscored concerning Julius Besas, the defendant, in a somewhat strange argumentation focusing on the deficiencies of his character.[421] This sentence about Besas' "personal qualities" is the only one in the article highlighted by the editors. *Der Confectionair* seems here bent on allaying concerns that Besas' moral decrepitude was a reflection of a wider work culture at N. Israel or the moral character of the company's owners, both suggestions of which traced to common tropes associated with department stores. With a focus on the person of Besas rather than his actions, the writer further addressed the specific anti-Jewish stereotypes of greed and financial dishonesty, encouraging readers not to generalise based on Besas' association with one of Berlin's well-known Jewish companies.

Der Confectionair implied it had additional information about the N. Israel case but refused to join the rumour mill until an official verdict had been issued. Yet since the Israels "had no intention of filing a complaint" against newspapers spreading misinformation,[422] *Der Confectionair* was practically acting on the company's behalf against the mob of public opinion. In this particular case, it was clear that the apologetics sought to curtail not only anti-commercial passions, but also those more specifically coupled with antisemitism. Together with the other examples given, the case concerning N. Israel showed *Der Confectionair* honouring its commitment to represent and advance

[420] "Neues aus der Branche," *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 44 (30 October 1902).
[421] The word used here for "cashier" is "Cassirer," rather than "Kassierer," a somewhat unusual choice that may or may not be connected to Yiddish.
[422] "Neues aus der Branche," *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 44 (30 October 1902).

the commercial clothing business; the similarities with discourses found in the Jewish press were, however, undeniable. Publications such as the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*,[423] a self-styled platform for "all" Jews across denominations, and *Im deutschen Reich,* published by the *Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* (the Central Association for German Citizens of the Jewish Faith, henceforth the *Central-Verein*) viewed the defense of Jews against antisemitism in the general press as a central part of their mission as Jewish papers, often responding specifically to injustices against Jews in commercial (vocational) life.[424] The framing of these issues by *Der Confectionair* was more subtle and more general – and yet the journal repeatedly promoted news and views that would primarily appeal to a Jewish audience, thus cultivating a Jewish public sphere outside of the dedicated Jewish press.

In some cases, *Der Confectionair* made it clear that it was not only representing a group of Jews but addressing them. An article about the "Admission of Foreign Business Travellers of Jewish Faith in Russia," referenced a demand by "German merchants of the Jewish faith" to revoke restrictions against Jewish business entering and trading in Russia.[425] "[...O]ne can expect that the [German] *Reich* government, recognising this fact, will work towards equality for the members of all denominations in the context of the forthcoming treaty with Russia," the writer maintained optimistically. Most of the text sought a correction to distorted reports, according to which only Christian businessmen could legally gain entry to certain territories. Despite the long-standing limitations on the movement of both foreign and Russian Jews in the Russian Empire, the article pointed out, Jewish company representatives could operate unhindered with special permission from central Russian authorities. This latter information, again, was highlighted here as if to instruct Jewish readers about their rights. In the final paragraph, *Der Confectionair* provided what it suggested was the surest recipe for success: applying for permission directly to the Russian Minister

[423] The spelling of the publication name changes from *Judenthums* to *Judentums* halfway through the Wilhelmine period on 29 May 1903.
[424] Johanna Philippson, "Ludwig Philippson und die Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums," in *Das Judentum in der Deutschen Umwelt 1800–1850*, ed. Hans Liebeschütz and Arnold Paucker (Tübingen, 1977), 243.
[425] "Neues aus der Branche," *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 50 (11 December 1902).

of War and relying on the "mediation of the Imperial General Consulate in St Petersburg." "[I]f the Russian authorities have nothing else against them, [Israelite business travellers of German nationality...] reach their destination within a short period of time [...]."[426]

Some advertisements in *Der Confectionair* further demonstrate that the journal was thought of as a medium to reach Jewish readers. Most advertisements had no clear Jewish stamp – not unexpectedly, since the sellers of items in *Der Confectionair* often did not represent the same branches as the readers but represented, rather, fields in which Jews were not as prolific, and because more clearly "ethnic" forms of advertising, for instance featuring the Star of David, did not gain popularity until the Weimar period.[427] Still, on occasion, the Hebrew letters for "kosher" would appear in advertisements for eateries and butchers' shops. One new restaurant drew a large heart around the "kosher" mark, followed by the description of its location, "at the heart of *Konfektion, Kronenstraße* 21," making thus a highly visual reference to the perceived Jewishness of the ready-made clothing district as a whole.[428] Another advert for a female-owned kosher butcher included the subtitles "English spoken", "On parle Français," ostensibly to signal to Jewish businessmen visiting Berlin where their needs as Jews could be met.[429]

Finally, *Der Confectionair* fostered a sense of Jewish communality parallel with its role as a crucial juncture for the interaction between Jews and non-Jews. The central offices of *Der Confectionair* and L. Schottlaender, found in various premises within a close radius of *Hausvogteiplatz* between 1886 and the 1920s,[430] provided physical meeting points for all those affiliated with the trade – a good proportion of whom, as we know, were connected to the Jewish community. The information

[426] Ibid.
[427] Reuveni, *Consumer Culture*, 25–65, especially 42–55; Wallach, "Kosher Seductions," 117–37. The tendency by advertisers to use the Star of David in *Der Confectionair* increased markedly in the 1920s, as did, interestingly, the appearance of the nationalist symbol of the German eagle in company logos and advert designs – the combination of which seems to evidence a more ethnically and politically polarised climate reflect in *Konfektion* as in wider Weimar society.
[428] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 1 (7 January 1912).
[429] *Der Confectionair* 24, no. 47 (25 November 1909).
[430] *Der Confectionair* and its publisher started off in a rented property at 23 *Jägerstraße* and ended up, after several moves for expansion, first at 11/12 *Wallstraße* in 1906 and then in 1909 at 8/9 *Hausvogteiplatz*, where it remained until 1920. Greiffenhagen, "40 Jahre," 2–4.

offices of *Der Confectionair* represented a large amount of the foot traffic, with over 20,000 inquiries answered in 1925 alone, over a third of these orally.[431] In the journal itself, a plethora of "personal notices" created connections between interested parties, including announcements of deaths, company anniversaries, bankruptcies, and communal celebrations. In its reporting on the 50th business anniversary of Gebrüder Simon in Berlin in 1902, for instance, *Der Confectionair* documented the festivities in great detail, identifying important figures such as Berthold Israel and Moritz Manheimer and other "big shots" in the business among the attendees.[432] More than mere society gossip, *Der Confectionair*'s report suggested the Simons' successes were collective successes. The article further reproduced the new lyrics to an orchestral performance of the *Preussenmarch*, which had subtly celebrated the Jewish heritage of the Simons; "[...a] strong race [*Geschlecht*] of fathers and sons, has ruled here and won the victory," the piece began, ending with: "[a]nd the most distant grandchildren may proudly declare: 'I am a Simon, a Simon I want to be.'"[433] While the performance itself cast the Simons as German patriots, *Der Confectionair* drew the readers' attention to the written words which evoked the image of the biblical patriarchs and situated the Simons in a larger context, not just as proud members of the German nation but as part of the Jewish people.

As a trade journal, *Der Confectionair* performed, then, many simultaneous functions. Formally, it was a confessionally neutral publication that would have eschewed any suggestion of favouring Jewish concerns or furthering Jewish economic or political interests. At the same time, it claimed to be an open forum with no factional tendencies, the sole purpose of which was to provide the clothing and textile industries with a public voice. With its headquarters in Berlin and its strong association with the inner circles of Berlin *Konfektion*, nonetheless, *Der Confectionair* could scarcely expect to achieve any real level of journalistic independence. According to Jürgen Habermas' seminal definition of the "public sphere," the paper's very connections to the capitalist economy would have

[431] "Ich bitte um Auskunft... Was der 'Konfektionär' alles wissen muß," in Schottlaender, *Der Konfektionär 40*, 130.
[432] "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 17, No. 41 (9 October 1902).
[433] Ibid.

precluded its functioning as a mediator of public opinion, even within its limited, professional context.[434] Many were the occasions when *Der Confectionair* gave leading clothiers – those with the greatest business success, honorary titles and seats on the commercial courts – a platform to voice their opinions, in a manner of which smaller business owners could only dream. The "Sprechsaal" was an open forum but with special back doors of access for those considered the trendsetters in fashion and leaders in business.

The inadvertent result of this elite and Berlin-centered focus was that *Der Confectionair* represented Jewish clothiers and department store owners to a conspicuous degree. This influential minority had little in common with many German artisans or small-scale shopkeepers; yet while separated by wealth and social status, many were linked to a much larger and more heterogeneous Jewish community through religious, social and cultural ties, and *vice versa*. Through the editorial staff of *Der Confectionair,* but also through key figures of the German apparel trade, the journal acquired a decidedly liberal political orientation. This included a *laissez-faire* stance on economic matters – a stance in which, I argue further below, Jewish and business considerations intersected. As shown, it also presumed equal rights liberalism as an ideal feature of commercial life – a position that was most likely to be held by those most likely to have their rights curbed in early twentieth century Christian society, namely Jews. In the end, with the expansion of *Der Confectionair* to cater both to the clothing and the textile trades, and as the commercial fashion trade grew beyond initially close-knit, mostly Jewish circles, the journal's "Jewish" content became increasingly scarce; indeed, many examples in this analysis derive from the turn of the century, when the journal's Jewish and communal aspects still appeared strong. This period, before the First World War, overlapped with the period of *Der Confectionair*'s intensive engagement with the Woman Question.

[434] Jürgen Habermas, Sara Lennox and Frank Lennox, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)," *New German Critique* No. 3 (Autumn 1974): 49–55.

A Woman Question without a Question Mark

The Woman Question of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was not primarily about "pronouncement but debate."[435] The role of the press as an open public forum was a crucial precondition for this debate to exist – even if the extent to which individual publications could be described as "democratic" varied and diminished with the commercialisation of the press. *Der Confectionair* was, as demonstrated above, a "Sprechsaal" only to a certain degree. Due to its specialised focus and audience, it could not reasonably reflect public opinion. Nevertheless, in aspiring to be the unified voice of a professional group – and in achieving commercial success as such – its content needed to resonate with its readers. Freed from expectations to represent a wider public, moreover, the trade journal could take on a clearer position of advocacy on the Woman Question. This section explores how *Der Confectionair* did not, in fact, raise a woman question but *assumed* by default the merit of the middle-class women's cause.

In many parts of the world, the debate surrounding the Woman Question was connected to broader questions of national identity and the national rights and responsibilities of the individual. In Europe, nationalist responses ranged from conservative conceptions that emphasised women's gender-specific and reproductive roles to liberal views that foregrounded women's education for citizenship, more broadly connected to questions of tradition vs. modernity.[436] Although the German state was well established by the early twentieth century, the country's debate on the Woman Question treated gender roles as a question of national stability and sustainability. Generally speaking, *Der Confectionair* did not engage in overtly nationalistic discourses, especially not in its engagement with the Woman Question. Still, as the earlier example of the reporting on the *Frauenbund* shows,

[435] Helsinger, Sheets, and Veeder commenting on Victorian England, in *The Woman Question*, xi.
[436] For non-western examples, where questions of gender and modernity relate to responses to westernisation, see Zhang Yun, *Engendering the Woman Question: Men, Women, and Writing in China's Early Periodical Press* (Leiden, 2020); Elena Vezzadini and Héloïse Finch-Boyer, "Nationalism, emotions and the woman question in the Sudanese press before independence (1950 to 1960)," *Clio. Women, Gender, History* 2018, no. 47: *Gender and the emotions* (2018): 165–80.

such ideas did find expression in the journal, especially as new waves of nationalism accompanied German colonialism and the arms race leading up to the First World War.

The *Frauenbund* article, referenced earlier in this chapter, combined this patriotic perspective with a fundamentally positive attitude to women's general education, emphatically endorsing the league's right to existence. The piece celebrated the league's success, but it also promoted its activities, providing readers with practical pointers for participation. The piece was part of a regular news section, in this case "New from Berlin," penned by an anonymous author speaking on behalf of the trade journal. Through it, *Der Confectionair* suggested new ways for its readers to be better citizens through the education and self-improvement of female readers – and the encouragement of wives by husbands and of girls by their parents to pursue civic education. If women would, in this way, become more in tune with the "heartbeat of the fatherland,"[437] *Der Confectionair* could take partial credit for this accomplishment through its promotional role.

During the First World War, *Der Confectionair* also drew attention to the workforce participation of German women in the spring of 1915. The war had achieved what "was heretofore not believed to be theoretically possible" in the economic realm, namely for women to take on "male" jobs.[438] Female machine technicians, tram drivers, and gardeners were a source of marvel. In Berlin, women were replacing men as window washers and cleaners at department stores such as Hermann Tietz. "Even inns, butchers and bakeries [..., traditionally co-managed by women,] are now run by women alone," the article commented, adding, "and things are going very well."[439] The rhetoric reflected the relative optimism and sense of collective purpose felt by many Germans in the early days of the war. The article's tone and title, "New female occupations during the war," suggested further, however, that women's advances were a societal breakthrough; a revealing of the inherent abilities of the female sex, previously suppressed by social conventions – an impression that members of the

[437] "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 24, no. 47 (25 November 1909).
[438] "Aus der Branche," *Der Confectionair* 30, no. 31 (18 April 1915).
[439] Ibid.

middle-class women's movement desperately hoped women's wartime efforts would achieve.[440] *Der Confectionair* documented this patriotic unleashing of women's potential under the thematic heading "From the field," despite its less than clear relevance to *Konfektion* specifically, apparently in order to position companies like Hermann Tietz, mentioned in but one sentence, in the context of a broader national effort and social progress.

Der Confectionair pointed, then, to the patriotic dimensions of women's involvement in public life in numerous ways and also by extension to its own patriotism and that of its professional audience by supporting women's education and employment. Most of the articles relevant to the Woman Question nonetheless did not engage with nationalism, at least explicitly, focusing primarily on women's employment and vocational education. One substantial article from 1915 reported on the founding of a "very necessary and appropriate" institution in Nuremberg, namely a public career advisory service for women and girls.[441] An endemic problem, the writer maintained, was that young women, after finishing school, entered jobs or apprenticeships without much consideration. More often than not, children and their parents were swayed by the temptations of a short training period and the prospect of quick cash. The new career service would be established in a collaboration between the public authorities and representatives of women's associations (which ones, we are not told).[442] The aim was to direct recent graduates "to such occupations, for which the young girls have a passion and aptitude."

While published during the war, the aforementioned piece argued from a longer-term perspective – indeed, one which aligned with German middle-class feminist campaigns to expand the opportunities

[440] On the wartime work of middle-class feminists, see Catherine Elaine Boyd, "'Nationaler Frauendienst': German Middle-Class Women in Service to the Fatherland, 1914–1918" (PhD diss., University of Georgia, 1979); Martina Steer, "Nation, Religion, Gender: The Triple Challenge of Middle-Class German-Jewish Women in World War I," *Central European History* 48, no. 2 (June 2015): 176–98.
[441] "Neues aus dem Reiche," *Der Confectionair* 30, no. 41 (23 May 1915).
[442] On the feminist origins of this work, see Angelina Palmén, "Josephine Levy-Rathenau," *Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women* (23 June 2021), JWA. Accessed February 27, 2023. https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/levy-rathenau-josephine.

for women in the workforce.[443] The article addressed a fundamental restructuring of middle-class society, in which public domains would take on a more mixed-gender character. The women's associations and the authorities invited parents to meetings across the city to inform them about the organisation's open office hours and the options available to women and girls looking to enter the job market. Members of the women's movement would undertake the practical side of the career guidance while the municipality would provide the premises, a typist, and the funds for an additional full-time (female) administrative employee.[444] In addition to women activists, the committee board included a representative from the Association for Retailers in the Fashion, Textiles and Clothing Trades (*Detaillistenverein der Mode- Textil-, und Bekleidungsbranche*). The editor of *Der Confectionair*, naturally, highlighted this connection in bold letters.

Der Confectionair dedicated generous space to covering the Nuremberg event, advertising once again the new services – soon to be found across Germany – and adding to them its stamp of approval. In addition, the journal highlighted specific points of information, such as a correction to the erroneous impression that "the occupation of a bookkeeper or a telephone operator is valued higher in society than that of a saleswoman, [female] tailor or [female] milliner"[445] – a point quite possibly edited to suit the journal's needs. "Young girls who display talent and a sense of taste will be much more successful at earning their livelihood in the commercial occupations." A presentation by Josef Aufseeser, chairman of the Association for Retailers in the Fashion, Textiles and Clothing Trades, sealed the deal with information about women's job prospects in the sales profession. *Der Confectionair*, meanwhile, rounded off its report with a projection that the joint effort would "bear beneficial fruit for all those involved."[446]

[443] Ute Frevert, "Middle-Class Women in Imperial Germany," in *Women in German History*, 107–30, especially 115–6.
[444] "Neues aus dem Reiche," *Der Confectionair* 30, no. 41 (23 May 1915).
[445] Ibid.
[446] Ibid.

In a similar vein, an article from two years before the war petitioned for "More specialised vocational education for girls!"[447] A corresponding parents' meeting had been held in 1912 by the Breslau branch of the Berlin-based Commercial Alliance for Female Employees [*Kaufmännischer Verband für weibliche Angestellte*], the German middle-class organisation for female clerks. "It almost seems as if parents have two kinds of children," the anonymous author began. Extensive sacrifices were made by families to secure the future financial security of boys, but girls were left without consideration, the director of the public school for continuing commercial education in Breslau had pointed out. "Are not boys and girls equally close to their parents' hearts?" the article pleaded. "Can the parents take it upon themselves to consign the girl to an uncertain future, to scarcity, to misery, and worse?" There were more women than men in Germany, which affected women's marital prospects; indeed, even married women now often had to contribute to the family income. "[T]houghtlessness and ignorance" alone were to blame for the lack of realisation that "*the girl must also be thoroughly trained for a profession.*"[448]

Like the earlier article from Nuremberg, the Breslau report noted the importance of taking into account the "child's proclivities" in the choice of career. While this writer was more interested in the Woman Question as a social question (a "*Brotfrage*") than one of equal rights,[449] he or she was in line with the agenda of the women's organisations staging these events and therefore primarily focused on the improvement of women's position and not on potential benefits to employers. Young women, girls, and their parents were ostensibly the expected audiences for these appeals, the latter of which drew powerfully on the readers' parental emotions and sense of justice.

Yet in the midst of these social considerations, *Der Confectionair* made sure to secure an added benefit for the clothing trade. As with the Nuremberg case, *Der Confectionair* used the example from

[447] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 44 (31 October 1912).
[448] Ibid. Emphasis in the original.
[449] This approach was used by opponents of women's political emancipation as a common "diversionary maneuver" to appease feminists, to quote Ute Gerhard, but was also one approach among many used by German feminists and other liberal supporters of the women's cause. Ute Gerhard, *Unerhört: Die Geschichte der deutschen Frauenbewegung* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1990), 89.

Breslau to zero in on the "*artisanal and commercial occupations.*"[450] In the overcrowded commercial field, the journal admitted, "*only particularly talented and adaptable people can advance*."[451] Crafts and tailoring offered a better chance of success for those with the right disposition, the article argued. Shedding further light on the "beneficial fruit," which *Der Confectionair* predicted would follow from joint efforts to support women in their quest for employment and careers in 1915, the writer noted how the finest underwear was imported from England and women's fashion from Paris and Vienna. In other cases, German retailers went out of their way to recruit female tailors from these countries, attracting them with generous paychecks. "This is not due to a low mental capacity among [German] women, but [due to their] lack of adequate professional training," observed *Der Confectionair*.[452] The writer thus rendered moot common antifeminist objections to women's education and careers based on ideas about women's mental inferiority – but simultaneously viewed women's work through the lens of the market and its need for domestic workers.

The article reveals that professional women were considered desirable employees in the Wilhelmine clothing trades, not merely due to their skills (or their expectations of a lower salary – at least if *Der Confectionair* was to be believed) but due to their gender traits. After all, clothiers were willing to dig deep into their pockets specifically to import highly trained female staff, which one assumes could not be replaced with German men of an equally high education. Men and women did not generally work in the same jobs in the early twentieth century, even if they worked in the same companies or professional fields. Broader labour markets were divided by gender into more specialised labour markets, and these divisions were replicated in larger firms in particular. Thus, on the one hand, employers may have had specific tasks in mind that were only "women's jobs," so to speak; lacemaking, sewing, and millinery were among the specialisations in clothing and dress-making that retained a strong female presence, for reasons of women's historical involvement in those fields and due to traditional clothing production work in the home. On the other hand, women's

[450] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 44 (31 October 1912). Emphasis in the original.
[451] Ibid. Emphasis in the original.
[452] Ibid.

connection to higher-skilled positions of design and tailoring was less obvious; like most other professions, artisanship had been and continued to be a male-dominated occupation. Yet it was precisely this sort of higher-level female input that Wilhelmine *Konfektion* seemed to be lacking, according to *Der Confectionair*.

Whatever the precise underlying logic (we are not made privy to further details), the promotion of women's vocational education and its further development was, in part, an investment in building up a domestic labour supply for *Konfektion* and by extension in increasing the international competitiveness of the German economy in a nationalistic sense. *Der Confectionair* presumably believed that informing readers about these affairs would help ensure the longevity of the German fashion industry (and perhaps also its future viability as a Jewish business niche); in its anniversary publication from 1926, for instance, the journal described its historical and continuing intention to guide "the current and future generation" in matters concerning professional education, in the context of "serv[ing] the overall interests of the industry," implying in this way that the practice was about securing the future of the trade.[453] For whatever reason, recruitment of female talent was seen as an essential step toward achieving this continuity.

Notably, however, *Der Confectionair* chose to make its case through foregrounding the work of women's organisations. The journal's argumentation had many parallels with that of the *Lette-Verein*, a Berlin society originally founded as a single vocational school for girls without formal ties to the organised feminist movement but gaining popularity in liberal circles.[454] Founded by Adolph Lette in 1865, the association had vowed to "promote the employability of women and maidens who are dependent on their own support," a goal later captured in the motto "To the woman her work!"[455] The *Lette-Verein* focused on advancing the employment prospects of middle-class women who were left without means of support and faced a changing economic landscape. Similar to *Der*

[453] Schottlaender, *Konfektionär 40*, 1.
[454] On the *Lette-Verein*, see Doris Obschernitzki, *"Der Frau ihre Arbeit!: Lette Verein: Zur Geschichte einer Berliner Institution 1866 bis 1986* (Berlin, 1987); Gerhard, *Unerhört*, 83–8.
[455] Cited in Obschernitzki, *"Der Frau ihre Arbeit!"* 252, 261.

Confectionair, the *Lette-Verein* did not concern itself with the work or welfare of working-class women.[456] Both assumed a certain social status of its audience.

The *Lette-Verein* was closely connected to business and industry through its financial ties to the state and its donors – according to historian Doris Obschernitzki, the laws of aryanisation in 1933 "robbed [the organisation of] its most significant members," likely due to the role played by Jewish philanthropists and the practical involvement of key Jewish economic and political figures.[457] The *Lette-Verein* made the requirements of the economy one of its central considerations beside its official agenda to serve women's economic needs, combining the interests of business and industry with what it perceived as a social cause. This fostered important collaborations especially through the women's educational institutions founded by the association; in 1910, for instance, the commission for the association's vocational school for tailoring included clothiers (*Konfektionäre*) from the companies A. Wertheim, Hermann Tietz, Kraft & Lewin and the *Kaufhaus des Westens*.[458] According to Obschernitzki, furthermore, the *Lette-Verein* gained important donors in the business world through these initiatives.[459]

With all these possible connections to the *Lette-Verein*, it is striking that *Der Confectionair* focused its energies on reporting about feminist and women's professional organisations instead. Some of the schools to which career advisers directed women and girls were almost certainly *Lette* institutions, for women's vocational education was still sorely underdeveloped. *Lette* was not mentioned, however, in either report by *Der Confectionair* sampled above. In the first piece, we do not learn which women's organisations were involved, though the text mentions the earlier efforts of the *Lehrerinnenverband*, a professional organisation which likely fell under the purview of the

[456] Gerhard, *Unerhört*, 87–8.
[457] Obschernitzki, *"Der Frau ihre Arbeit!,"* 253.
[458] Ibid., 256.
[459] Ibid.

teachers' associations in the Federation of German Women's Associations.[460] The Commercial Alliance for Female Employees, highlighted in the second article, was a member of the same feminist Federation since 1910.[461] While, as a union of women's organisations, the Federation represented a moderate middle ground of bourgeois feminism, the Commercial Association joined its ranks because, as one of its most central (and, by exception, male) figures, Josef Silbermann, pointed out, "the employed woman is foremost in creating the basis for all the demands for the women's movement right up to women's suffrage."[462]

Even when *Der Confectionair* brought the involvement of professional clothiers to the attention of its readers, it did so by portraying their collaboration with feminist or, at the very least, women's organisations. In reporting from Nuremberg, the journal highlighted the employment of female advisers but also the names or professional roles of numerous female speakers, making it clear that this was a female-led venture. Although the journal was not overtly pro-suffrage, it also did not discuss the pros and cons of extending women's political rights – nor did it, therefore, as far as the present research shows, publish opinions that ran counter to suffragism. This tendency can be contrasted with the declaration by Adolph Lette in the first memorandum of the *Lette-Verein* (published in a much earlier period): "What we do not want and never will desire [...] is the political emancipation and equality of women."[463] Lette cited the New Testament prescription of women's silence in the congregation as the basis for women's exclusion from political decision-making – a stance which the organisation had not disavowed in the Wilhelmine period.[464] The *Lette-Verein* was, additionally, all male at first, though women were eventually able to join.[465]

[460] For a full overview of the membership organisations of the *Bund deutscher Frauenvereine* and other federations of women's associations, see Agnes Zahn-Harnack, *Die Frauenbewegung: Geschichte, Probleme, Ziele* (Berlin, 1928), appendix (infographic).
[461] Adams, *Women Clerks*, 78.
[462] Citation and translation in ibid.
[463] German cited in Gerhard, *Unerhört*, 85.
[464] Ibid.
[465] Ibid., 85–6. Note especially the role of Jenny Hirsch (1829–1902), who, according to Gerhard, as the secretary and only female member on the governing body of the early *Lette-Verein*, "did all the work" by default. Ibid., 86. See also Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 172.

Important similarities and differences could, in other words, be found between the reporting in *Der Confectionair* and the ideas of the *Lette-Verein*. Both apparently saw *Bildung* and *Ausbildung* (vocational education) as central paths toward women's empowerment while prioritising the latter, namely providing the basis for economic women's independence as a means toward refining and emancipating their person (and producing good citizens).[466] Still, while emphasising the importance of employment, *Der Confectionair* did not oppose or undermine other avenues to further the middle-class women's cause; on the contrary, the journal provided visibility for the work of the women's movement. As with the *Lette-Verein*, an ever-present influence was a default bourgeois worldview that did not seek structural economic change but rather assumed that the issues of working-class women were not relevant to the Woman Question. For *Der Confectionair*, however, as I propose in the final section, this was not merely connected to the class of prominent clothiers or the editors of *Der Confectionair*, but also to the ethno-religious dimensions of the trade, as a safe haven for Jews.

In addition to the question of women's education, *Der Confectionair* engaged with another theme closely tied to the commercial fashion industry, namely employment. The title of one of the most extensive articles on the Woman Question from 1910 raised the question "How do female staff perform?"[467] In the previous issue, *Der Confectionair* had published a report from the Berlin association for creditor protection in the textile industry in which "it attribut[ed] the insolvency of a retail business in the province partly to the exclusively female personnel."[468] *Der Confectionair* had subsequently taken the initiative to conduct a survey among "influential individuals" in the field, the article explained. The results were now published as the leading editorial, on the front page. Fritz Gugenheim, the Jewish-born chief executive of Seidenhaus Michels, Germany's largest speciality store for items made of silk and velvet, was quoted commenting that American department stores commonly employed women for important tasks, presenting this, in the words of *Der Confectionair*,

[466] Obschernitzki makes this comparison between the approach of the *Lette-Verein* and the women's movement, which in this area brings *Der Confectionair* closer in emphasis to the former than to the latter. See Obschernitzki, *"Der Frau ihre Arbeit!,"* 256–8.
[467] *Der Confectionair* 15, no. 48 (24 February 1910).
[468] Ibid.

as proof "that there are extraordinarily capable people among women." The bankruptcy could just as well have happened with inexperienced male staff, Gugenheim noted. Women marry and thus do not advance in their careers, "but not because they are not equal to men." "Otherwise [...] *Direktricen* [women clothiers] would not have such important positions in large businesses." "I have numerous female employees who do outstanding work and I could hardly think of a better man to replace them," Gugenheim concluded.[469]

The piece continued with responses from Oscar Tietz, the director of the Hermann Tietz department store and chairman of the Association for German Department Stores – an organisation which *Der Confectionair* formally represented and with which the journal collaborated closely.[470] According to Tietz, "ladies held [...the most important positions in commercial enterprises] entirely satisfactorily" and possessed equal capacity as men for creating "tasteful decorations."[471] In some positions such as women's fashion and lingerie, Tietz explained, customers preferred saleswomen. Despite certain differences between urban and rural contexts – with Berliners, surprisingly, more particular about being "served by gentlemen" – "there is probably no industry at all for which only men are suitable."[472] The recruitment of women is not determined by "economic considerations," Tietz stressed, because wages are determined by performance. "[...O]ne should not dismiss the possibility of women filling even positions of responsibility." Tietz clarified his stance finally with arguments about female nature; men are "less sensitive, "not as frequently absent," and "more agreeable" and "collegial" than women in the workplace, as women, he alleged, have a tendency to get into disputes with one another. "Ladies," however, hold certain advantages because they are "able to adapt quickly to change," a trait which makes them particularly valuable to small companies. "In dealing with complaints and in reassuring customers, a lady will more easily achieve success than a gentleman."[473]

[469] Ibid.
[470] Hagen, "Die Geschichte"; Greiffenhagen, "40 Jahre," 2.
[471] *Der Confectionair* 15, no. 48 (24 February 1910).
[472] Ibid.
[473] Ibid.

As the "voice" of the field, *Der Confectionair* once again reflected on the women's cause in a positive light in this leading editorial piece. The author offered a detailed rebuttal of the critiques presented of women's character and against their work performance (with a few caveats). *Der Confectionair* chose two respondents from what was perhaps a wider selection, presenting these as indicative of the business as a whole; the first of these, Gugenheim, the head of one of Germany's most successful fashion stores, seemed to speak for the clothing industry, while Tietz, more obviously through his chairmanship, represented German department stores. Together the two businessmen tried to convince readers why women were not only good but essential employees both in apparel production, per Gugenheim's focus, and in fashion and clothing retail, per Tietz's presentation. Both implied that the economy is enriched by the presence of women, with Gugenheim suggesting "equality" as the principle state of gender relations and Tietz essentially recommending women for employment in any sector.

The article also leads us into a different (or more detailed) set of arguments to explain the appeal of female labour to the field of *Konfektion* and how the drive to employ women intersected with questions about gender equality. Bourgeois beliefs about gender traits (the *Gechlechtscharakter*) underpinned German middle-class ideas about how to optimise the functioning of the economy. Most assumed that a strict division of labour, which rendered men breadwinners and women homemakers, provided the best model and that male and female gendered traits and strengths made such a division natural and organic. As Paul Lerner among others have pointed out, however, gender was also used to motivate the hiring of female staff in early twentieth-century German department stores, through arguments that emphasised the utility of particularly "feminine" traits to the sales profession.[474] The Saxon *Kaufhaus* Salman Schocken's manual for employees from the interwar period claimed, for instance, that "[y]oung girls and women have a natural disposition for the sales profession," much in the same tone as *Der Confectionair*.[475] Similar statements were also made by members of the *Deutscher Werkbund*, the German national league for the professional community of designers and

[474] Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 111.
[475] Cited in ibid.

craftspeople. Writing in *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* (henceforth the DKD), Karl Widmer argued that women should be encouraged to train in the commercial sale of arts and crafts products. Women, wrote Widmer, displayed naturally "greater kindness and patience in listening and service."[476] According to arguments such as these, women possessed a caring nature that translated into good social skills – yet, as Tietz's responses revealed, women were not necessarily seen as superior in all areas of social interaction but rather more specifically in dealing with customers.

The *Werkbund* is a worthwhile point of comparison because, as the professional body representing "non-commercial" clothing designers, its approach to the Woman Question diverged from that seen in *Der Confectionair*. The research of architectural historian Despina Stratigakos has been instrumental in covering this ground; most of my own examples below derive from the DKD, a publication owned by the *Werkbund* figure Alexander Koch, where major ideological trends could already be seen even before the founding of the league in 1907. "Members of the Werkbund," observes Stratigakos, "mourned the common spirit they believed integrated cultural forms in the precapitalist era."[477] The league strove to create a shared philosophy and design language for architecture, dress, and other everyday objects based on the key words of "*Sachlichkeit*" (objectivity or functionalism) and "*Qualität*" (quality). Questions of gender entered the equation as *Werkbund* members, like the majority of Imperial Germans, believed in the distinct gender differences between men and women, which in turn engendered different positions on women's professional roles.

A small minority of articles in the DKD focused on women; one submission from 1898 asserted that "a keen search for new, unique forms and modes of expression that correspond to the new *Zeitgeist*" was revealed in the training of women in traditional Nordic arts and crafts.[478] Hailing Scandinavia as "the Eldorado of women's emancipation," meanwhile, Karl Widmer's essay from 1909–1910

[476] Karl Widmer, "Die Gebildete Frau im Kunstgewerbehandel," DKD 25 (October 1909 – March 1910), 65.
[477] Despina Stratigakos, "Women and the Werkbund: Gender Politics and German Design Reform, 1907–17," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62, no. 4 (December 2003): 490.
[478] Molly Rothlieb and C. Mühlke, "Die Nordische Ausstellung zu Stockholm 1897," DKD 2 (April – September 1898), 386.

posited that (middle-class, cultivated) women possessed an innate sense of taste which qualified them for assessing the value of arts and crafts products.[479] Generally speaking, the DKD showed a conspicuous lack of interest in women's roles in the industry, despite the central importance of women in the later *Werkbund*, including figures such as designer Else Oppler-Legband (1875–1961) and display window decorator Elisabeth von Hahn (1868–1939). Even *Werkbund* member-to-be Anna Muthesius, known for her advocacy of women's freedom and independence in matters of dress, took a different path in an article about clothing reform in 1905–1906. Henry van de Velde, one of the founders of the *Werkbund*, similarly referred in 1902 to women's "responsibility" in clothing culture, an area in which "they have sunk from the role of ruler to a subject first of all through their subservience and then through other circumstances," without dwelling further on women's gender-specific role in design. [480]

As Stratigakos argues convincingly, the supporters of the *Werkbund* generally believed, in fact, that "the 'battle' for aesthetic renewal was a gendered one [...]."[481] The new aesthetic principles were conceived as a "masculine" retort to the "feminine" culture of bric-a-brac, the latter seen as embodied in consumerism and ready-made fashion.[482] While, as Stratigakos, demonstrates, a focus on the movement's women designers and their allies reveals how prominent factions of the *Werkbund* objected to this reasoning, appealing instead not only to the utility of women's gender traits but also to their expertise as guardians of the home, an overview of the DKD confirms the impression that advocating women's involvement was nowhere near the centre of *Werkbund* ideology. In contrast to *Der Confectionair*, the DKD did not report on the activities of women's organisations. Some of its writers commented negatively on the women's movement, for instance criticising its versions of the reformed dress as not aesthetically pleasing.[483]

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[479] Widmer, "Die Gebildete Frau," 63, 69.
[480] Henry van de Velde, "Das neue Kunst-Prinzip in der modernen Frauen-Kleidung," DKD 10 (April 1902 – September 1902), 363.
[481] Stratigakos, "Women and the Werkbund," 491.
[482] Ibid., 491–2.
[483] Margarete Bruns–Minden, "Der Stil der modernen Kleidung," DKD 8 (April–September 1901), 374. See also Rudolf Klein, "Mäcenatentum," DKD 18 (April–September 1906), 508.

The commercial clothing industry and the community of craftsmen, then, shared the predominant belief in fundamental sex/gender differences between men and women, reaching, however, rather different conclusions on this basis. Ready-to-wear clothiers argued *for* women's inclusion into the workforce of *Konfektion* through their leading trade journal, not just in sales and office work but in creative roles, specifically because women were seen as innately suited for such work. Was this difference due to the fact that many businessmen were Jews while comparatively few *Werkbund* members were Jewish? The nostalgia of the *Werkbund* for reviving (albeit reimagining) traditional crafts certainly contrasted with the perspective of some middle-class Jews, since Jews had experienced social-economic ascent largely through modern commercial work and business. At the same time, other prominent German Jews were preoccupied with correcting the "unhealthy" concentration of Jewish occupations in the commercial sector, specifically by directing Jews into agricultural work and craftsmanship.[484] Ultimately, the same economic processes that were drawing women into paid work and professions – though for different reasons and with vastly different implications – had propelled Jews into the German bourgeoisie and therefore formed the basis for some Jewish claims to belonging and citizenship.[485]

Be that as it may, it is perhaps more fruitful to consider what *Der Confectionair* tells us about Jews in *Konfektion*, since Jewish figures such as Tietz and Gugenheim were invariably perceived in public as Jews, even when they were speaking in their professional capacities. Particularly if we regard *Der Confectionair*'s interest in the Woman Question as part of the same phenomenon as the *Lette-Verein*, and the apparent attraction of Jews to the organisation, a perhaps more relevant angle is whether we are, in fact, dealing with an underexplored strand of German-Jewish liberalism, which advocated economic contribution above *Bildung* as a pathway to rights and recognition (for women).[486] It is

[484] Penslar, *Shylock's Children*, 205–16.
[485] Ibid., 150; Reuveni, "Emancipation through Consumption," 19–21.
[486] Marion Kaplan has also suggested Jewish "attitudes toward education" as one of the key reasons for the prominence of Jews (specifically Jewish women), in organisations such as the *Lette-Verein* (referring in her discussion to the singular role of Jenny Hirsch). Kaplan does not, however, differentiate between *Bildung* and *Ausbildung* and therefore does not pay attention to the ideological differences of these two foci within bourgeois German liberalism. Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 172–3.

worth noting that the positions presented in *Der Confectionair* seem to be outliers in the context of middle-class Imperial German Jewish culture, as portrayed in the field-defining research of Marion Kaplan. Bourgeois Judaism cast women as homemakers and religious educators, and women's salaried work was often stigmatised.[487] A study of *Der Confectionair* reveals, nonetheless, prominent groups among German Jewry, at least in Berlin, who had a very different perspective, and who were vocal about in the press.

So far, I have suggested that statements such as those made by Tietz and Gugenheim may well have reflected their actual beliefs, due to the connections between bourgeois gender ideology and certain strands of German liberalism and how the combination seemed to manifest itself among Berlin Jews in business. This does not negate the benefit from or promotional value to employers of defending women employees; the two, rather, reinforced one another. *Der Confectionair* was vying for a global readership at this point and looking especially to extend its influence in the English-speaking world in an effort to generate new international business for *Konfektion*. Gugenheim's point, for instance, to look to the American example could be perceived (favourably) abroad as flirting with anglophone liberalism in business and questions of civil equality. Indeed, there can be little doubt that in this matter, as in so many other questions of business culture and business organisation, American and British department stores inspired Berlin's fashion companies, in this case to realise the hidden opportunities in publicly supporting the women's movement.

Whatever the motivations, however, Tietz and Gugenheim painted an idealised picture. As far as can be discerned from *Der Confectionair*, female clerks started at the bottom of the company hierarchy and worked their way upwards – a view described by Caroline Elizabeth Adams as "[t]he accepted fiction."[488] With the gradual deskilling of clerking and the increasing division of labour, it became more difficult for women to switch between positions or progress upward – without even factoring in the obstacles faced by women due to widespread gender discrimination, which go unmentioned

[487] Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*.
[488] Adams, *Women Clerks*, 7–8.

in *Der Confectionair*.[489] *Der Confectionair* also apparently did not make space for a discussion about employee wages, a conspicuous omission in the context of the Woman Question, given that female clerks earned on average around half the salary of their male counterparts, and once again evidence that *Der Confectionair* functioned primarily as a mouthpiece for employers.[490] Tietz's idealistic position that women were paid according to performance was progressive, if his male and female employees were, indeed, equally remunerated for equal work (which they likely were not) – yet, not unexpectedly, it still did not consider the full picture of the challenges faced by women in the labour market, including salaries and promotions lost to pregnancy and childcare.

Noticeably, Tietz refers to women rather courteously as "ladies" (*Damen*). According to Susan Porter Benson's work on gender in American department stores 1890–1940, company executives sought to "instill the spirit of cooperation in their employees" through the way they addressed their female employees[491] – some saleswomen in New York, for example, preferred the term "salesladies" to the demeaning "salesgirls"[492] – because managers realised by the turn of the century that those working the shop floor could either make or break the profitability of a business; Benson somewhat pessimistically sees the same "paternalism" in company welfare schemes or educational programmes, as these could be used to exercise control over female personnel (in the latter case, for example, through what was included in the curriculum).[493] As I explore further below, we know that professional businesswomen and female employees were among the readers and subscribers of *Der Confectionair*, so this added touch by Tietz would certainly not go unnoticed.

Yet the term "ladies" also conveys a sense of class, which aligns with the general middle-class perspective of the journal editors and most readers on the women's cause. The higher up the pay scale and the better the job status, the more likely women employees were from the middle class.

[489] Ibid., 9–11, 13–5, 59–62; Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*, 168–71.
[490] For wage statistics, see Adams, *Women Clerks*, 17.
[491] Susan Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 139, 155.
[492] Ibid., 24.
[493] Ibid., 142–53.

Jewish women in search of a career were statistically more likely to enter the higher segments of the labour market in *Konfektion* where women did, in fact, experience career progression, due to their higher than average socio-economic status and due to the investment of Jewish parents in vocational training – Jewish women also likely benefited from the inner mechanics of an ethnic enclave, which for reasons of trust and loyalty would have been inclined to integrate members of that group (even if this was less true for larger firms).[494] Yet even for working-class girls, work in department stores involved a class journey in itself; Émile Zola characterised the position of female sales staff as "neutral [and] ill-defined, somewhere between shopkeepers and ladies," since, as Paul Lerner adds, the job required women employees to handle expensive goods and dress and act in a refined albeit not ostentatious manner.[495] This was not exactly the kind of journey that Tietz and Gugenheim were describing, because for them, as for many others of their social standing, class was assumed but not considered critically in the context of the gender debate. And yet their statements were achieving their primary objective: to undercut the inflammatory remarks about the female sex made by representatives of the textile industries.

We must finally acknowledge how, in pursuing this mission, Tietz and Gugenheim were together with *Der Confectionair* not only potentially appealing to foreign markets but alienating domestic readers and even inflaming labour relations. The *Lette-Verein* retained in its ideology a certain level of congruity with the wider culture of the Imperial German bourgeoisie because it objected to gender equality in principle. Overt support for the women's movement, even with German feminism's moderate mainstream expression in the Imperial period, was, on the other hand, more niche. Additionally, clothiers faced a growing nuisance from organised male clerks. The position of male clerks had changed significantly with the modernisation of the German economy, with an obscuring or loss of the career path for the traditional "commercial assistant" (*Handlungsgehilfe*).[496] Clerking had been regarded as a stepping stone toward business independence, but the complexity of modern

[494] Kaplan reaches similar conclusions in *Jewish Middle Class*, 159, 167–8.
[495] Zola, *Ladies Paradise*, 311; Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, 120.
[496] Adams, *Women Clerks*, 6–7.

labour organisation made such trajectories increasingly unlikely. Professional clerking organisations formed over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most actively opposing women's employment in the trade.[497] Some organisations endorsed union tactics, including strikes, but perhaps even more disconcerting, at least for Jewish employers, was the one that did not.

The German Nationalist Commercial Assistants' Alliance (the *Deutschnationaler Handlungsgehilfen-Verband*, henceforth the DHV), founded in 1893, distanced itself from all forms of socialism in addition to tracing the professional decline of male clerks to both the feminisation of the German commercial workforce and to the "Judaisation of business life"[498] – an ominous phrase later favoured by the Nazis. "[B]orn out of antisemitism,"[499] in its own words, the DHV sought simultaneously to undermine women's employment in the commercial realm as well as women's professional training in commerce. The organisation combined virulent anti-Jewish propaganda, directed at Jews in business, with arguments to show that women were physiologically and psychologically unsuited for commercial work and that middle-class morality was being undermined by women's employment in Wilhelmine department stores.[500] By the outbreak of the First World War, an estimated 40 percent of organised German male commercial employees were members of the DHV.[501]

Just as the DHV was experiencing an upswing in membership after 1909,[502] *Der Confectionair* published a statement made by the Elberfeld branch of the Association of German Commercial Staff (*Verein der Deutschen Kaufleute*) in a personnel supplement. The resolution corrected a false claim made at a public meeting held by the DHV, which had stated that the group of Elberfeld commercial employees had "changed its point of view on the woman question," joining the antifeminist camp of

[497] Ibid., 36–8.
[498] Ute Planert, *Antifeminismus im Kaissereich: Diskurs, soziale Formation und politische Mentalität* (Göttingen, 1998), 75.
[499] Cited in ibid., 71.
[500] Ibid., 73–6.
[501] Ibid., 73.
[502] Adams, *Women Clerks*, 37.

the DHV.[503] Women's employment, the association explained in contrast, was an inevitable development of modern life and economics; any problems arising from it could only be mitigated through collaboration between male and female clerks, and by proceeding with plans for a commercial training school for women in Elberfeld. The employee organisation expressed "deep regret" at the blatant lies of the DHV, which were "only likely to cause discord among commercial assistants and damage their efforts."[504]

The Association of German Commercial Staff was considered "abnormal" in its approach, including its acceptance of collective bargaining tactics and permission for women to join its ranks since 1906.[505] The DHV had, in other words, falsely suggested that the Association had abandoned some of its core principles as a mixed-gender community of clerks. The Elberfeld group, which had its mother organisation in Berlin, was making an active effort to correct the misinformation, which would have shifted the position of female employees in commercial life – as part of preserving its stance on the "Woman Question." *Der Confectionair* was, meanwhile, once again signalling the support of female employees by commercial clothiers while, in this instance, simultaneously pointing employees to an alternative to the *völkisch* antisemitism of the DHV. The publication of the statement by *Der Confectionair* combined a promotion of gender inclusivity with furthering the interests of Jewish employers. In so doing, the journal continued to shape the wider liberal consensus in *Konfektion* – leading it, interestingly, on this occasion, to platform a socialist-oriented organisation.

The question of independent women in business did not figure prominently in *Der Confectionair*, likely because businesswomen and female executives were a rare breed. The recurring women's segment in the journal, discussed further below, dealt mainly with matters relevant to female

[503] "Beilage für die Interessen des Personals," *Der Confectionair* 15, no. 48 (24 February 1910).
[504] Ibid.
[505] Curt Henning, "Zur Geschichte der Angestelltenverbände, 1774–1914," *Soziale Welt* 10, no. 2 (1959), 127, 131. The organisation also supported equal pay for equal work for both sexes. See *Der Verein der Deutschen Kaufleute: Seine Arbeit und seine Ziele* (Berlin, [c. 1912]), 8–9.

employees such as further education and the rights of insured employees. One report from Berlin in 1912, nonetheless, joyfully acknowledged the news that a woman had been elected to a company creditors' committee for the first time, to manage the aftermath of the bankruptcy of a family firm. "The 'woman in commerce,' about whom *Der Confectionair* so often reports, is making progress," observed the introductory sentence of the report, referencing the name of the journal's segment for women.[506] Once again shielded by editorial anonymity, the writer views women's increasing entry into the male worlds of business and work as a positive, teleological process of civilisation through women's emancipation.

By far the most eye-catching of *Der Confectionair*'s woman-themed articles mentioned female workers and businesswomen in the context of a ground-breaking feminist phenomenon in the spring of 1912. "*The importance of women* in the home, in the occupations and in science has increased so remarkably in the last decade," declared *Der Confectionair* on its cover, that "two new value judgements" were shaping women's lives in addition to the "traditional" mode of the housewife: that of the "woman in science and that of the *woman earner*."[507] The full front page was dedicated to the exhibition "The Woman at Home and at Work" ("Die Frau in Haus und Beruf") in Berlin, organised under the patronage of the German Lyceum Club, a women's professional association, but drawing in participants from across women's groups. The goal of the exhibition was to show the capabilities of the modern woman in all her realms of activity – a prelude to her demand for rights and opportunities. For *Der Confectionair*, the exhibition was a major scoop, in print immediately the following day, with an additional, nearly half-page article inside the paper detailing the grand opening proceedings.

As possibly the most vivid collaboration between German business and the women's movement in the early twentieth century, the exhibition "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" is the subject of a separate

[506] "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 41 (10 October 1912).
[507] Front page and "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 8 (25 February 1912). Emphases in the original.

chapter below. For now, a few central points will suffice to illuminate *Der Confectionair*'s take on the Woman Question. Springboarding from the highlighted "woman earner," the editorial piece went on to emphasise the pre-eminent "economic importance" of women in commerce, in the visual arts, and in the arts and crafts, once again connecting the women's cause to the professional clothing trade.[508] In addition, however, the front-page article acknowledged the political significance of the event for women; the piece noted that the exhibition would "attract a large number of the most well-known pioneers in the field of the women's movement to the *Reich* capital" because the first German Women's Congress was being held in conjunction with the exhibition.[509] The images from this event that circulated in the press, observes Despina Stratigakos, "gave Berliners a rare glimpse of a politicized mass of women," only recently welcomed into the realm of German political life through the 1909 Law of Association.[510] This was all good, reckoned *Der Confectionair*. The words "German women's congress" were printed in bold above precise dates for the gathering, which would, like the exhibition, take place in the buildings of the Berlin Zoological Garden.

As an illustrated publication – which nonetheless included only few pictures in the Imperial period – *Der Confectionair* could have chosen to display the unprecedented sea of expectant women's faces visible in the meeting halls of the Zoological Garden, like many German newspapers. Instead, the journal went down a different route. A circular portrait of the "the soul" of the exhibition, Mrs Counsellor of Commerce, Hedwig Heyl, featured prominently inside the journal. Heyl, whose name was written in bold letters on the journal's front page, was a prominent businesswoman, addressed, however, through the honorary distinction of her husband, as was customary. *Der Confectionair* surprisingly overlooked the involvement of the Empress Augusta Victoria as the unlikely "protector" of women's work and the patron of the exhibition, though the articles did observe the role of her lady-in-waiting, as the exhibition's honorary chairwoman. The real royalty of the affair, as far as *Der Confectionair* was concerned, was Heyl, whose efforts received high praise.

[508] Front page, *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 8 (25 February 1912).
[509] Ibid.
[510] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 128–9.

Except for Heyl's portrait, which captured the spirit of the exhibition in a feminist and prominent business figure, *Der Confectionair* spoke of "the essence of the woman herself, as it is symbolically represented [in the exhibition] as a blossoming tree stretching far in all directions[...]."[511] The text referred to one of Ida Stroever's monumental artworks created for the event, showing a verdant tree and naked female figures, some, per Stratigakos analysis, "drinking from the stream of productive life."[512] *Der Confectionair* apparently interpreted the exhibition and its displays of female productivity as the blossoms that Stroever omitted from her painted trees. Yet going further, the journal envisaged that women "may reap rich fruits from the exhibition, the success and importance of which is already guaranteed by its layout and organization," predicting that the metaphorical tree would bear fruit.[513] This was one of the journal's rare mentions of women's inner being, suggesting in this instance, through the exhibition, that both women's domestic and professional accomplishments were natural extensions of the female self. *Der Confectionair* also projected that "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" would make gains for the women's cause, which it welcomed. According to the journal, the recipe for success was to be found in the way in which the exhibition imitated in its physical organisation a modern institution with proven results in the realms of public engagement and propaganda: the department store. This connection was one of several to create a powerful symbiosis between commercial clothiers and the Wilhelmine women's movement in Berlin in 1912, explored further in the next chapter.

Der Confectionair's reporting on the women's exhibition was in many ways a culmination of a long-standing positive stance on the Woman Question. The journal had for years provided a platform for the initiatives of women's organisations, fostering good relations and eagerly promoting women's education and employment. Its position was, in this respect, progressive among the German bourgeoisie for imagining that women could and even should reconcile family and marriage with work and careers – even if it ignored entirely the difficulties faced by working-class women, which

[511] Compare with Stratigakos' discussion on Heyl in *A Women's Berlin*, 98–99.
[512] Ibid., 109.
[513] Front page, *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 8 (25 February 1912).

were ironically nowhere as conspicuous as in Berlin *Konfektion*. Interestingly, *Der Confectionair* apparently made no effort to remind readers of women's maternal, reproductive, or conjugal responsibilities, which many feared would be neglected with the proliferation of "new women," and which one might expect to find as a counterweight to the journal's other suggestions.[514] We may assume that women's "traditional" roles were all part of the greater equation, especially as they were so clearly combined in the 1912 exhibition and personally modelled by many bourgeois German feminists (and wives of clothiers, no doubt).

Unexpected Women's Spaces

Earlier in this chapter, I argued that an extension of the German-Jewish public sphere could be seen operating in *Der Confectionair*, despite the fact that the journal neither claimed to be a Jewish paper nor included explicitly Jewish sections. This rationale has precedent in studies of the women's press and print media, which similarly demonstrate how the women's public sphere in printed media could be "defined expansively to include newspapers and periodicals directed at female readerships, *as well as those aspects of the 'general press' that were produced by and/or for women.*"[515] Both Jewish and women's public spheres are active and simultaneously overlap in *Der Confectionair* in the decade and a half leading up to the First World War (and during it), after which Jewish issues and women's issues alike seem to lose their importance in the paper. This section explores the unexpected public women's spaces that materialised in *Der Confectionair*, how they intersected with the Jewishness of those involved, and why they emerged in the first place.

[514] This can be contrasted further with journals such as *Die Damengarderobe*, geared specifically toward professional women in (non-commercial) clothing design and tailoring, with a female editor in Josephine Graz from Berlin. Writing in 1913, Graz, for instance, stated that "[a] woman who carries no feelings of motherliness is an aberration of her sex." *Die Damengarderobe* (15 Nov 1913).

[515] Alexis Easley, Clare Gill, and Beth Rodgers, eds., *Women, Periodicals, and Print Culture in the Victorian Period* (Edinburgh, 2019), 4 (emphasis added); Deborah Mutch, "Making Space for Women: The Labour Leader, The Clarion, and the Women's Column," in ibid., 365–78. See also Yun, *Engendering the Woman Question*, on the early Chinese women's press and the fact that commercial women's publications were, in themselves, mixed-gender spaces since they tended to be "overwhelmingly edited and staffed by men." Ibid., 5.

As established above, *Der Confectionair* must have expected a large proportion of its readers to be Jewish (or, at the very least, philosemitic), given how overtly and sometimes frequently it placed Jewish issues high on its agenda. In a similar vein, *Der Confectionair* was well aware that some of its readers were women. In his memoirs and unpublished company history of L. Schottlaender publishing and *Der Confectionair*, former owner Erich Greiffehagen frames the very origins of Berlin *Konfektion* as a socio-cultural transformation in the lives of German women, which changed not only how women dressed but eliminated visits to the tailor's shop and the practical need for women to sew their own clothes.[516] In assuming some of the traditional roles played by women, the ready-made clothing industry helped create a new female audience in the woman consumer, tying, by extension, the history of *Der Confectionair* to that of women's modernity.

Der Confectionair was not oriented toward private consumers but businesses. This focus included, however, appealing not only to entrepreneurs and company owners but to other family members who might be reading the paper – and might have sway over the main breadwinner. In the interwar period, the journal began to include entertainment portions in the form of crossword puzzles and serialised novels, commissioning famous authors for the job.[517] One such contributor was German-Jewish author Margarete Michaelson (1873–1924), whose novel "*Die Konfektionsbaron*" ("The Ready-to-Wear Baron") appeared posthumously in 1925 under her male pseudonym Ernst Georgy.[518] According to Greiffenhagen, the journal branched into light-hearted content specifically for "the wives of our readers, especially in small towns [...]."[519] On the one hand, then, *Der Confectionair*

[516] Hagen, "Die Geschichte." Greiffenhagen changed his name later to Hagen but will be referred to in text as Greiffenhagen to avoid confusion.
[517] Greiffenhagen highlights the role of author Artur Landsberger, who had personal connections to *Konfektion*, in ibid. Concurrent with his involvement with *Der Confectionair*, Landsberger also published in 1925 the dystopian novel *Berlin ohne Juden* (Berlin without Jews) as a response to the perhaps better-known *Die Stadt ohne Juden* (*The City without Jews*) by Hugo Bettauer from 1923. Landsberger's book, in which Germany exiles its Jews, pointed to the absurdity of *völkish* ideology and the cultural and economic devastation that would follow for wider German society from the loss of its Jewry.
[518] On Georgy, see "Margarete Michaelson" entry in Elisabeth Friedrichs, *Die deutschsprachigen Schriftstellerinnen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts. Ein Lexikon.* (Stuttgart, 1981), 206. Further on the family, see the sister's entry "Jarno Jessen (Anna Michaelson)" in *Große Jüdische National-Biographie*, ed. Salomon Winiger (Cernăuți, 1928), 3: 269. Anna Michaelson was involved in documenting the 1912 women's exhibition, discussed in the following chapter.
[519] Hagen, "Die Geschichte."

brought to these provincial women a whiff of modernity from the metropolis, inviting them to participate. On the other hand, the journal's "feminine" content showed a noteworthy thematic narrowing in the Weimar period, receding into well-worn stereotypes about women's preference and predilection for the non-intellectual.

The output of *Der Confectionair* in the Wilhelmine period stands, in this respect, in striking contrast to the 1920s. By the Weimar era, German women had been enfranchised and middle-class women had come to exercise a higher degree of autonomy over their own affairs, including their sexuality, education, and working life. To some extent, the Woman Question had therefore become a "non-issue" among the broader middle-class public; the need to convince readers of women's virtues (or deficiencies, for that matter) was less pressing, at least in the decade after the First World War. At the same time, *Der Confectionair* no longer represented a tight-knit and majority Jewish professional community but sought broader appeal among those in the textile trade. It could no longer cater as lavishly to the niche interests of a small group of progressive liberals based in Berlin.

From the beginning, *Der Confectionair* had assumed that career women were among its readers. A conspicuous advert from the first issue in 1886 – when the entire paper was but a few pages long – related "a rare business opportunity for ladies."[520] The notice sought (middle-class) women to settle down in the provinces to work as independent regional agents for the Society for Scientific Tailoring Art in Berlin, promising that each representative would "be able to support herself brilliantly."[521] A similar awareness of its female readers was reiterated by *Der Confectionair* in 1911; apart from laywomen, looking to impress with their knowledge or hungry for the latest joke about *Konfektion*, a writer explained, businesswomen and professional women such as bookkeepers were also among its audience.[522] Browsing the paper on the way to work or taking precious time after a long day, the article maintained, working women incorporated *Der Confectionair* into their daily routines. For the

[520] *Der Confectionair* 1, no. 1 (20 January 1886), reproduced in *Der Konfektionär 40*, ed. Schottlaender, 8.
[521] Ibid.
[522] "Unsere Leser," *Der Confectionair* 26, no. 3 (19 January 1911).

female commercial publisher, the journal was an essential source of material, the piece noted; in a passionate frenzy she would cut the entire advertising section into pieces, leaving a trail of destruction in her wake.[523]

Der Confectionair made special efforts, furthermore, to establish a professional female readership. In 1913, for example, a special milliners' issue *of Der Confectionair* was produced with a circulation of 71,000, including copies sent out to the professional community of female modistes.[524] The most noteworthy investment was the journal segment "Die Frau im Geschäft" ("The Woman in Commerce"), which made a regular appearance at least in the early 1910s.[525] The primary female-focused feature in the journal, "The Woman in Commerce" filled around half a page and comprised several distinct articles. Typical themes included news and discussion about women's vocational training and matters of women's employee insurance. Aside from its staff magazines and special employee supplements, *Der Confectionair* thus created a forum specifically to serve women's professional needs and interests, which it ostensibly (and correctly) saw as partially distinct not only from business affairs but from general (male) professional and personnel concerns.

Der Confectionair cultivated, then, a "women's sphere" in a broader sense through its frequent engagement with women's affairs and, as I argue below, through the intersections of these themes with women's professional involvement in the journal. Like Deborah Mutch, Karen Hunt and June Hannam, I take the view that a "women's space" in the press need not necessarily have the word "woman" in the title.[526] The fact that *Der Confectionair* wrote about the Woman Question with such fervour can be considered evidence for a "women's space" materialising in the journal, specifically in the segments on Berlin and internal trade affairs, where this sphere intersected with both Jewish and professional spheres in the printed press. In addition to this more contested idea, the

[523] Ibid.
[524] *Der Confectionair* 28, no. 24 (20. Juni 1913).
[525] The segment was paused during the First World War and did not reappear in the volumes for 1925 and 1926, which constitute my research material for the 1920s.
[526] I borrow here from Deborah Mutch's discussion on the women's column in the Victorian periodical press, which she similarly conceptualises as a "women's space." Mutch, "Making Space," 366.

abovementioned women's segment for professional women constituted an unambiguous, designated women's space within the publication.

What about the role of the authors and editors? Erich Greiffenhagen, having migrated from Germany after Hitler's appointment as chancellor in 1933 to France and later to the United States (and assumed the anglicised name Eric G. Hagen), makes an interesting suggestion in his unpublished company history from the 1960s concerning the origins of the "feminist" content in the journal (although not in so many words). When discussing how *Der Confectionair* catered to "the wives of [...] readers," Greiffenhagen mentions that "Karo had already published social reports earlier, but they stopped after his death [...]."[527] He therefore seems to imply that articles from the Wilhelmine period, which dealt in women's affairs from a more societal (rather than entertainment-focused) perspective, were not only intended to serve female readers, and specifically to reach out to the female family members of businessmen, but could be traced to the influence of Siegfried Karo, the chief editor of *Der Confectionair* from 1886 until his death in 1918.

Karo is an obscure figure, not to be confused with his Berlin contemporaries Siegfried Caro (1898–1979), nicknamed "Hüne," who is mentioned in the correspondences of Gershom Scholem, Walter Benjamin, and Else Lasker-Schüler, or the Siegfried Caro (1850–1933) who was involved in a number of Jewish organisations and served on the board of the synagogue in Lützowstraße together with Berthold Israel.[528] Neither the published nor unpublished chronicles of the journal *Der Confectionair* elaborate on Karo's background or political inclinations. It is fair to assume that he came from a Jewish family, although he seems not to have been prominently involved in the Jewish community. Either way, Karo was the pivot for editorial and personnel affairs at *Der Confectionair*

[527] Hagen, "Die Geschichte."
[528] On the first Caro, see the digitised Else Lasker-Schüler Archive, Series 4: Caro Family, NIL URL: https://www.nli.org.il/en/archives/NNL_ARCHIVE_AL990038146170205171/NLI#$FL82501650, and Walter Benjamin, Gershom Scholem, *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem*, (Cambridge, MA, 1992), 24. On the second Caro, see, for e.g., *Jüdische Familienforschung* 14, no. 49 (1938), 929; *Central-Verein-Zeitung* 10, no. 8 (20 February 1931), 90; *Israelitisches Familienblatt* 49 (7 December 1933), 13.

through his connections in *Konfektion* and Berlin more broadly. With his departure in 1918, the journal seems to have stopped reporting on professional *Jewish* affairs and the Woman Question altogether.

Greiffenhagen's observation about Karo cannot be dismissed since all journalistic pieces went to print through the latter. In other words, it seems there was a sympathetic *man* at the helm of *Der Confectionair*'s journalistic engagement with the women's cause. Strikingly, Karo approved and perhaps even initiated the expansion of a professional paper into more or less explicit women's spheres in print media, going beyond stereotypically gendered content for women, such as appeared more frequently in the Weimar issues, into advocating for women's organisations. Karo's individual agency as co-founder and leading editor was significant and his role in these matters therefore likely also; it would be misleading, however, to think he acted alone or even assume that he was the driving force behind the more "feminist" inclined content.

Karo had female staff and colleagues. Like other parts of the male-dominated Wilhelmine press, *Der Confectionair* employed a growing number of women in line with general trends in white-collar fields of work. The journal did not make much noise about the fact, but photographs from the company headquarters suggest that women filled most of the lower ranks of the production team in particular.[529] If pictures from the 1920s are anything to go by, virtually every department of the journal had a mixed-gender composition – though the bigger desks were typically occupied by men.[530] Judging from the images, male clerks retained their importance in customer service while the "propaganda" (advertising) department and the accounts office were predominantly female-staffed.[531] Two offices stand out among the rest: the editorial offices for fashion and for Berlin affairs. In both photographic scenarios, a woman sits at the main editorial desk. No individuals are named.

[529] A series of large pictures from the *Kurstraße* offices were published in *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 4 (23 January 1902).
[530] Schottlaender, *Der Konfektionär 40*, 10–1.
[531] Ibid.

Der Confectionair employed several women in important capacities but with varying degrees of attention to their contributions. The anniversary publications from 1911 and 1926 mention a number of female figures including "Frau Lüdecke," an expert in statistics and business organisation (not pictured by *Der Confectionair*), Elisabeth von Stephani-Hahn (b. von Hahn), *Werkbund* member and the leading journalist for display window decoration, and Toni Faller, head of journal subscriptions and personnel. In addition, the fashion editorial department was managed by Gertrud Lenning, who also headed an affiliate office in Paris.[532] Lenning and von Stephani-Hahn exemplify the tendency in Wilhelmine culture to pigeonhole women – quite often with their assent – into roles that were thought to benefit from "female" expertise; as women, they apparently possessed a good radar for tastefulness and aesthetics. "It is the job of the decorator to do justice to the discerning eye of the woman," maintained von Stephani-Hahn, suggesting at once that women were the main audience and best judges and also a crucial professional resource.[533] "[F]emale taste is decisive in the area [of fashionable dress]," asserted Lenning similarly in an interview with famous female stage artists in *Der Confectionair* in 1911.[534] Like Lenning's interview subjects, von Stephani-Hahn was a celebrity, as chief decorator for the Wertheim department store. The cult of celebrity contributed significantly to the rise of the myth of the female fashion expert; von Stephani-Hahn's case demonstrates further how factors of class and fame intersected with gender in the increasing prominence of women in journalism, particularly in whether they, like von Stephani-Hahn, were able to write in their own name.

At least one further female character left a lasting imprint on *Der Confectionair*, without, however, being mentioned in either company anniversary publication. Käte Herz (née Gottschalkson) joined the editorial staff in 1901 as the right hand to Karo. A notice in 1926 celebrated her 25 years of "loyal work" at the firm, mentioning especially her close friendship with Karo.[535] Herz's responsibility was,

[532] Ibid., 4.
[533] Elisabeth von Stephani-Hahn, *Schaufenster Kunst* (Berlin, 1923), 82.
[534] Anonymous [Gertrud Lenning], "Die Mode im Lichte der Rampe – Wie such unsere Bühnensterne kleiden," *Der Confectionair* 16, no. 3 (19 January 1911).
[535] "25 Jahre beim 'Konfektionär,'" *Der Confectionair* 41, no. 98 (8 December 1926).

the text explained, the "entire Berlin news section" but she also gradually took on a more specialised role in reporting on professional matters of the ready-made clothing business and millinery. She took a step back in her professional responsibilities at *Der Confectionair* following her marriage to "the well-known Berlin womenswear clothier" Max Herz, continuing, however, as an employee and contributor in a less intensive capacity.[536] The notice of Herz's employment anniversary acknowledged the plethora of publications in *Der Confectionair* that had "sprouted" from her editorial involvement.[537]

The forgotten figure of Herz, in other words, had exerted considerable influence on *Der Confectionair* in the Wilhelmine period and even after the war, when her work in the Berlin office was, it seems, photographically immortalised in the journal. She worked in close contact with Karo and was able to carve out a journalistic space for herself outside of the stereotypically "feminine." The bulk of the feminist-leaning – or what Greiffenhagen described as "social" – content in *Der Confectionair* can be attributed to Herz with some degree of confidence, since most of the relevant journal articles fell under her professional purview – as did the reports on Jewish affairs. It is possible that Herz was additionally involved in the women's segment "The Woman in Commerce." Whatever the case may be, it was in the more general context of Berlin and professional news that the topic of the Woman Question gained most visibility.

From biographical information available we may deduce that Lenning and von Stephani-Hahn were not from Jewish families, while Herz, and Faller, boss of the subscriptions department, probably were.[538] The latter two share a commonality in the relative anonymity of their work – even if Faller was pictured and identified among the otherwise all-male senior staff of *Der Konfektionär* in 1926.[539]

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[536] Ibid.
[537] Ibid.
[538] Herz's background is suggested by her social connections to Karo and marriage within *Konfektion*, while the Holocaust Survivors and Victims database identifies that a woman from Berlin matching Faller's name and age died in Treblinka extermination camp in 1942. https://www.ushmm.org/online/hsv/person_view.php?PersonId=1473291.
[539] Schottlaender, *Konfektionär 40*, 5. On the spelling of the journal name, see footnote 403 above.

In contrast to von Stephani-Hahn, neither could boast of a celebrity status to support their application for employment or encourage the public acknowledgement of their work. Rather, they probably entered the enterprise through Schottlaender's most frequent channel of recruitment: Karo's contacts. It seems, then, that Jewish and non-Jewish women may have taken different paths into the workforce of *Der Confectionair*, the former through social networks and the latter through their recruitment as experts on a gendered/celebrity basis. The journal's outspoken stance on the Woman Question, furthermore, seems to have originated at the former nexus, while the "internal" path of Herz to journalism may have been the very reason that her role has fallen into the shadows of history.

In searching for an explanation for *Der Confectionair*'s particular political outlook, we thus discover a "polyvocal" space, to borrow from Margaret Beetham on the basic nature of periodicals.[540] In addition to being mixed-gender, the group of creators and audience consisted of Jews and non-Jews. As chief editor, Karo set the tone. Yet the identity of the paper was ultimately defined through teamwork. Women's participation and agency in this context was contingent on the gendered conventions that dominated contemporary media professions, including the practice of female editorial anonymity.[541] Nonetheless, a handful of women did take on prominent positions in *Der Confectionair* – especially as the journal was connected to the culture and gendered recruitment patterns of *Konfektion* as a "women's field." Käte Herz came to the job as an assistant, probably through the Jewish fashion trade, subsequently expanding her professional domain through her insight into Berlin affairs and growing expertise in the clothing business. "[Hiding] behind the 'editorial we'" allowed Herz to branch out from her prescribed female realm into business, economics, and current affairs, without "fear of compromising [her] middle-class respectability," to lean once more on Easely, Gill and Rodgers,[542] and without loss of credibility for *Der Confectionair*

[540] Margaret Beetham, "Preface: The Role of Gender in Defining the 'Women's Magazine,'" in *Women and the Periodical Press in China's Long Twentieth Century*, ed. Michel Hockx, Joan Judge, and Barbara Mittler (Cambridge, 2018), xxvi.
[541] Easley, Gill, and Rodgers, *Women, Periodicals, and Print Culture*, 2.
[542] Ibid.

among male readers. Behind the scenes, Herz helped shape the journal into a public platform for both Jewish affairs and sympathisers of the middle-class feminist cause.

Epilogue: The Women Left Behind?

The elephant in the room in this discussion is the question of lower-class female garment workers. Besides associating Berlin *Konfektion* with the emancipatory "lady havens" of fin-de-siècle department stores, contemporary Imperial Germans connected the field, perhaps even more frequently, with the misery of poor women in the domestic industries. Contrary to the former image, the dependence of the clothing industry on "sweated" labour did no favours for its reputation. In line with this difference (but also consistent with its politics), *Der Confectionair* erected a Chinese wall between its treatment of the Woman Question and its discussion on workers' rights; the two never intersected, in other words. While reporting on the women's cause was high on the agenda (c. 1909–1914), an intense focus on labour relations ran conspicuously parallel to it; in the very next issue following *Der Confectionair*'s elaborate treatment of the women's exhibition "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" in 1912, for example, the journal reported on strikes by menswear tailors in 32 German cities, quoting a commercial clothier's lament in response: "[a] war has been declared on us"![543]

The welfare of homeworkers was not a central concern for Berlin clothiers. A report from the industrial court arbitrating between workers and employers during the Berlin strike of homeworkers in 1896 paints a far from flattering picture, especially regarding the responses from womenswear clothiers.[544] Womenswear firms apparently insisted that the labour movement was "none of their business" and that homeworkers should direct their concerns to their real employers, the middlemen, who were allegedly being paid sufficient wages by clothiers.[545] Similar perspectives were presented in *Der Confectionair*, with numerous writers pushing back on the prevalent impression that garment

[543] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 9 (3 March 1912).
[544] O. Weigert, "Der Strike in der Berliner Herren- und Damen-Konfektion," *Mittheilungen des Verbandes deutscher Gewerbegerichte* 4, no. 11, published in *Soziale Praxis* 5, no. 22 (27 February 1896), 626–30.
[545]Ibid., 627.

workers were receiving "*Hungerlöhne*" (starvation wages).[546] The question of sick insurance for homeworkers was likewise treated with reservations, with obvious concerns expressed about the potential costs incurred to employers.[547] Notwithstanding some of the arguments made, there was no ignorance among clothiers about their dependence on homeworkers. Homework was among the most frequently recurring themes in *Der Confectionair* and also a regular topic in the journal's special supplement for department and retail stores.[548]

The issue of homework, however, provoked profound anxieties among the journal's writers, especially in relation to legislative labour reform. While some recognised the financial pressures faced by lower-ranking workers, the idea of fixing a minimum wage was vehemently opposed across the board or seen as impracticable due to the "fluctuating [nature of] women's fashion."[549] The prospect of ending homework altogether received strong responses: "[T]he discontinuation of homework would not only be a death blow to our field but would call into question the existence of *all families* in which *women are the main breadwinner* [...]," wrote one anonymous commentator in 1902.[550] Another contributor, discussing the parliamentary proposal to establish trade boards (*Lohnämter*) to set minimum wage levels in 1911, maintained that the measure would "*damage the domestic industries so greatly that it would jeopardise the existence of homework*."[551] A minimum wage requirement would, the article continued, constitute a "*serious encroachment on the basic liberal economic principles of [German] economic life*."[552] As far as J. Landau, a member of *Der Confectionair*'s inner circle of employees, was concerned, the enemies of the trade were not only those who raised objections on behalf of the working class but the workers themselves, who made trouble for employers. In this battle, observed Landau, "*Der Konfektionär* with its troop of twenty-

[546] For e.g., *Der Confectionair* 26, no. 34 (20 August 1911).
[547] See for e.g., the speech of Ferdinand Manheimer, the son of fashion mogul Valentin Manheimer, held before the assembly of representatives for the fields of ready-made clothing production, published in "Neues aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 40 (2 October 1902).
[548] Department stores relied on homework not only for fashion and clothing articles but for other merchandise such as toys.
[549] *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 41 (9 October 1902).
[550] Ibid. Emphasis in the original.
[551] *Der Confectionair* 26, no. 35 (27 August 1911). Emphasis in the original.
[552] Ibid. Emphasis in the original.

four lead soldiers; with its small army of [alphabetic] letters, which are thought to yield great power, is proving itself a valiant ally."[553]

The contrast between these assessments and those offered on behalf of middle-class women is striking. While *Der Confectionair* campaigned enthusiastically for women's professional education and employment, it simultaneously engaged in a war on multiple fronts, as the "defensive weapon" for Berlin *Konfektion*, against lower-class women workers and their bourgeois supporters.[554] The separation of homework from the Woman Question was not unexpected but reflected the general treatment of the two as distinct issues by middle-class Germans. Nor was the opposition to protective legislation especially surprising, since, whatever clothiers may have claimed in times of industrial action, the entire business model of clothing companies and department stores depended on the outsourcing of production. Finally, multiple levels of difference, including class, gender, and, most often, ethnicity/religion separated commercial clothiers from homeworkers, making it difficult for them to relate to the concerns of the latter.

Still, *Der Confectionair* bore witness to an existential struggle that trumped all of the above considerations. The journal's position on homework invariably traced back to the idea of protecting the freedom of trade. For some middle-class German Jews, liberal economics was not one among many politico-economic orientations but a basis for Jewish emancipation. Most famously perhaps, Ludwig Holländer, the chief legal counsel of the *Central-Verein,* influenced the German-Jewish public through the Jewish press, linking Jewish belonging in Germany to the role of Jews in the economy.[555] "*Just as economic liberalism alone can emancipate us today, our greatest enemy is*

[553] J. Landau, "40 Jahre Berlin. Vier Jahrzehnte Weltbekleidung," in *Konfektionär 40,* 114. Given that the Imperial German alphabet has 25–26 letters, excluding the special characters (I and J were often treated as the same letter), it is unclear what exactly Landau means with the figure twenty-four.
[554] Ibid.
[555] *Der Confectionair* highlighted the patriotic activities of Holländer and Jews in the commercial field during the First World War, reporting how the former, in his other prominent capacity as deputy secretary of the B'nai B'rith lodges of Germany, delivered "gifts of love" in the form of medical equipment to the frontlines of combat together with others. "Aus der Branche," *Der Confectionair* 30, no. 7 (24 January 1915).

economic reaction," wrote Holländer in 1907, describing human rights as the "father" of "socio-economic" (and political) liberalism.[556] The Wilhelmine *Central-Verein* understood the fight against antisemitism in German public life and the defence of Jewish economic life as two sides of the same coin. The periodical *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, which endeavoured to represent all Jews, and the Viennese *Die Neuzeit* likewise "openly propagated a free market economy as inherently valuable and as a basis for Jewish integration."[557] The language of defensive warfare used by *Der Confectionair* to address the question of homeworkers resonated with the tone of German-Jewish commentators who believed Jewish security in Germany was contingent on the freedom of the market.

Bourgeois German Jews, like bourgeois Germans more generally, disagreed about how to tackle the problem of homework – and, indeed, on the extent to which it was a problem at all. The Woman Question similarly divided both the German general public and German-Jewish communities. Few middle-class Germans connected the two issues, and bourgeois businessmen were by default inclined to oppose government-imposed restrictions on the market economy – though for Jews, as a historically vulnerable minority, the incentive was greater and the response from some Jewish representatives of the commercial sphere perhaps therefore especially passionate. The decision to endorse or actively promote the rights of middle-class women was apparently not, by contrast, a default position in German business and industry, even when female labour was viewed as a resource. In the broader cultural sphere of the Wilhelmine bourgeoisie, feminine ideals of motherhood and domesticity held their ground.

The most striking thing about the politics of *Der Confectionair* is therefore not its lack of enthusiasm about state intervention in the economy – even if the zealousness of its response is conspicuous and

[556] Ludwig Holländer, "Die sozialen Voraussetzungen der antisemitischen Bewegung in Deutschland," *Im deutschen Reich* 13, no. 9 (September 1907), 482–3, 485. Emphasis in the original. The article is based on a speech given by Holländer to the general assembly of the *Central-Verein* on 25. February 1907. Holländer elaborated on his ideas in a book published in 1909 under the same title.
[557] Reuveni, "Emancipation through Consumption," 18. See also ibid., 20; Penslar, *Shylock's Children*, 150.

suggests deeper underlying sensitivities – but rather its take on the middle-class Woman Question. "[T]he Woman Question was [considered] societally relevant and played a substantial role in [German] public discourse," argues Ulla Wischermann, whose research on two major illustrated magazines, *Illustrirte Zeitung* and *Die Gartenlaube*, provides a case in point.[558] The two upper- and middle-class publications respectively reported on the work of feminist activists and the *Lette-Verein* to a surprising degree alongside themes of women's education and employment more generally. With the diversification of the German feminist movement toward the end of the century, however, *Die Gartenlaube* focused exclusively on the moderate ("conservative") wing of the women's movement.[559] *Illustrirte Zeitung*, meanwhile, "largely lost interest in the (middle class) Woman Question" in the 1890s.[560]

While there remains a dearth of research about the relationship between the middle-class German public and the bourgeois women's movement as reflected in the press, Wischermann's work is likely indicative of broader trends.[561] Neither magazine showed any significant interest in writing about the work or welfare of working-class women (including homeworkers) – publications from bourgeois reform circles, of course, differed in this respect, although even there the problems of women labourers were less commonly considered through the gender lens. The proletarian women's movement was, in a similar vein, either opposed or ignored entirely in *Die Gartenlaube* and *Illustrirte Zeitung* alike.[562] Most importantly in comparison to *Der Confectionair*, both publications accepted women's waged work and careers only as a necessary evil and "never in the context of women's self-realisation"; *Illustrirte Zeitung* even approached such deviation of women of the higher classes from bourgeois feminine ideals "with defamatory misogyny," according to Wischermann.[563]

[558] Wischermann, *Frauenfrage und Presse*, 172.
[559] Ibid., 173.
[560] Wischermann's research does not go beyond the year 1900.
[561] On the fashion/women's magazine *Der Bazar* and its approach to the Woman Question, see Barbara Krautwald, *Bürgerliche Frauenbilder im 19. Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld, 2021).
[562] Wischermann, *Frauenfrage und Presse*, 174.
[563] Ibid., 173, 174.

The reporting of *Der Confectionair* could, then, be regarded as more "radical" in the wider context of the bourgeois (non-feminist) press, even though it never pledged allegiance to the progressive wing of the women's movement (from which it remained separated by the ideological rift between socialism and liberalism). Since mainstream (moderate) feminism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries followed general bourgeois culture in idolising marriage and motherhood, *Der Confectionair* occupied a liminal position between two predominant strands of German feminism. Just as interesting, if not more so, is that the journal's approach to gender differed from that of most middle-class German Jews, but especially bourgeois German-Jewish feminism, which hewed close to moderate German feminism as advocated by leading ideologues such as Helene Lange, who "perpetuated the conventional notion that motherhood was the destiny of women."[564] The topics of matrimony, women's maternalism and domesticity, foregrounded by Wilhelmine German feminists of all camps, shone by their absence in *Der Confectionair*.

The journal's strict professional focus may offer a partial explanation; women's roles and responsibilities in the family and in the home may simply have lacked sufficient relevance. More importantly, however, department stores and fashion houses across the English-speaking world were expressing their support for the women's movement, providing an impetus for the German clothing trade to do the same. By comparison, the women's cause was not commercialised in *Der Confectionair*, even if it may have helped indirectly to elevate the international appeal of German clothing firms. Anglophone firms sided specifically with – and capitalised on – suffragism, furthermore, while *Der Confectionair* aligned with the non-suffragist tendencies of the German women's movement. What is the explanation, then, for *Der Confectionair*'s somewhat idiosyncratic approach?

[564] Marion Kaplan, *The Jewish Feminist movement in Germany: The campaigns of the Jüdischer Frauenbund*, 1904–1938 (Westport, Conn., 1979), 65.

The liberalism of the "1848ers" seems to have been influential; indeed, it was around 1848 that "Liberalism and the Jews came together," notes Abigail Green.[565] German feminism originated in this period through figures such as Louise Otto-Peters, who declared on behalf of the early German women's movement that "[...]the only emancipation we demand for our women is the emancipation of their work."[566] While feminism had grown more conservative by the Wilhelmine era, focusing on the virtues of motherliness, the legacy of this thinking survived in organisations such as the *Lette-Verein*, inspired, like the first German feminist organisation, the *Allgemeine deutscher Frauenverein* (the General German Women's Association), founded in the same year, by the March revolution. Combined with progressive liberal currents of the English-speaking world, through business and through the international connections of German Jews, this tradition assumed a particular expression in *Der Confectionair*. Berlin *Konfektion* appeared, in this way, as the ultimate proof of the emancipatory power of economic liberalism, not just for Jews as a minority but (middle-class) women too.

[565] Abigail Green, "1848 and Beyond: Jews in the National and International Politics of Secularism and Revolution," in *Jews, Liberalism, Antisemitism: A Global History*, ed. Abigail Green and Simon Levis Sullam (London, 2021), 341.
[566] Otto is cited in English in Katharine Anthony, *Feminism in Germany and Scandinavia* (New York, 1915), 181.

CHAPTER 3:

A Fair Exchange: Berlin Clothiers and the 1912 Women's Exhibition "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf"

"People have generally become a little suspicious of exhibitions, because for the most part they are strongly associated with commercial profit and significantly play down spiritual values by creating [disquieting] amusement parks with all sorts of – sometimes quite inferior – popular amusements," wrote Frieda Radel in the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* on 27 February, 1912.[567] Looking back on the opening of the women's exhibition entitled "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," "Woman in the Home and at Work," a few days earlier, Radel noted her amazement that no such evils presided at the Berlin event. Tasteful visual arts impressed on audiences the nature of women's historical journey from servitude (a societal state of "barbarism") into modernity and independent creativity. A festive cantata by a female composer culminated in a performance from a high-profile female choir and leading soprano, imploring women to "fight" and "wrestle" for recognition, before an audience of Germany's leading politicians, royalty, and high society, including the Empress Augusta Victoria, the exhibition's foremost patron. A tour of the exhibition, rounding off the ceremony, dispelled any remaining doubt for Radel: "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" was an unadulterated demonstration of "what liberated female power, what the freely developing female intelligence, and freely active female charity are able to achieve."[568]

The 1912 Berlin expo was the first major German exhibition to display women's work and work products. Preceded by two other exhibitions in Europe – the 1895 "Women's Exhibition from Past to Present" in Copenhagen, the first national exhibition to present women's diverse contributions to society, and the Hague "National Exhibition of Women's Labour" in 1898[569] – "Die Frau in Haus

[567] Frieda Radel, "Von der Berliner Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,' *Hamburger Fremdenblatt,* no. 48 (27 February 1912). The suggested translation "disquieting" refers here to "trubulosen," which is not standard German and I suggest as a possible liberal adaptation of the English "troublous" by the author in question. Credit to Despina Stratigakos for identifying this newspaper article, which has been preserved without author or bibliographical reference in the collection "Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf' des Deutschen Lyzeumsclubs in Berlin 1912," Ref: 111-1_4642, HSA.
[568] Ibid.
[569] See Eva Lous, "Striving for a national movement. The Women's Exhibition from Past to Present in Copenhagen, 1895, in *Een vaderland voor vrouwen – A Fatherland for Women: the 1898 "Nationale*

und Beruf" reflected the format of the universal exhibition, with its basic premise to provide what Tony Bennett calls "a specular dominance over a totality."[570] At the Berlin expo, this meant offering an all-encompassing view of women's achievements in Imperial German society. Not without precedent, then, the Berlin event was nonetheless singular among women's exhibitions of the early twentieth century in its level of ambition and scope of influence; the Danish and Dutch exhibitions respectively drew a respectable 80,000 and 90,000 people over eleven to twelve weeks, whereas the German exhibition attracted half a million people during its four-week run, capturing the attention of the international media.[571] Contrary to Radel's observations, it was not a *lack* of commercial influence that ensured this remarkable success but, rather, as this chapter shows, in part because of it.

What Radel and many others saw as the welcome absence of business interests at the Berlin women's fair[572] was, I will argue, in fact a demonstration of the success with which its feminist organisers had adapted the visibility of their commercial collaborators to align with (elite) Imperial German tastes. "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" was the product of a mutually beneficial synergy between commercial companies and the exhibition's organiser, the German Lyceum Club, a Berlin-based women's professional organisation, and its female visionaries. As representatives of some of the most influential commercial sectors in Berlin, clothing producers and retailers took important – albeit

Tentoonstelling van Vrouwenarbeid' in retrospect, ed. Maria Grever and Fia Dieteren (Amsterdam, 2000), 47–64; Grever and Waaldijk, *Transforming the Public Sphere*; Maria Grever and Berteke Waaldijk, "Women's Labor at Display: Feminist Claims to Dutch Citizenship and Colonial Politics around 1900," *Journal of Women's History* 15, no. 4 (2004): 11–8. Other more focused women's exhibitions include the London 1894 exhibition "Fair Women," which centered on women's art collections. Meaghan Clarke, *Fashionability, exhibition culture and gender politics: Fair Women* (London, 2020).

[570] Tony Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. Bruce W. Ferguson, Reesa Greenberg and Sandy Nairne (London, 1996), 62.

[571] Chicago women's fairs organised between 1925 and 1928 offer a further comparison. Despite being organised as women's *world's* fairs, these affairs ran for a few weeks at most, drawing a crowd of a hundred thousand at best. See Tracey Jean Boisseau, "Once Again in Chicago: revisioning women as workers at the Chicago Woman's World's Fairs of 1925–1928, *Women's History Review* 18, no. 2 (2009): 267–8.

[572] American international exhibitions tended to be called "world's fairs," their British equivalents "exhibitions" and the French ones "expositions." While there may have been certain distinctions in the format depending on the organising nation, international and universal exhibitions shared a sufficient number of characteristics to be discussed within the same literature. For stylistic reasons – and without an established convention for the use of the German word "Ausstellung" (literally, "exhibition") in this context, as Germany did not host an international exhibition until the year 2000 and the Vienna expo of 1873 is often referred to as a "world's fair" – I will use the three terms inter-changeably.

sometimes invisible – roles in the making of the 1912 spectacle. Well-versed, as we have seen, in the art of marketing themselves to the bourgeoisie through culturally acceptable avenues by the early twentieth century, Berlin fashion houses and department stores had paved a way that they would now walk together with the exhibition's women organisers.

The shared origins and conceptual similarities of department stores and exhibitions are well known. Like other modern institutions that developed concurrently, including museums and dioramas, exhibitions and shopping venues helped usher in a cultural shift toward a predominance of visuality and the act of looking in modern mass culture.[573] Ever since the first international exhibition at London's Crystal Palace in 1851, expositions have – not unlike some department stores, as we have seen – amalgamated ideology with capital and commodities under the banner of a newly developing "visual regime." [574] At least since the late nineteenth century, furthermore, women have eagerly attended international and universal exhibitions while "featur[ing] as objects of knowledge, analysis, wonder, desire and curiosity," to echo Anne R. Epstein's discussion of the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900.[575] Combining a focus on female consumers and ideological messaging, the Berlin women's exhibition of 1912 borrowed from the tradition of international exhibitions while finding common ground with a number of Berlin's foremost department stores.

The special relationship between "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" and the Wertheim department store has received some attention, most importantly in the work of architectural historian Despina Stratigakos.[576] Wertheim was a major sponsor and several of the exhibition's leading female designers were employees of the Berlin store. While the organisers were therefore able to lean into "an already established architectural type and its visual practices," visitors, many of whom were

[573] On international exhibitions and the combination of politics and commodity cultures, see Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (Stanford, 1990), 17–72; Penelope Harvey, *Hybrids of Modernity* [electronic resource] (London, 1996); Burton Benedict, *The Anthropology of World's Fairs* (Berkeley, 1983), 1–65.
[574] Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 17
[575] Anne R. Epstein, "A 'Reason to Act, an Ideal to Strive Towards': Women as Intellectual Organizers at the Paris Exhibition of 1900," in *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions, 1876–1937*, ed. Myriam Boussahba-Bravard and Rebecca Rogers (London, 2017), eBook: https://www.perlego.com/book/1489973/women-in-international-and-universal-exhibitions-18761937-pdf (Accessed: 20 April 2023), para 4.
[576] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 97–136.

female, "came equipped with a ready-made set of visual tools with which to absorb and process the encyclopedic display."[577] Stratigakos emphasises how the female designers of the Berlin exhibition not only transformed the exhibition space using familiar elements but transformed the very meaning of these elements, in order to effect a "reorientation of this gendered mass away from consumption toward production. Women were exhorted to reach for the 'sun' of emancipating labor [– a reference by Stratigakos to the visual imagery in Ida Stroever's rounded frieze], not the glittery bijoux."[578]

This chapter will focus on "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" not primarily as a physical space but as a rhetorical space, part of an emerging public sphere of German women. As Maria Grever and Berteke Waaldjik have shown concerning the Dutch women's exhibition, the women's exhibition can function as "a feminist intervention in the process of constructing the public sphere and citizenship."[579] In the context of the nineteenth and early twentieth-century West, where women were "[g]enerally locked out of control of most forms of mass media," observe Tracey Jean Boisseau and Abigail M. Markwyn, "fairs provided a venue for organized groups of women to communicate to a mass and often international public a vision of themselves as constituents of particular nations and a newly collective consciousness of themselves as a sex."[580] The women's exhibition constituted part of the women's public sphere that was based on the principles of bourgeois culture while remaining an open public forum, separate from the male-led (middle-class) "general" public sphere. My analysis is guided by the basic questions of who, why, what and how, in relation to the construction of this rhetorical space. As I demonstrate below, "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" became the stage for the expression of both general (middle-class feminist) concerns and more particularistic (middle-class Jewish) concerns.

The first section provides an overview of the Berlin women's exhibition through the lens of the women's public sphere, illustrating the collaborative spirit and ideological affinities that

[577] Ibid., 105.
[578] Ibid.
[579] Grever and Waaldijk, *Transforming the Public Sphere*, 10.
[580] Tracey Jean Boisseau and Abigail M. Markwyn "The World's Fairs in Feminist Historical Perspective," in *Gendering the fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs*, ed. Tracey Jean Boisseau and Abigail M. Markwyn (Urbana, 2010), 2.

characterised the relationship between the fair's female organisers and Berlin business circles. The chapter then charts the participation of the German clothing industry, primarily Berlin clothiers. How were women's achievements presented as part of Berlin *Konfektion*? What were the advantages and potential disadvantages for commercial companies involved in "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf"? What, if anything, did it mean that many of the company owners concerned were Jewish, for the exhibition and for the exhibitors themselves in their involvement? Were *Konfektionshäuser* and their owners motivated to participate by any other concerns than profit, including politics or religion? In the third section, I explore how distinctly Jewish spaces developed within the broader women's "counterpublic" at the exhibition.[581] Jewish women took part as individuals and as representatives of Jewish women's groups, in the latter case using the women's exhibition as a platform to pursue "Jewish" objectives. I suggest how the activities of Jewish women at the women's expo overlapped with those of Jewish-owned commercial firms, discussing further the clear limits of this relationship. I conclude the chapter with an examination of the parallel lives of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" in the press and printed media, focusing on the contrasting level of importance assigned to the exhibition in *Der Confectionair* and the N. Israel albums compared with the Jewish press. This final perspective highlights the significance of the Berlin women's exhibition as an inclusive public forum that treated Jewish women's issues as equal, particularly as the Jewish public sphere often did not do so.

Constructing the Exhibitionary Women's Sphere

Unlike world's fairs, the women's exhibition "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" did not erect any permanent monuments to mark the arrival of women in the Wilhelmine city.[582] The organisers were, however, able to rent an existing venue of good repute with the help of a loan from the German

[581] Nancy Fraser uses the term "counterpublics" to challenge the idea of middle-class men as the default "public," arguing that "competing" publics based on class, gender, or a certain political orientation cultivated their own public spheres. Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere."
[582] A possible counterpoint is that the funds collected by the Lyceum Club from the exhibition were used to purchase a permanent house for the club's activities. For further discussion on how women and feminists used the built environment to establish their presence in Wilhelmine Berlin, see Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*.

Imperial Gas Association, negotiated by Hedwig Heyl, the chair of the German Lyceum Club. The exhibition space, belonging to the Berlin Zoological Garden and known as the "Wilhelmshalle," in honour of the former German emperor, was spacious, with two large halls and balconies, and had good connections through the nearby railway station for the zoo.[583] With the help of thousands of female volunteers, this space would now transform into an utterly different "living, temporary, public space[...]."[584] Two magnificent gas flames atop wooden pillars in royal blue flanked the entrance on the opening day, inviting visitors to experience what Alice Salomon described as a "milestone of monumental importance for the women's movement."[585] An illuminated semi-circular banner depicting a green tree hung above the doorway, announcing the name of the exhibition, with fresh flowers defiantly inaugurating the "feminine" festivities in the grim February weather.[586]

From the moment of entering, the viewer was engulfed in a "women's kingdom." Two large columns on either side, entwined with colourful ribbons, demonstrated growing female participation in the workforce through census statistics.[587] Stroever's female figures at the stream of life, shaded by a blossoming tree, towered over the audience in a 200-square meter apsed mural, symbolising the beauty and vibrancy of the productive woman (Fig. 29). A silk canopy, yellow roses trailing the walls, and gas-powered chandeliers joined in with a vast array of colour-coordinated exhibits to create "a blaze of colour [...] too dazzling" for any normal person, suggested radical feminist Minna Cauer, one of the exhibition's few vocal critics.[588] Under the direction of Fia Wille, a successful Berlin designer and business owner, disparate displays came together in this first hall as an integrated demonstration of women's activity in the form of an upper-class apartment with custom-built furniture, designed by women for the needs of the modern woman. In a room just off the main stage, slightly out of sync with the rest of the hall, women in "sports and physical culture" were shown

[583] On the Zoological Garden Building, see Ibid., 99–100.
[584] This general point is made by Gaby Franger about women's exhibitions (in plural) in *Else Oppler 1875–1965: eine außergewöhnliche Künstlerin* (Nuremberg, 2023), 260.
[585] Radel, "Von der Berliner Ausstellung"; Alice Salomon, "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," *Der Tag* (*Nachrichtenblatt)*, no. 103 (26 February 1912).
[586] Radel, "Von der Berliner Ausstellung"; Stratigakos makes a similar observation in *A Women's Berlin*, 101.
[587] Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 177 (footnote 77).
[588] Minna Cauer, "Gedanken zur Ausstellung: 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,'" *Die Frauenbewegung* 18, no. 5 (1 March 1912).

engaged in surprisingly "un-feminine" activities such as car sports, hunting, and aviation. Contrasting these apparent deviances, "[s]himmering court trains and evening dresses [...,] and hats decorated with feathers" dignified the section for women in fashion – one of the show's highlights, according to the *Illustrirte Zeitung*.[589] Framed photographic portraits of female pioneers in journalism hung in the office of the recreated apartment, while two thousand volumes in the library showcased the skill and craft of female authors and bookbinders. The bedroom was fitted by Elisabeth von Hahn, expert in window decoration at *Der Confectionair,* and executed by her other employer, the Wertheim department store.[590]

While the first hall (Fig. 29) exuded luxury and relaxation, treating visitors to afternoon teas, music, and other forms of entertainment, the second hall had a different energy. In this space, designed by Else Oppler-Legband, another employee of Wertheim and rising star among Berlin's applied artists, woman was not the creative genius – except, of course, in the case of Oppler-Legband – but a pair of dirty hands that got the job done.[591] A loud "roaring, pounding and whistling" of mechanical apparatus carried down from the upper gallery, where the female employees of department stores and clothing companies demonstrated the manufacturing of fabrics and ready-made fashion.[592] Female farmers tended to a live sow and her piglets while female gardeners displayed their fresh produce. Social work – not yet a recognised profession – was exhibited beside vocational and remunerated work as one of the most important areas of female progress. Housework was similarly portrayed as a profession; the division "Woman in the Home" included a teaching kitchen, where new visitors could enhance their domestic skills through cooking classes and demonstrations in the use of new household equipment. A working-class apartment furnished by Lilly Reich, yet another designer on Wertheim's payroll, suggested ways in which women could help democratise access to

[589] Emma Stropp, "Die Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,'" *Illustrirte Zeitung* 138, no. 3584 (7 March 1912), 449.
[590] For fuller descriptions of the exhibition rooms and their upper galleries, see Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 107–28; Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 177–81.
[591] Stratigakos argues that the halls were differentiated by two "aesthetic criteria: luxury and mechanization," while making a compelling case that the origin of these two "dominant codes of display" were the department store and the international industrial exhibitions respectively. Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 107.
[592] E. von Monsterberg, "Ausstellung: Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," *Hamburgischer Correspondent* [182], no. 147 (20 March 1912). A copy is found in "Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,'" Ref: 111-1_4642, HSA.

designer products and functional architecture. Lotte Klopsch's rendition of a school for home economics, meanwhile, doubled as a functional middle-class model home for the school's female teachers. The department for "Woman in the Colonies," finally, showcased life in the far corners of the German Empire, including how women dressed and cooked in the tropics.[593]

As feminist leader Gertrud Bäumer noted in a speech to the women's congress, organised parallel to the exhibition, an ever expanding "women's sphere" ("Sphäre"[594]) had "opened up in public life."[595] This sphere was brought to life in "kaleidoscopic" view by the exhibition, to borrow from Heyl.[596] Some women, the fair illustrated, were involved in bringing out the best in existing, male-dominated fields. Others were establishing new fields of professional female influence, especially in caring roles. The exhibition divided "Woman in the Home" and "Woman at Work" into distinct departments, the former headed by Hedwig Heyl and the latter by social work pioneer Alice Salomon and her fellow activist Else Schulhoff. Yet as both Despina Stratigakos and Mary Pepchinski have pointed out, the fair visitor would not necessarily have discerned these categories, or the two remaining divisions of club life and public and private interests, unless they had looked at the exhibition catalogue.[597] The two main halves of "Home" and "Work" were not synonyms for the public and the private sphere. Rather, like the exhibition's coherent but diverse displays, they were an integrated whole. Women could, it seems, successfully wear two hats. Meanwhile, the complementary sides of women's lives enjoyed a mutually transformative relationship: domestic and "feminine" skills were changing the face of public life while professionalism was entering the home. Now emerging to take her place alongside the independent career woman, a familiar symbol of female modernity, was a new hybrid type: "the new housewife."[598]

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[593] Details about individual departments can be found in the exhibition catalogue, *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf* (Berlin, 1912).
[594] Habermas' idea of "the public sphere" uses, rather, the term "Öffentlichkeit".
[595] Gertrud Bäumer, "Die Bedeutung der Frauenbewegung für die persönliche Kultur," in *Der Deutsche Frauenkongress, Berlin, 27. Februar bis 2. März 1912*, [edited by Bund deutscher Frauenvereine], (Berlin, 1912), 278.
[596] Hedwig Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben* (Berlin, 1925), 129.
[597] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 107; Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 177.
[598] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf*, 88. The catalogue uses this phrase to denote the professionalised houseworker in industrial kitchens, suggesting the role constitutes a variation of the New Woman (uncapitalised in German). Similar ideas appear in a number of publications by Heyl.

Women's endeavours, the exhibition suggested, were, then, increasingly public in nature. The boundaries between bourgeois public and private spheres were being blurred and, with it, the gender coding of public (though not private) realms of life. Simultaneously, the exhibition was undergoing the same process, as a medium of the bourgeois public sphere, becoming an arena for female-led public discourse. Clubs like the German Lyceum Club constituted "small women's states," wrote feminist activist Josephine Levy-Rathenau, an avid clubwoman and co-organiser of the women's exhibition; Stratigakos mentions that the Lyceum Club, among other things, "staged mock debates to teach its members parliamentary form."[599] Envisioned in this way by Levy-Rathenau and others,[600] the club world provided a blueprint for an elite-led, collective display of female representation to a broader public. Exhibitions were, for the German Lyceum Club, an intrinsic part of the process; it was the success of one particular folk-art exhibition held at Wertheim in 1905 that provided the impetus for a more comprehensive show of female talent. The club declared itself a "neutral ground" for all women's efforts, side-lining in this way the central body for women's associations, the feminist Federation[601] – of which most club women were members anyway.

The Lyceum Club achieved success in this area, in that it mobilised a cross-section of middle-class women and women's organisations for the purposes of the exhibition. Several hundred royals, aristocrats, prominent bureaucrats, business owners, and national and municipal politicians were, furthermore, recruited as the fair's formal protectors – a critical mass of influential people that would turn eyes and ears to the messages of the collective women's lobby. Over a thousand honorary guests were invited to the opening ceremony, which fortunately coincided with the sitting of both the Reichstag and the Prussian state parliament in Berlin.[602] The idea of the organisers was clearly to "show, not tell," as practical demonstrations dominated over the use of combative speeches and

[599] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 43.
[600] Stratigakos mentions Alice Salomon in this context but does not address the question of whether this stance had particular significance to Salomon and Levy-Rathenau as Jews. Ibid.
[601] Hedwig Heyl, "Die Ausstellung: Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," *Centralblatt des Bundes deutscher Frauenvereine* 8, no. 16 (offprint).
[602] A.C., "'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf': Ein Epilog," *Neue Badische Landes-Zeitung* 57, no. 141 (1912), Collection Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine (BDF), B Rep. 235-01, 2. MF-3151, HLA; Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 129.

slogans – Heyl had apparently championed this as an appropriate strategy for reaching a polarised German middle-class public.[603] The exhibition's message of female unity and ability resounded across a thousand mediums, with sounds, smells, and visuals; here, basic hands-on tutorials married the powers of modern science and technology, including moving images – there were daily cinematographic showings – and quantitative expositions ("Here speak the figures," observed the *Berliner Tageblatt*, concluding that women had indeed "conquered their part of the nation's work"[604]). Each (pre-selected) women's organisation was apparently given a free hand to determine the content of their exhibits, while leading designers restricted their own involvement to overall display, organisation, and visual coordination.[605] The final component of this public forum were the people; the company employees, the performers, the volunteers, and the exhibitors, and, importantly also, the visitors, whose bodies and their movements contributed to the making of this "feminist space."[606] Simply being there, even as a spectator, was an endorsement of sorts.[607] The presence of a large, feminised crowd shaped the spectacle and helped drive home its central point about women's growing influence in the public realm. Further, while the layout played a decisive role, "the story's meaning [was ...] partly determined by the spectator (who decides how to move through the space)."[608] The female visual consumer or *flaneuse* transformed into a citizen, actively participating in the construction of an exhibitionary women's public sphere.[609]

The Berlin women's congress, held from 27 February until 2 March, was viewed by the exhibition's feminist organisers as a complement to the exhibition. Anna Plothow from the *Berliner Tageblatt*, chairwoman for the department "Woman in the Press," compared the exhibition to "a huge, illustrated edition of women's work" while suggesting the associated congress formed the accompanying "descriptive text."[610] The organising committees had compiled a 300-page printed

[603] Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 134; Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 171.
[604] P.B., "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf – Zur Eröffnung der Ausstellung," *Berliner Tageblatt* 41, no. 100 (24 February 1912).
[605] Stropp, "Die Ausstellung," 447.
[606] Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, passim.
[607] Grever and Waaldijk, *Transforming the Public Sphere*, 19.
[608] Ibid., 18.
[609] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 105.
[610] Anna Plothow, "Die Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf' und der deutsche Frauenkongreß," *Berliner Tageblatt* 41, no. 20 (*Frauen-Rundschau*) (12 January 1912). Conferences were commonly organised in

catalogue, published by Rudolf Mosse, the husband of Emilie Mosse, Plothow's co-chair, to help visitors navigate the halls of the Zoological Garden building and its vast contents – and to frame the exhibits through a combination of ideologies deriving from the German women's movement and the German design reform movement. The women's congress was to be a more interactive space, accommodating spontaneous dialogue alongside lectures; in her speech at the joint opening of the exhibition and the congress, Gertrud Bäumer spoke about the purpose of the gathering as "thinking through" [women's] questions together" and "finding the path together."[611] The congress directed the focus from women's achievements to the plethora of "women's questions" that remained, including issues such as suffrage and male-female competition on the job market, which it suggested women could jointly help resolve in a rare cross-confessional public assembly.[612] The intention was thus literally to organise the female bourgeois public in order to reach a consensus on women's issues – a consensus which could then be conveyed to higher powers. Simultaneously, the congress helped ensure that the "spiritual" component of the fair would not be drowned out by commercialism – much to the satisfaction, one imagines, of concerned parties like Frieda Radel. With over five thousand daily attendees, it was a roaring success in terms of turn out.[613] Between the exhibition and the women's congress, the "Woman in the Home and at Work" became the subject of a multi-pronged propaganda campaign, generating new, public rhetorical spaces for middle-class women.

This was not the first time that German feminists had used universal exhibitions to organise themselves. Heyl had been part of a German delegation contributing to the Woman's Building of the Chicago World's Fair in 1893; indeed, it was in Chicago, at the meeting of the International Council of Women, that German feminists had been inspired to found a national feminist federation, the BDF.[614] In 1896, the German women's movement had also hosted a congress for the international

conjuction with universal and international exhibitions, in recognition of the exceptional opportunities to attract the large national and international audiences of the fairs, but also as the intellectual complement; at the Paris Exposition of 1900, writes Anne R. Epstein, the French government actively supported efforts to organise conferences, in an effort to create a "'universal exhibition of thought' as a counterweight to the 'universal exhibition of products.'" Epstein, "A 'Reason to Act," para 5.

[611] Reprint of Gertrud Bäumer's speech in Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 132.

[612] [Bund deutscher Frauenvereine], *Der Deutsche Frauenkongress*.

[613] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 128.

[614] The Chicago "Columbian" fair, considered by historians to be the most significant in terms of women's representation at international exhibitions from the nineteenth to early twentieth century, inspired both the

women's movement, coinciding with the *Berliner Gewerbeausstellung*, Germany's scaled-down response to world's fairs. The 1912 women's exhibition was, however, the first time that women's contributions were presented explicitly as such in the context of a major German exhibition. The *Gewerbeausstellung* had accommodated individual women-led groups under certain thematic headings, including organised female employees, soup kitchen activists, and the educators of the Pestalozzi Fröbel Haus – pioneering female staff and representatives of the latter formed a separate "Ladies' Committee," which was, however, subordinate to a male-led associational board.[615] Still, women's subdued presence at the Berlin trade exhibition reflected broader reactionary attitudes among members of the higher classes that continued to deny women recognition and representation, seen nowhere more clearly than in Kaiser Wilhelm II, who personally influenced the scope of the *Gewerbeausstellung*.[616]

With growing antifeminism in the early twentieth century, it seemed clear to many that the Berlin women's exhibition constituted a response to sceptics and opponents of the women's movement. Yet exclusion from past exhibitionary contexts also became the impetus for creating a public forum that conveyed bourgeois feminist beliefs in gender difference in ways that may have been precluded in a male-led context. "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" displayed what bourgeois culture perceived of as the female "Eigenart," or essence, in all its many expressions;[617] the exhibition embodied bourgeois womanhood in exhibitionary form. In practice, this meant that the differences between the *Gewerbeausstellung* and the women's expo reflected in part those existing between the lives of men

Danish and Dutch women's exhibitions. Like the European women's fairs, the Columbian expo likely served as the precedent for the Berlin exhibition, although this was never acknowledged by the organisers. Lous, "Striving for a national movement," 47; Grever and Waaldijk, *Transforming the Public Sphere*, 9. On the general importance of the 1893 Chicago (Columbian) world's fair, see Boussahba-Bravard and Rogers, *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions*, para 13–14; Boisseau and Markwyn, "The World's Fairs," 3–5.

[615] *Berliner Gewerbe-Ausstellung 1896 – Offizieller Haupt-Katalog – Illustrirte Pracht-Ausgabe* (Berlin, 1896), 173. URL: https://digital.zlb.de/viewer/image/34220080/7/.

[616] According to some commentators, including Heyl, the Kaiser's antifeminist statements fuelled the Lyceum Club's efforts to exhibit women's work. Heyl *Aus meinem Leben*, 113; P.B., "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf." On the Kaiser's role in shaping the 1896 Berlin trade exhibition, see Dorothy Rowe, "Georg Simmel and the Berlin Trade Exhibition of 1896," *Urban History* 22, no. 2 (August 1995): 221; George Steinmetz, "Empire in three keys: Forging the imperial imaginary at the 1896 Berlin trade exhibition," *Thesis Eleven* 139, no. 1 (2017): 49.

[617] For further discussion on the concept of the female "Eigenart" in the context of German women and universal exhibitions, see Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*.

and women of different classes. Machines and the heavy industries were a dominant feature of the former, whereas the latter gave a "softer," more "feminine" impression, partly mirroring the tendencies of female industrial workers as well as creative professionals to congregate in consumer-oriented fields, and partly due to the general bourgeois and elitist flavour of the women's exhibition, which dedicated disproportionate space to the activities of club women compared to the much larger proportion lower-class women in the working population.

The biggest difference between "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" and other universal exhibitions seemed to be, however – at least according to observers like Frieda Radel – its emphasis on educating as opposed to push marketing.[618] "We sold nothing," comments Alice Salomon in her memoir, in effect stating a half-truth.[619] Since competition and profit-making were seen as part of the bourgeois masculine universe, contrasted with feminine virtues such as purity and collaboration, the apparent absence of commercial influence seemed to fit the ideal profile of a Wilhelmine women's exhibition. The Lyceum Club was, as a women's professional organisation with an emphasis on the visual and applied arts, influenced by the German design reform movement and its vehemently anti-capitalist tendencies. In giving the exhibition its visual impression, female applied artists were not only exemplifying the professional achievements of German women but auditioning for a male-dominated professional community, making the question of commercial visibility one of central importance.

The exhibition organisers did manage to do an appreciable job shifting focus away from commodities. The whole experience must, at least for the seasoned fairgoer, have felt more like a visit to an interactive museum than to a shopping arcade. Salomon's statement captured the striking point that female volunteers did not hustle goods from stalls, which they had done as representatives of the Lyceum Club at the folk arts exhibition at Wertheim in 1905.[620] The fact that feminist

[618] An exception seems to be the *women's* world's fairs organised in Chicago in the 1920s, with their strict emphasis on women's labour – possibly inspired by the 1912 Berlin women's exhibition in this respect. Boisseau, "Once Again in Chicago."
[619] Andrew Lees, ed., *Character is Destiny: The Autobiography of Alice Salomon* (eBook). (Ann Arbor, 2004), 94.
[620] Ibid., 93; Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 26–8.

propaganda commanded the attention in 1912 was an important indication of the organisers' agency. Heyl and her collaborators took advantage of the commercial support available to them while refusing to allow it to dictate the agenda, in effect "marshall[ing] commercial interests for their own benefit," to echo Pepchinski.[621] Yet, for a first-time exhibition visitor, as Stratigakos shows, the closest point of reference would have been the department store, from the general ambience of the exhibition down to specific functional and decorative details.[622] Companies were allowed to display visible branding if they paid a special fee to the organising committee[623] – and many did. The pavilion of Scherl publishing, one of the leading sponsors of the exhibition, was an unmissable feature of the first exhibition hall. The colonial department was similarly unambiguous in its intentions, with its allusions to "[d]iamonds, semi-precious stones and ostrich feathers [...]" that apparently waited for German women on the imperial frontier, in addition to presenting consumer products that were meant to help facilitate life in hot climates, such as long-life cooking yeast.[624] Some exhibits were for sale, with price tags, while the extensive advertising section of the exhibition catalogue highlighted exhibitors' showrooms off site.[625] The exhibition was not a full-fledged consumer extravaganza; however, the subtle presence of businesses and commodities could be sensed throughout.

Habermas' notion of the (ideal) public sphere hinges on its independence from state and economy, but, as Grever and Waaldijk point out, "[e]xhibitions constituted a complex combination of, or a transition between, these two public domains."[626] Promotional display was built into the very idea of trade exhibitions and was similarly part of the original conception of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf." Heyl was the daughter of Edouard Crüsemann, founder of Bremen shipping company Norddeutscher Lloyd, and the owner of a chemical firm. Her connections and reputation brought her into contact with the German Imperial Gas Association, which was eager for the celebrity educator

[621] Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 175.
[622] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 102–5.
[623] Brochure to potential exhibitors, "Allgemeine Ausstellungsbedingungen" (29 April 1911), Collection "Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf' des Deutschen Lyzeumsclubs in Berlin 1912," Ref: 111-1_4642, HSA.
[624] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf*, 105.
[625] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 110.
[626] Grever and Waaldijk, *Transforming the Public Sphere*, 17.

and author to organise an exhibition to renew interest in gas appliances among female consumers, given the growing competition from electricity. Although the exhibition subsequently took on a life of its own, gas remained an important feature. Gas lit up rooms and display boxes, and powered stoves and sample cooking equipment. In this context, in fact, commodities carried the suggestion that modern consumer technologies were intrinsic to the making of "new women," as equipment that would help rationalise and professionalise housework, simultaneously freeing up the housewife for more important tasks.[627]

Heyl was adamant that feminism and business were friends not foes; after all, the two came together in her person. The German middle-class women's movement was not especially wealthy, despite that the fact that its leading ranks hailed from the upper middle classes. The success of the exhibition hinged on external funding, without which it would have remained modest in scale and, ultimately, limited in impact.[628] The American women organisers of the 1893 Columbian Woman's Building had been assigned state funds; for the BDF and the Lyceum Club, no such support was forthcoming. Heyl envisioned the relationship between the women's cause and industry as reciprocal; "[w]omen should put themselves at the service of industry," she maintained in her memoirs from the mid 1920s, "but conversely, industry [should put themselves] at [...women's] service."[629] The women's movement needed strategic allies in the world of commerce, but consumer businesses, equally, according to Heyl, needed women's input as both consumers and professional creatives.

Consumption was a sensitive issue, given contemporary bourgeois discourses condemning excess and the pursuit of luxury as foreign and as especially female vices.[630] The *Werkbund* advocated scaling back on production and focusing on the manufacturing of higher end quality wares – a point that female applied artists who were attached to the movement readily endorsed and manifested at

[627] Radical feminists such as Hedwig Heyl and Lily Braun explicitly advocated household machines such as dishwashers as a solution for combining work and motherhood. Ehrenpreis, "Beyond the Femme Fatale," 96.
[628] The Chicago world's fairs organised by women offer a case for comparison, since they lacked not only state sponsors but commercial ones, too. Boisseau, "Once again in Chicago," 270–1.
[629] Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 114.
[630] Breckman, "Disciplining Consumption"; Repp, "Marketing, Modernity"; Lerner, *Consuming Temple*, passim; Wallach, "Kosher Seductions."

the women's exhibition. The reality was not so straightforward, however, since goods needed to be distributed and major retailers like department stores offered the best routes for doing so. For women looking for a career in design or crafts, many of whom faced gender discrimination within the design community, large department and fashion stores constituted important resources. A minority of female designers made independent careers, including Fia Wille and artist-milliner Regina Friedländer, one of the leading female-run (and Jewish) companies to have a presence at "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf."[631] Still many more, like Else Oppler-Legband, had launched their careers through department stores. As Gaby Franger shows in her biography of Oppler-Legband, these partnerships were not always painless, especially as the principles of design reform interfered with store profits.[632] Yet for Oppler-Legband as for many others, the world of commercial retail offered an important stepping-stone for making it in a male-dominated field.

The Lyceum Club, in turn, offered a home for these women. Referring to the sister organisation of the German branch, in London, Stratigakos writes about the club as "[p]romoting a form of gendered free trade," the goal of which was to secure for "women new opportunities to sell their work abroad and [for] foreign members access to domestic markets."[633] An important avenue was creating new markets among female consumers. The 1912 women's exhibition did not overtly connect emancipation with consumption – indeed, such an "American" sentiment, as it would have appeared, may not have gone down well with the bourgeois German public. Yet Heyl believed that women could exert significant power over individual households and the wider economy through consumption, which would promote production.[634] Heyl suggested, in fact, that the women's expo was partly born out of her public complaints over the lack of a female point of view before launching new consumer products.[635] Convinced that the voice of the female consumer mattered, the organisers

[631] On Friedländer as a Jewish designer, see Wallach, "Weimar Jewish Chic," 118–20.
[632] Franger, *Else Oppler*, 120–2, 133–4, 136. Franger writes about Else Oppler using her maiden name for "feministic and pragmatic reasons" as she covers a longer time period. Correspondence between Franger and myself, 15 July 2023. I use her (unofficial) double-barreled name by which she chose to be identified in 1912.
[633] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 21.
[634] Heyl makes this point through reference to the *indirect* effect of consumption, claiming that thoughtful consumption can generate savings, which can then be used to accumulate interest. Hedwig Heyl, *Das ABC der Küche* (Berlin, 1897), 1.
[635] Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 113.

of the women's exhibition approached potential sponsors not on the basis of a demonstrated interest in the feminist cause, but rather as "big industries that have women as consumers,"[636] quite literally thus configuring "consumption [...] as a route toward other aspects of the public sphere."[637] In displaying the work of professional women, with an emphasis on the Lyceum Club's beloved applied arts, the Berlin expo was vying for both rights and expanded professional opportunities for women. This endeavour involved winning over both the woman consumer and "feminine" consumer industries, who, according to members of the Club, each held important keys to unlocking women's professional freedom.

A remaining part of the story of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" was the relationship of Heyl and the Lyceum Club to Jews and Judaism. The Club was a confessionally neutral organisation, as was the feminist Federation. Jewish women had historically played decisive roles in the German women's movement just as they had been leading figures of the Berlin scene of intellectual salons in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[638] The Lyceum Club, meanwhile, identified as a cross-national organisation; Stratigakos describes its English counterpart as "truly extraordinary" for the period, with its "inclusion of all nationalities across racial categories."[639] None of this made feminist or club circles immune to antisemitism – as Pepchinski has suggested (albeit without definitive evidence), Oppler-Legband may have been disadvantaged within the women's club world as a Jewish woman.[640] Nevertheless, the principal framework in which Wilhelmine feminists and female professionals operated, in the two abovementioned contexts – and not least in the construction of the

[636] Heyl, "Die Ausstellung."
[637] I borrow here from Erika Rappaport's discussion about the ideologies of British feminists and club women. Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure*, 79.
[638] Kaplan, *Jewish Middle Class*; Fassman, *Jüdinnen in der deutschen Frauenbewegung*; Petra Wilhelmy, *Der Berliner Salon im 19. Jahrhundert (1780–1914)* (Berlin, 2011), reprint, 436, 464; Deborah Hertz, *Jewish High Society in Old Regime Berlin* (New Haven, 1988). Christa Spreizer portrays the influence of "'old Europe' salon culture" on the leadership of the Berlin Lyceum Club as a distinctive characteristic of the club vis à vis its British counterpart. Christa Spreizer, "Women's arenas of encounter: The London and Berlin Lyceum Clubs," in *Leisure and Elite Formation: Arenas of Encounter in Continental Europe, 1815–1914*, ed. Peter Heyrman and Jan de Maeyer (Berlin, 2020), 89.
[639] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 19.
[640] Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 105, 107–8. Pepchinski derives her observation from differences between the careers of Oppler-Legband and Fia Wille, who was not Jewish – but there could be other reasons for this difference, such as the coupling of Wille's career to that of her husband, which may have enhanced her reputation even in more progressive circles.

women's exhibition – was not only secular but accommodating to Jewish women's religious difference, as I explore further below. Heyl was emphatic about her rejection of antisemitism, "against which my sense of justice had always reared up," she wrote in her (pre-Nazi era) memoirs.[641] In her recollections, Heyl furthermore described her acquaintance with an elderly Jewish woman, who taught her about Jewish religious practice, an "asset for life."[642] Among numerous Berliners of Jewish birth on the fair committees, some more religious than others, Alice Salomon became a right hand to Hedwig Heyl, overseeing the exhibition's central department for women in non-domestic work and careers.

The nature and extent of commercial participation in "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" was related to Heyl's personal beliefs and the liberal policies of the Lyceum Club. Prominent Jewish women organisers formed an organic link to the Berlin business community; Josephine Levy-Rathenau, the chair of the department "Woman in Industry and Crafts," was, for instance, the daughter of Oscar Rathenau, a fabric wholesaler, but also a niece of Emil Rathenau, who founded the electricals company AEG, and married to Max Levy, a successful manufacturer of X-ray machines in Berlin.[643] Levy's company was represented (and therefore advertised) at the 1912 women's fair ostensibly as a notable employer of women in Berlin– but also likely thanks to his marriage to one of the exhibition's foremost organisers. [644] Gertrud Israel (1882–1940), a merchant's daughter, former commercial employee, and leading social reformer in Berlin, co-chaired another subdivision found within Salomon's purview, "Woman in Commerce and Transportation."[645] Now an advocate for

[641] Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 56. Heyl grew more conservative later in life. Having lost her fortune during the inflation and struggled with personal loss, she began to see Hitler as a sort of messiah figure (but died in 1934 before witnessing the extent of his murderous vision). Birgit Jochens, *Zwischen Ambition und Rebellion: Karrieren Berliner Kochbuchautorinnen* (Berlin, 2021), 98–9.
[642] Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 56.
[643] Palmén, "Josephine Levy-Rathenau"; Jürgen Nürnberger and Dieter G. Maier, *Josephine Levy-Rathenau – Frauenemanzipation durch Berufsberatung* (Berlin, 2013).
[644] The organisers decided which fields of women's industrial work to include by ranking them according to the greatest absolute number of women workers. Two years after the 1912 women's fair, Levy-Rathenau also published a monograph advocating technical employment as a future women's field; see Josephine Levy-Rathenau, *Die Frau als technische Angestellte* (Leipzig, 1914). On the exhibition department for industrial work and Max Levy, see *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf*, 127, 135.
[645] Israel was one of the leading figures of the professional movement of commercial employees, through the Berlin *Kaufmännischer Verband für weibliche Angestellte* (which went through many variations of its name from the 1880s until the 1930s). A prolific writer, Israel worked briefly as the chief editor of the publication *Soziale Praxis* before migrating to Britain in the 1930s. While in London, Israel was killed together with Berlin

women in the commercial professions, Israel had a track record of working together with companies and factories to improve the conditions for female workers.[646] Finally, there was Salomon, who once (apparently) joked about her commercial background as an asset at the Lyceum Club exhibition in 1905; "I feared I would not sell a single piece, but apparently the heritage of my forbears—their business talent— asserted itself, and before we closed I was sold out."[647] Many Jewish women organisers brought with them not only a vast social network of influential and monied people, who helped ensure the public and financial success of the women's exhibition, but also – leaving humour aside – an entrepreneurial spirit that helped conceive the extraordinary event.

The Wertheims had a complicated relationship with their Jewish heritage. The store's founder, Georg Wertheim (1857–1939), observes Simone Ladwig-Winters, cherished Jewish culture but "associated poverty with Judaism."[648] Like his brothers and business partners, he was eventually baptised. The Wertheim department store continued, nonetheless, to be associated with the Jewish community, by both Jews and non-Jews. It was not just the antisemitic press that encouraged the store's Jewish identification, but the company appeared regularly in the Wilhelmine Jewish press as the place to buy tickets for Jewish cultural and Zionist events.[649] Heyl would certainly not have objected to this connection and may even have seen it as a bonus; in her memoirs, she lamented how the Empress had once rejected her suggestion to engage the Rothschild family as benefactors for German royal charities due to the prevalence of antisemitism at the time.[650] Holding the reigns this time around, Heyl was able to accept any assistance she saw as strategically useful. Wertheim had managed what few other Wilhelmine department stores had achieved: it had become for Wilhelmine Germans a

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colleague Adele Beerensson in Nazi bombings of London. For a brief biographical entry, see Peter Reinicke, *Die Berufsverbände der Sozialarbeit und ihre Geschichte* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990), 288–9.

[646] Israel was tasked by the *Berliner Frauenverein* in 1906 with charting the needs of factories in Berlin to appoint social workers to oversee the welfare of female employees – an activity which postulated good working relations with business owners. Israel's organisation, the *Kaufmännischer Verband*, while petitioning for women's professionalisation and legal reform, also rejected the use of collective bargaining tactics such as strikes and fostered close relations with employers (who had been allowed on the organisation's executive board until 1905). Adams, *Women Clerks*, 69–76.

[647] Lees, *Character is Destiny*, 93.

[648] Ladwig-Winters, *Wertheim*, 24, 26.

[649] Examples include the ball of the *Israelitische Union*, an offshoot of *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, lectures about Jewish emigration and colonisation, and modern Hebrew music recitals, mainly to be found in the community supplement of the AZDJ.

[650] Heyl, *Aus meinem Leben*, 56.

symbol of the *successful* modernisation of German culture. It would serve the emerging women's public sphere well to be understood in the same terms: as a bearer of *Kultur*, not crass commercialism.

Clothiers at the Fair: Publicity, Politics and Jewish Philanthropy

The clothing industry had the most dominant presence of the industries represented at "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf." This dynamic was familiar from the *Berliner Gewerbeausstellung* in 1896, in which elite Berlin circles, keen to promote the interests of the capital, had shaped the exhibition to a similar extent. Yet at the women's exhibition, the role of the industry was even more central. Commercial exhibitors, the exhibition catalogue explained, had been chosen based on their ability to represent industries in which "the work of women in the home and at work is particularly important."[651] With over 700,000 formally registered women employees, the catalogue added, the clothing industry was the most important field for women's work in quantitative terms.[652] Prominent clothiers had additionally both the means and the incentive to provide sponsorship and patronage for the event; their corporate identities, Heyl and others calculated, were tied in closely with the consumer market of middle-class women, amply represented among prospective fair visitors. Finally, the women's exhibition needed to include the tertiary sector of service jobs, in order truthfully to convey the contours of women's work. It thus expanded beyond typical representations of the clothing industry at trade fairs to a corner of the wider fashion trade where a growing number of women congregated – namely, the department store.[653]

Among the exhibition's first attractions, turning right from the main entrance, was a room dedicated to "Fashion." Surrounded by graphics, embroidery, and hand-made laces, fashion was presented as a branch of the applied arts. Here, an impressive line-up of independent female designers and commercial ateliers, including names like Regina Friedländer, Bertha Pechstein, and Sally Rosen,

[651] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 9.
[652] Ibid., 127.
[653] The department store (i.e., Wertheim) was not shown as part of the clothing or fashion industries, but as part of the commercial sphere, in accordance with conventional Wilhelmine categories of economic activity.

showcased their work. “Fashion is woman’s very own area,” explained the description in the exhibition catalogue, claiming the fashion scene as a female domain – only one of forty odd exhibitors was male.[654] The catalogue compared the work of dress designers to that of painters and sculptors, suggesting that women were there to right a wrong; “It is not so long ago that Germany had real clothing artists and did not get all its great luxury from Paris.”[655] Change was apparently imminent, as women were bringing their artistic “genius” into the equation. The department cast middle-class women as creatives and cultural reformers, whose work was helping to rejuvenate German culture. Still, simple acceptance was not enough – craftswomen and artists needed people to buy their creations. By choosing to describe the department as “fashion,” the organisers seemed to mark the female venture as a consumption-oriented enterprise, distinguished from standard practices within the German design reform movement.[656] The exhibits thus served a larger propaganda purpose but also a very practical goal, inscribed into the DNA of the Lyceum Club and calling out through the commodity-oriented displays: to conquer and grow the art and crafts market, especially among middle-class female consumers, in order to secure the future careers of female applied artists.

This conception of “fashion” did not, however, have the last word. Moving into the main hall, exclusive designs were laid out enticingly inside large illuminated glass cabinets on top of the stage. A double-sided staircase, especially constructed for the exhibition and resonating with the architecture found in many department stores,[657] guided visitors past luscious flower beds to a small but impactful consumer haven overlooking the space. Here, “woman’s very own area” met its challenge in three male names: A. (Abraham) Wertheim, Gustav Cords, and S. (Saul David) Adam. Wertheim presented “a selection of elegant ball and society outfits in light, flowing fabrics,” detailed

[654] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf*, 35, 36–7.
[655] Ibid., 36.
[656] Fashion, notes Pepchinski, was understood within applied arts discourses as an “unstable” and “superficial” phenomenon; “in contrast, style was understood to be an integral quality which maintained a constant, cultural value.” Pepchinski suggests that the notion of “fashion” was promoted by deviant (female?) voices within the design reform movement as a way of associating designer clothing with the culture of wealthy elites. Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 145–6.
[657] Stratigakos, *A Women’s Berlin*, 103.

Der Confectionair, while Gustav Cords put on a show of luxurious fabrics.[658] S. Adam, a prestigious Berlin seller of work clothes and activewear, contributed "chic street and riding clothes in white and black."[659] As far as the formal narrative of the exhibition was concerned, these displays demonstrated women's skills in the "art" of commercial window dressing through the designs of Elisabeth von Hahn. They indirectly highlighted von Hahn's ingenuity and professional talent – such as knowing exactly what props and type of lighting to use in order to bring out each object, observed *Der Confectionair*.[660] The irony was, of course, that greater decorative skills meant a greater focus on the merchandise. *Der Confectionair*'s account, foregrounding the contributions of commercial clothiers, must have been closer to the visitor experience than the official commentary of the organisers, which sought to add a further interpretative layer to guide the visitor's impressions. Regardless, no one realistically expected the viewer to ignore the physical objects in front of them.

The room for women in sports continued to manifest this mutually profitable but not unproblematic co-existence of commercial and feminist interests. To the right of the stage, naturally leading to or from the above displays, Wertheim and S. Adam were helping to envision women as carriers of physical culture who were furthering German civilisation through health and physical fitness. Wertheim exhibited women's hiking, while S. Adam made possible, among other things, demonstrations of women's cycling, fencing, golf, hockey and ice skating. Accompanied by photographs, sporting attire, and equipment, the department of sports flowed daily into the main hall with live performances including dirdl dancing, roller blading and gymnastics. Undertones of nationalism and ideas of racial improvement were inescapable, echoing the sentiment of Heyl's pet topic of public nutrition and the populist, eugenicist views of the Women's League of the German Colonial Society, chaired by Heyl and exhibiting just a stone's throw away.[661] Still, what visitors saw were women breaking gender taboos and actively contradicting the stereotype of women as the

[658] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 8 (25 February 1912), front page.
[659] Ibid.
[660] Ibid.
[661] On Heyl and the colonialist Women's League, see Lora Joyce Wildenthal, *Colonizers and Citizens: Bourgeois women and the Woman Question in the German colonial movement, 1886–1994* (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1994).

weaker sex. Berlin's foremost clothiers offered, the exhibition showed, a range of sartorial support to these "new women," as their bodies became both the objects and vehicles of cultural reform.

Peace was further than one might expect from these serene settings, however, as major clothing and textile manufacturers, exhibiting far away in the upper gallery of the second hall, dominated the auditory environment, "with the full vocal power of their mechanical means of expression;" journalist Elinor von Monsterberg was profoundly impressed.[662] "The [F.V.] Grünfeld company shows several of their slender jacquard looms, operated by women, producing cloth with ornaments or red ribbons with an astonishing speed," she continued.[663] Von Monsterberg marvelled at the fact that Grünfeld apparently employed around 1,500 women in an overall staff of just above 2,000.[664] A few rooms further down, workers of the company Julius Spiegel transformed strings and wires into elaborate flowered and feathered hats, while eight panoramic booths dedicated to the Seidenhaus Michels & Cie illustrated the production of silk and its manipulation into exquisite dresses.[665] Women employees were shown caring for the silkworms, collecting their cocoons, and spinning the fibres into silk fabric.[666] At the exhibits of Herrmann Gerson, detailed *Der Confectionair*, you would walk "[t]hrough a portal in bright green tones [...] into a tailor's workshop – set up according to hygienic principles," where you would witness "the creation of a dress under the direction of a female clothier."[667] Display windows on either side showcased the latest spring fashions, including a cerise street outfit worn with a white Liberty skirt, and a Poiret-inspired tea gown[668] – reform-oriented fashions, which, one presumes, were intended to appeal to an "emancipated" (and design-conscious) female public. Von Monsterberg was spellbound by the demonstrations of the American Singer company, one of the exhibition's few foreign contributors. A young girl embroidered monograms

[662] Monsterberg, "Ausstellung: Die Frau in Haus und Beruf."
[663] Ibid.
[664] Ibid.
[665] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 8 (25 February 1912), front page.
[666] Monsterberg, "Ausstellung: Die Frau in Haus und Beruf."
[667] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 8 (25 February 1912), front page.
[668] Ibid.

onto six items at once using a stencil and an extensive system of levers comprising Singer's latest invention – a piece of "witchcraft," concluded von Monsterberg.[669]

The portrayal of women's work in this "machine hall" stood in stark contrast to preceding exhibits. Clothiers certainly tried to follow the script; "[i]n a reversal of the ascendancy of the machine," argues Stratigakos, the industrial department of the exhibition "maintained the idea of the machine hall [of trade fairs] but made women's bodies the engine driving the nation's productivity."[670] Yet, as some contemporaries registered, women were no longer the headline act. "Pretty girls sit at the sewing machines in neat costumes [...] – everything seems so friendly, almost tempting," noted Minna Cauer.[671] Credit went to their employing companies, without a critical assessment of the hardships faced by female workers.[672] Were they there voluntarily, or compelled by their bosses? Did they reap any benefits from their participation, or did their employers? Cauer's mind was brought back to images of the average garment worker; the harried hand, "restlessly running to and fro" pregnant, poor, and without relief.[673] True to Cauer's observations, even the separate room dedicated to the national labour organisation of female homeworkers showcased only the "quality products" of home-based work, not the everyday activities of homeworking women.[674] Some observers, like von Monsterberg, ostensibly went away exhilarated and entertained. Others, like Cauer, were left deeply dissatisfied.

As a pragmatist, Heyl was quite willing to accept the trade-off of losing some left-wing support. The progressive liberal in her may have wanted to incorporate a greater number of women's labour organisations among the exhibiting groups, to ensure greater agency for working-class and lower

[669] Monsterberg, "Ausstellung: Die Frau in Haus und Beruf."
[670] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 112–3.
[671] Minna Cauer, "Gedanken zur Ausstellung, 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,'" *Die Frauenbewegung* 18, no. 5 (1 March 1912).
[672] Some areas of women's work were, in fact, exhibited through the organised female workforce, including homeworkers and commercial clerks, but there was limited communication between these comparatively modest presentations and the adjacent displays of commercial clothiers. (*Der Confectionair*, not unexpectedly, failed to mention the homework exhibition, which was independent of the exhibition of the clothing industry). Twenty-four photographs from the Wertheim store, belonging to the field of "commerce and transportation," were the only tool included to help visitors' personal recollections of women's everyday work in commercial jobs. *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 138.
[673] Cauer, "Gedanken zur Ausstellung."
[674] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 131.

middle-class women. The business- and clubwoman in her, however, looked to the long-term benefits of the exhibition for members of the Lyceum Club. Cultivating good relations with commercial enterprises was a strategic step in realising the club's bourgeois feminist vision. Exhibits from trade unionists risked undermining the inspiring tone of the exhibition – and a more appropriate forum for airing concerns was, in any case, provided by the women's congress. While critics such as Cauer – incidentally also a member of the Lyceum Club – suggested that the influence of commercial companies distorted the picture, causing the exhibition to idolise capitalism and ignore its darker side for women, Heyl and likeminded feminists viewed businesses as partners, for whom concessions could be made. In recognition of a special working relationship with clothiers, representation from *Der Confectionair* was on the exclusive list of invitees to the opening ceremony, alongside honorary patrons, royalty, and leading feminists.[675]

What was in it, then, for clothiers? International and universal exhibitions were widely recognised as a prime medium for advertisement and commodity exchange. They were, as Martin Wörner has argued, an "ideal medium [...] for the presentation of a 'corporate identity.'"[676] Berlin fashion and department stores participated eagerly in fairs of all sorts; Rudolf Hertzog took part in the 1883 hygiene exhibition in Berlin, as well as the 1890 Berlin expo focusing on horses, while Hermann Tietz and several specialists in childrenswear featured prominently in the Red Cross exhibition "Das Kind" about children's welfare in 1913 (perhaps inspired by the success of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" – it, too, was held at the *Zoologischer Garten*).[677] In addition to amassing vast consumer audiences, exhibitions allowed commercial companies to portray themselves at the cutting edge of societal and technological progress. The Berlin *Gewerbeausstellung* of 1896 was a culmination in this respect, as the most well-attended and most comprehensive of German exhibitions, covering the

[675] I deduce this from the fact that the report of *Der Confectionair* on Sunday 25 February 1912 included a detailed account of the opening proceedings from the previous day. A separate press conference had been held on the afternoon of the opening day between 1pm and 4pm, but, given the *Der Confectionair*'s insight into the preceding events, and the expediency of the publication (the morning after), it stands to reason that the journal had special access compared to many representatives of the German press.
[676] Martin Wörner, *Die Welt an einem Ort: Illustrierte Geschichte der Weltausstellungen* (Berlin, 2000), 96.
[677] *Rudolph Hertzog – Agenda 1896* (Berlin, 1896), 52, 55; "Aus Berlin," *Der Confectionair* 28, no. 15 (13 April 1913) (15). The department store of Leonhard Tietz, Hermann Tietz's nephew, published in 1913 a company agenda on the theme of childhood, ostensibly to coincide with the exhibition.

1,000,000 square meter grounds of Treptower Park and attracting close to 2 million visitors.[678] The 1912 women's exhibition turned out to be second only to the trade exhibition in terms of popularity (even though, at the planning stages, its success was far from certain).

While Berlin's *Konfektionäre* had played an important role at the *Gewerbeausstellung* – which had included representatives of the firms S. Adam, Herrmann Gerson, Gebrüder Manheimer, and Hugo Baruch (whose firm had designed display cases for the women's expo[679]) – they did not inevitably participate in fairs. German delegations to international fairs were influenced by the professional design reform community and its ideal of small-scale artisanal production as the basis of the nation's economic development and international reputation. If the Berlin fair had necessarily included leading voices from local economic powerhouses, German representatives at world's fairs could and did promote a more exclusive agenda. Judging from the official catalogues for German participation in Paris in 1900 and St Louis in 1904, there was no department dedicated to *Konfektion*; a handful of shirtmakers presented in Paris, and one corset producer, one glove-maker and one underwear producer in St Louis, but none primarily as fashion-oriented clothiers.[680] Gerson and Rudolph Hertzog made appearances, but not together with colleagues connected to *Hausvogteiplatz*. Their contributions included oriental carpets, furniture, and soft furnishings.[681]

The women's exhibition was, as such, an unprecedented opportunity for some clothiers. Only a select number of companies had been given a platform at the Berlin trade exhibition; the non-Jewish Hertzog was among the most visible, with a lavish pavilion to delight visitors.[682] Women-owned firms, which tended to be modest in size, were few and far between. Meanwhile, due to their

[678] Rowe, "Georg Simmel," 221; Katja Zelljadt, "Presenting and Consuming the Past – Old Berlin at the Industrial Exhibition of 1896," *Journal of Urban History* 31, no. 2 (3 March 2005): 306.
[679] *Der Confectionair* 27, no. 8 (25 February 1912), front page.
[680] The German delegations foregrounded primary industries such as textiles, embroidery, and dress-making machinery. For limited reference to the clothing industry, see "Various Articles of Dress," in *International Exposition Paris: Official Catalogue – Exhibition of the German Empire*, Reichscommissar für die "Welt-Ausstellung in Paris 1900" (Berlin, 1900), 286–7; "Various Industries connected with clothing," in *International exposition, St. Louis, 1904. Official catalogue: exhibition of the German empire*, ed. [Theodor] Lewald (Reichskommissar), trans. G.E. Maberly-Oppler (Berlin, 1904), 469.
[681] On Gerson and Michels (presenting silk production), for e.g., see Reichscommissar, *International Exposition Paris*, 280, 320, 323, 325; on Gerson and Hertzog (who also presented articles of ready-made clothing), see Lewald, *International exposition, St. Louis*, 114, 359, 361, 362, 455, 458, 462, 463, 468.
[682] *Rudolph Hertzog – Agenda*, 48.

concentration in the ready-to-wear clothing sector, Jewish-owned businesses were especially affected by the restrictive focus of German contributions to world's fairs – which may have concealed antisemitic prejudices under the guise of nationalism. The women's expo was equally selective but based on different criteria. Existing relationships with members of the women's movement and with women consumers proved decisive for companies that were not female-run – who would, in this case, have been advantaged rather than disadvantaged by their gender – as did the quantitative importance of companies as employers of women. These criteria were disproportionately met by Berlin-Jewish businesses. Sparse representation at international trade fairs improved the odds of clothiers agreeing to participate, and perhaps especially so for Jewish companies, who faced added pressure to demonstrate their patriotism. For whatever reason, however, Hertzog – among Berlin's mostly overtly nationalistic department stores – had no representation at "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf." Wertheim, on the other hand, was reaping the fruit of long-term collaboration with feminists and female creative professionals.

The women's expo was no doubt great publicity for those involved. It was significant for female entrepreneurs, portrayed as the stars of the show, but served equally to make familiar Berlin brands founded by men even more visible to a diverse, consuming public. The Lyceum Club was adding to its prestige among the international movement of Lyceum Clubs – which it formally re-joined in the autumn of 1912 following a hiatus.[683] Commercial companies were, meanwhile, able to market themselves to a specific group of consumers with largely untapped purchasing power, namely members and supporters of the women's movement, gathered in the capital for a national congress. Vast domestic and international press coverage of the exhibition, discussed further below, allowed Berlin's fashion industry to elevate its reputation among European and American liberal elites. From the nature of the advertisements found in the exhibition catalogue, it is clear, furthermore, that exhibitors regarded the expo almost unequivocally as an opportunity to court female consumers. Most advertisements – dominated by businesses already involved in the exhibition – concentrated in the appendix; adverts from clothing companies including Gebrüder Mosse were included among a

[683] Spreizer, "Women's arenas," 94.

handful of inlays in the main body of the text. Money or contacts, it seems, could therefore buy further privileges for those willing to go the extra mile.

Recalling the discussion in the previous chapter, "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" also offered employers an opportunity to scout for new talent. *Konfektion* was apparently experiencing a deficit of creative professionals, and clothiers were looking to the cultivation of German women's "natural" aesthetic instincts as a solution. The feminist organisers of the exhibition offered visitors information about different educational and career paths, functioning as a kind of job fair and therefore effectively doing part of the work "for" clothiers. The exhibition catalogue highlighted the shared nature of recent progress in Prussian trade legislation, described as "equally significant for the clothing industry itself as for the women who work in it."; since 1911, male and female craftsmen were to be regarded as equal.[684] According to the newspaper *Der Tag*, tailoring courses offered at the exhibition "enjoyed exceptional participation."[685] Clothiers were invested in recruiting not only new customers but potentially also new staff. The polished displays of firms like Herrmann Gerson made them appear respectable to consumers and jobseekers alike by redressing the public image of fashion stores, tainted by both antisemitic prejudice and legitimate criticism of the practices of capitalist enterprises.

Though the women's exhibition was a great opportunity for businesses, we must, however, also consider the potential cost. The exhibition had a clear viewpoint on the Woman Question that was not universally accepted. While Pepchinski has argued that the event exemplified conservative and nationalist currents within the women's movement, which negated new feminine expressions and attracted crowds by foregrounding socially acceptable narratives that glorified traditional German elites, I concur, rather, with Stratigakos, who emphasises the progressive nature of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf."[686] Many prominent feminists continued to regard biological motherhood as women's primary purpose (or "career"), yet mothering and child-rearing, in its most basic form, was nowhere

[684] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf*, 127.
[685] "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," *Der Tag* (newsletter), no. 103 (26 February 1912).
[686] Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 189–90; Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 97–136.

to be seen at the exhibition. Even "spiritual motherhood," the central tenet of bourgeois German feminism, had a negligible presence; different language was used in most of the exhibition's attempts to justify women's influence in various professional and professionalising fields.[687] The primary influence in the making of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" was not the bourgeois feminism of the BDF, but the Lyceum Club, a fringe group loosely associated with the women's movement, and the idiosyncratic priorities of its leading firebrand, Hedwig Heyl. Being a feminist venture alone made the women's expo controversial to parts of Wilhelmine society. Its insistence that women's paid and professional work was of equal importance to women's work in the home was, meanwhile, a tough sell even for some feminists.

The potential for publicity at the women's exhibition may have been incentive enough for clothiers to take an active role, regardless of the risk of adding fuel to the fire of antifeminist and antisemitic discourses. Most Wilhelmine Jews felt relatively secure in their status as members of the German nation and many felt comfortable enough, at least within certain limits, to express a dissenting opinion. Heyl's feminism would additionally have appeared congenial to the politics of many clothiers, given its focus on productivity as the basis of enlightenment and cultural progress. A female embodiment of this ideology conspicuously overlooked Wertheim's main atrium in the form of Ludwig Manzel's sculpture titled "Work" (*Die Arbeit*), representing a dynamic woman labourer carrying a piece of equipment in either hand. Brought into the heart of the modern department store, this "primordial mother of production and commodity turnover," to borrow from Alarich Rooch, bridged a romanticised, humble German past with modern commerce, literally placing women's work on a pedestal.[688] Like Manzel's sculptural metaphor, "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" allowed Wertheim and other businesses to glorify the ideals of liberal economy using Woman as the

[687] Heyl invokes ideas about motherliness when framing the exhibition to members of the women's movement, and nursery teachers and youth workers, closely associated with the Fröbel movement, who are exceptionally described by the exhibition catalogue as "motherly educators and carers." Words such as "work," and "occupation," are, however, by contrast, used 90 and 77 times respectively in the same publication. Heyl, "Die Ausstellung"; *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf*, 163, 212.
[688] Alarich Rooch, "Wertheim, Tietz und das KaDeWe in Berlin. Zur Architektursprache eines Kulturraumes," in Weiss-Sussex and Zitzlsperger, *Das Berliner Warenhaus*.

medium.[689] Similar to Wertheim's centrepiece, furthermore, the exhibition implicitly positioned businessmen like the Wertheims or the Grünfelds as evidence for the liberating and regenerating potential of the free market – the Manzel piece was humorously but tellingly re-named "Mrs Wertheim" by company employees.[690]

Most companies participated in the women's exhibition through invitation by the organisers, but, as the case of N. Israel shows, there were other avenues to become involved. Berthold Israel and his firm were instrumental in the construction of the 240 square-metre exhibition department of the Patriotic Women's Associations of the Red Cross, as revealed in the archives of the Berlin police department, which was considering Israel's nomination for the Red Cross Medal in the 3rd order in the summer of 1912.[691] N. Israel apparently lent several staff for free, full-time service for weeks leading up to the exhibition opening, including the company's female head clothier and leading decorators and 4–6 other employees from among company staff, including a painter, a tailor and a carpenter.[692] Berthold donated five spacious glass cabinets and additional frames for the display of items such as the organisation's uniforms – which Berthold had apparently introduced to the German Red Cross.[693] Explanatory signage was ordered and paid for by Berthold – the (Prussian) Patriotic Women's Association (the PWA), one of the exhibitors of the department, valued the total cost of Berthold's contribution at several thousand marks. "Without this self-sacrificing support, it would have been difficult to exhibit in the first place," representatives of the PWA concluded in a letter to the police authorities.[694]

[689] The Manzel statue was an apparently intentional addition by the Wertheim company to the otherwise coherent architectural vision of the new store building by architect Alfred Messel.
[690] Ladwig-Winters, *Wertheim*, 43.
[691] Documents and correspondences (June–July 1912), in "Orders and titles." "The Patriotic Women's Associations" (*Vaterländische Frauenvereine*) was used to describe a group of Red Cross organisations consisting of the main organisation, the (Prussian) Patriotic Women's Association (*Vaterländische Frauenverein*), the Bavarian Women's Association, and the Baden Women's Association. The collective display at the women's exhibition included all three.
[692] Correspondence from the board of the Patriotic Women's Association to the Royal Police Headquarters (28 June 1912), ibid.
[693] Notes (8 July 1912), ibid.
[694] Correspondence (28 June 1912), ibid.

According to the petition, N. Israel had been active supporter of the work of the Association and the Red Cross since the founding of the former (in 1866).[695] Berthold had personally made large donations to the women's branch during his career but was also credited with having "promoted" the work of the Associations and the sewing department of the Red Cross, coordinated by the former.[696] These sewing workshops were not universally popular among clothiers, because, as suggested by a letter to the editor of *Der Confectionair* in 1902, they raised funds through commercial bazars that were seen as interfering with the profits of local businesses, especially around the lucrative Christmas period.[697] Berthold, however, worked for the sustainability of these ventures, supplying workshops with high-quality fabrics at non-profit rates.[698] He was, no doubt, well aware, like others in his position, that charity could result in public recognition, which would in turn increase his social and cultural capital and that of his company. Such honours were far from guaranteed, however; prejudices toward Jews and their perceived ability to embody patriotism posed complications in particular, making it impossible to view the process of donation as a straightforward quid quo pro. In Berthold's case, the PWA proposal did not pass without problems, but came under further scrutiny by the Berlin police authorities.[699]

The participation of N. Israel in "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" was different from that of companies like Wertheim. Not only was it apparently the firm's own initiative to get involved, the contributions of N. Israel and Berthold Israel were never made public in the context of the exhibition, neither in the catalogue (where all commercial exhibitors were listed) nor in the special exhibition guide published by the PWA.[700] Judging from the evidence of these publications, the women's exhibition

[695] "Begründung des Vorschlags" (8 June 1912), ibid.
[696] Notes (8 July 1912), ibid.
[697] "Ein geschäftliches Verfahren des "Vaterländischen Frauenvereins," *Der Confectionair* 17, no. 51 (18 December 1902).
[698] Correspondence (28 June 1912), "Orders and titles."
[699] Correspondence from the Dr Kühne of the Vaterländische Frauenverein to senior Privy Counsellor (29 June 1912), ibid. The document states that, following an initial indication of support by the Privy Counsellor, an officer from the police department had contacted the PWA to ask further questions about the nomination, leading representatives of the PWA to understand that there were "still doubts as to the approval." The letter, underlining once more the "indispensable" nature of Berthold Israel's contributions, is an attempt by the PWA regain the support of the Privy Counsellor in order for matters to move forward.
[700] *Der Vaterländische Frauen-Verein in der Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf* (Berlin, 1912). The same can be said for potential sponsors of the presentations of other charities at the women's exhibitions;

did not significantly enhance the visibility of the N. Israel brand. Judging from the timeline of N. Israel's involvement, this was rather a case of Berthold following the Israel family's tradition of making the company an extension of its Jewish and secular charitable work, the cause of the PWA having passed down to him from his father Jacob.[701] The PWA, founded by the Prussian Queen Augusta, combined a patriotic sentiment of equipping the German people for peace and war with the progressive sentiment of positioning women at the forefront of national welfare efforts.[702] Additionally, the PWA's founding ethos was to ensure that women who, "regardless of religion or rank," had done "truly selfless and magnificent work during the war, may continue their successful joint activities in peacetime as well."[703] The support of N. Israel and Berthold Israel, while a demonstration of patriotism in itself, thus helped honour the wartime contributions of Jewish as well as non-Jewish women and continued to further the future of cross-confessional collaboration.

If past research has emphasised the agency of Heyl and other Berlin feminists in rallying the support of the Berlin business community, I wish to add to this picture the contention that Berlin's top fashion houses provided fertile soil for cultivating the seeds of feminist advocacy. As seen above, there was a clear convergence of interests between clothiers and Berlin feminists, particularly those with connections to the Lyceum Club. As suggested in the previous chapter, the collective clothing lobby, spearheaded by Berlin-Jewish firms through the mouthpiece of *Der Confectionair*, was not only receptive to but vocally supportive of middle-class women's efforts to professionalise. This support, I have shown, was manifested on a grand scale at the *Zoologischer Garten* exhibition building in 1912. In at least one instance, it was the philanthropic culture of a Jewish family that helped shape

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charity donors tended to remain anonymous, and Berthold Israel's involvement was ostensibly viewed in this context.

[701] The PWA also seemed a good fit with Berthold's politics; his approach to rising conservative nationalism was one of optimism and appeasement, as demonstrated most clearly in his belief that a donation to the 1933 election campaign of the *Deutsche Nationale Volkspartei*, an ally of the Nazi party which Berthold had supported for some time, might help change the ominous direction of German politics. Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel*, 87, 113.

[702] Angelika Schaser has argued, in this vein, for an "expanded definition of the 'German women's movement'" that includes organisations such as the PWA, which, though not explicitly "feminist," were viewed by many contemporaries, including feminists, as being part of the same movement. Angelika Schaser "Women in a Nation of Men: The Politics of the League of German Women's Associations (BDF) in Imperial Germany, 1894–1914," in *Gendered Nations: Nationalism and Gender Order in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Karen Hagemann and Catherine Hall (Oxford, 2000), 250–1.

[703] Translation by Schaser. Ibid., 251.

the exhibition behind the scenes. In most cases, it was a loud and visible endorsement that simultaneously amounted to a political statement and a profit-driven publicity stunt. In this, too, clothiers were aligned with the spirit of the feminist organisers.

Jewish Spaces among the Women's Counterpublic

The question of inclusivity has influenced the discussion on women's participation in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century exhibitionary culture. The female organisers and independent exhibitors of international and universal fairs were invariably drawn from among white, societal elites, which tended to generate a certain image of women's work and modern womanhood – to the exclusion, under- or misrepresentation of other groups such as working-class women, women of colour, and colonial subjects.[704] Pepchinski finds, in this vein, that the Berlin women's exhibition of 1912 "celebrated [binary gender] difference but did not explore the breadth of the feminine experience," arguing that it cosied up to exclusionary (even antisemitic) forms of nationalism through its focus on women's impact on *Kultur*."[705] The influence of bourgeois ideology could, indeed, be seen clearly in the displays of the clothing industries, which idealised bourgeois notions of hygiene and orderliness as well as promoting middle-class, business-focused liberalism. Without a follow up, noted the left-liberal *Neue Badische Landes-Zeitung*, the women's exhibition risked giving the impression that it was, in fact, "only interested in 'the *lady* at home at work.'"[706]

A closer look at the club world nonetheless reveals an exception to this rule, namely, Jewish women. Like men's clubs, "[w]omen's clubs also had biases," observes Deborah Grand Golomb concerning

[704] Many studies focus on the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, which, in its very premise as a celebration of the fourth centenary since Columbus' landing in America, approached questions of modernity from the perspective of colonisers. See for e.g., Tracey Jean Boisseau, "White Queens at the Chicago World's Fair, 1893: New Womanhood in the Service of Class, Race, and Nation," *Gender & History* 12, no. 1 (April 2000): 33–81; Ann Massa, "Black women in the 'White City,'" *Journal of American Studies* 8, no. 3 (1974): 319–37. For a general discussion, see Boisseau and Markwyn, "World's Fairs in Feminist Perspective," 4–5; Boussahba-Bravard and Rogers, *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions*, para 26–9. For examples of how women resisted these representations and their marginalisation, see, for instance, contributions by Claudine Raynard on African American activist Ida B. Wells and others, and James Keating's chapter on Utah Mormon women and the Australian Margaret Windeyer, both found in Boussahba-Bravard and Rogers, *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions*.
[705] Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 189.
[706] A.C., "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf."

the American context, "but these cut across racial and economic rather than religious lines" (Jewish women being considered "white" in this context).[707] "For Jewish women," she continues, "the club movement served as a stepping stone from parochial Ladies' Benevolent Societies to city, state and national organizations."[708] Similar to their American counterparts, middle-class German-Jewish women entered the club scene, using the opportunities it offered to advance both the middle-class women's cause and Jewish causes. For women from marginalised backgrounds, argues Tracey Jean Boisseau, international and universal exhibitions formed "key battleground sites," and Jewish women, many with connections to the club world, took the 1893 Chicago world's fair as "an opportunity to make themselves more visible and assert their rights."[709] So, too, at the Berlin women's expo of 1912, where Jewish women stepped out as women and Germans and some also as Jews.

Claims of Jewish difference at the Berlin women's fair were legitimised, in part, through notions of westernness and whiteness. Jewish women were counted among the cultural emissaries of the German nation, who, like the exhibition's life-sized mannequins, surveyed the colonial landscape from on top of a camel or lay bundled up in a litter carried by dark-skinned mannequin native men. In the department for German women abroad, German-Jewish charities presented the philanthropic activities of women in German-Jewish schools, orphanages, and hospitals in Ottoman Jerusalem as expressions of Germany's reformative influence in foreign lands.[710] Among the exhibits for the folk arts, a Palestine section showcased the handicrafts of German-Jewish settlers, proposing Zionism as a form of western, civilising colonialism. The artisanal technique of these "female colonists," noted

[707] Deborah Grand Golomb, "The 1893 Congress of Jewish Women: Evolution or Revolution in American Jewish Women's History?" *American Jewish History* 70, no. 1 (September 1980): 57.
[708] Ibid.
[709] Tracey Jean Boisseau, "Fair Chances: World's Fairs and American Woman Suffrage," *Journal of Women's History* 36, no. 2 (forthcoming, Summer, 2024).
[710] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 193. In mentioning the work of the Augusta Victoria Hospital, recently founded on the Mount of Olives, on the same page, the exhibition catalogue failed to note the charitable involvement of *Kaufhaus* N. Israel in the endeavour (the company supplied all the necessary bedding and linen). Visibility was awarded to commercial firms only when necessary or when beneficial to the women's movement, and sponsors were excluded entirely from departments for women's charitable work. On N. Israel and the Jerusalem charity, see Correspondence from and to Baron von Mirbach (2 June 1908), "Orders and titles."

the Jewish newspaper *Die Welt*, "equals and sometimes even surpasses that of the Arab women."[711] Club veteran and author Luise Marelle formed a link between the Lyceum Club and the Zionist arts and crafts lobby, which had jointly organised a smaller exhibition focused on the lace creations from the workshops of the Association of Jewish women for Cultural Work in Palestine in 1911.[712] The event had – of course – been held at Wertheim.

In the case of the most notable Jewish presentation – that of the Jewish Women's League (the JFB) – however, it was not race or culture but an inter-communal Jewish class dynamic that validated the claims of German-Jewish women as a distinct group. Jewish women in public welfare roles, the exhibition showed, did not just form an important part of the exhibition's message that women were selflessly placing their feminine talents at the service of the nation. A plethora of Jewish women's organisations, exhibiting as part of the JFB, demonstrated how Jewish women were contributing to the wider community by caring for – and managing – "their own," through promoting Jewish women's education, supporting Jewish women's work, and through raising Jewish women's (bourgeois) morality. These efforts, the exhibition catalogue determined, were part of the "Woman in Social Work," which belonged, in spite of its unremunerated nature, to the overarching division of "Women at Work." Meanwhile, instead of addressing the central role of poor eastern European Jewish women as recipients of Jewish aid, the organisers pointed to more general economic pressures facing Jews, which allegedly "open[ed] up a wide range of social activities for Jewish women."[713] The organisers of the JFB exhibition did not, therefore, appear to use ethnic differences between Jews to signal their superiority or belonging in Germany, but rather differences in financial standing within the Jewish community. Ultimately, the catalogue explained, the work of Jewish women's welfare groups would, as it were, "[strengthen] Jewish communal consciousness."[714]

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[711] "Ausstellung palästinensischer Spitzen in Berlin," *Die Welt* 15, no. 17 (28 April 1911), 388.
[712] Marelle was responsible for the Palestine department of the folk-art exhibition at "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf." *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 34. Regarding the Association of Jewish women for Cultural Work in Palestine as a Zionist organisation, see Tamara Or, *Vorkämpferinnen und Mütter des Zionismus: Die deutsch-zionistischen Frauenorganisationen (1897–1938)* (Frankfurt am Main, 2009), 121–41.
[713] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 158.
[714] Ibid.

In addition to Jewish nurses, who exhibited through their professional organisation, [715] there was one final group of Jewish women who exhibited as Jews and participated as such in the women's congress, namely women's groups within B'nai B'rith lodges. According to the annual report of the Frankfurt am Main branch in 1913, women's groups belonging to the lodges had utilised the event to have their own gatherings and create a centralised collaborative body, which came into being about six months after the women's exhibition.[716] The united women's associations of B'nai Brith lodges subsequently joined the JFB, becoming through it part of the Federation for German women's Associations.[717] The case of women in Jewish lodges shows how the exhibition brought together not only German women of different backgrounds but Jewish women with other Jewish women, helping them to organise Jewish charitable work more effectively. In a surprising turn of events, the interspersed activities of Jewish women also became organisationally connected to the middle-class women's movement to a greater degree through the women's exhibition, strengthening the connections between Jewish lodges and German feminism and encouraging inter-confessional collaboration among German feminist activists.

"Die Frau und Haus und Beruf" therefore constituted a national platform which allowed German-Jewish women to further Jewish aims while bringing Jewish women's charitable work closer to German feminism. Some Jewish groups, as seen above, had working relations with the exhibition organisers that predated the women's exhibition – indeed, Bertha Pappenheim, the founder of the Jewish Women's League who had dedicated herself to fighting for the rights of Jewish women, demonstrated her commitment to the universal women's exhibition by lending her personal cache of fine lacework to be displayed among the exhibits of prominent female collectors.[718] In the context of an exhibition that is characterised here as "feminist," the involvement of Jewish women's groups

[715] *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 69. A sizeable proportion of German nursing care was administered through religious orders, making Jewish women a natural sub-community within the wider field of professional nursing.
[716] "Allgemeiner Bericht," *Sechster Jahresbericht der Frauenvereinigung der Frankfurt-Loge* (1 April 1911–31 March 1913), 3.
[717] Ibid., 4.
[718] Pappenheim is unusually denoted "Berta," without an h, in the exhibition catalogue. *Ausstellung Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,* 44.

was a public expression of Jewish identity and religious difference as well as of solidarity with the exhibition's bourgeois feminist aims – and, along with it, as an exercise in framing Jewish women's paid, professional, and voluntary work as patriotic alongside that of other German women.

No German-Jewish group or institution had been as explicit about its Jewishness at the Berlin trade exhibition as some of the Jewish women presenting in 1912. The Baruch Auerbach orphanage and the Association for the Berlin Public Soup Kitchen from 1866, chaired by Lina Morgenstern, had, for instance, well-known Jewish origins but in neither case was "Jewishness" their defining characteristic, at least not as far as the *Gewerbeausstellung* catalogue from 1896 was concerned.[719] Jews did present conspicuously as Jews as part of the trade show's Palestine exhibition, though without reference in the official catalogue, which mentioned only the German colonial exhibition as a whole. Jewish life formed part of the Cairo exposition, quite literally sandwiched between "the great pyramid and the [Egyptian] temple of Edfu."[720] The Jewish building, dedicated to "Products of Jewish Villages in Palestine" and with walls decorated in Hebrew Bible verses, featured handicrafts and agricultural produce of Jewish settlers, showing how these were being refined by German-sounding companies such as S. Friedmann in Haifa, which distilled Palestine's choice citrus fruits into various alcoholic beverages.[721] The *Gewerbeausstellung* emphasised the "oriental" connections of Jews, simultaneously portraying Jews – and Jewish companies in particular – as instruments for Germany to realise its colonial aspirations in the (Ottoman-ruled) Holy Land. Like the women's exhibition, which framed Jewish women's efforts as patriotic "work," whether performed professionally or voluntarily, the Berlin trade exhibition made Jewish productivity a basis for reconciling difference with national belonging. Contrary to the trade exhibition, however, the women's expo imagined and manifested a public sphere in which Jews could remain publicly Jewish in Germany as well.

[719] See *Berliner Gewerbe-Ausstellung 1896*, 173, 181.
[720] "Von der Gewerbe-Ausstellung – Die jüdische Palästina-Ausstellung in Berlin," *Deutsche Hausfrauen-Zeitung* 23 no. 33 (16 August 1896), 392.
[721] Ibid.

The role of Jewish businesses in shaping Jewish spaces at "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" is elusive. An obvious explanation for this situation is suggested by the organisers' desire to emphasise the artistic rather than the commercial qualities of women's work and relate their presentations to upper-class German notions of taste and elegance as opposed to "American-style" mass consumerism. This consideration would have been particularly germane for Jewish groups since prevailing stereotypes already associated Jews with business and capitalism – and often so with disapproval. Women of organisations such as the JFB were, nonetheless, almost certainly able to draw on their network of contacts in urban business circles to realise their vision, especially as their efforts were portrayed by the exhibition as serving Jewish charitable purposes. Jewish firms likely chose to contribute, at the very least, to attract new clientele from among the increasingly empowered members of women's groups – although there is scant evidence to this effect in Jewish press. Berthold Israel's son Wilfrid would later become closely affiliated with Jewish feminists, yet since exhibits of philanthropic work did not publicly reveal their sponsors, we cannot be sure about the full extent of the Israels' involvement.

One particular example illustrates, finally, how Jewish women activists and a Jewish business *did* publicly collaborate in the lead up to women's exhibition; the *Frankfurter Israelitisches Familienblatt* reported a month before the opening of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" that the Frankfurt branch of Wronker department stores was displaying in its shop window a model replica of a Jewish girls' club, destined for the women's exhibition.[722] The Jewish-owned company allowed passers-by an exclusive preview, which the local Jewish press brought to people's attention, while also generating publicity for the upcoming women's expo. Once again, the interests of a business, using here the work of Jewish women activists to channel foot traffic to a retail store, coincided with those of German, in this case, German-Jewish feminists. The *Familienblatt* hailed the model as evidence for the "diverse activities" of the "well-known association" of Jewish women in Frankfurt[723] – the paper was referring to the association *Weibliche Fürsorge*, founded by Pappenheim

[722] "Aus dem Frankfurter Vereinsleben," *Frankfurter Israelitisches Familienblatt* 10, no. 4 (26 January 1912, supplement, 10.
[723] Ibid.

and Henriette Fürth, another prominent Jewish feminist, and sharing an address with both the Jewish girls' club and the Frankfurt-based *Israelitische Hilfsverein*. The Wronker story shows that the women's exhibition had ripple effects in Jewish communities beyond Berlin. Strikingly, it also suggests how the women's expo not only metaphorically inhabited the department or fashion store space, through the design of female department store employees, but how, in at least this one – hardly isolated – case, the women's exhibition physically inhabited the department store, in this instance through the achievements of Jewish women taking centre stage in the prime commercial space of a Jewish store.

Epilogue: The Exhibition's Parallel life in Press and Printed Media

Since "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" lasted an entire month, it came to enjoy a rich parallel existence in a range of German and international publications. Large dailies such as the *Berliner Tageblatt* ran multiple features detailing the exhibition's content and significance, in special women's supplements as well as on its front page. Major newspapers in other cities such as Hamburg similarly made the exhibition a recurring topic with over a dozen articles in the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* alone, beginning weeks before the opening. The event was presented and reviewed by the *Werkbund* and women's clubs, in socialist publications, and in bourgeois and left-wing feminist periodicals, with a vivid discussion arising between (majority) supporters and opponents of the endeavour and its execution.[724] The exhibition was noted in newspapers and periodicals across Europe and the United States, with the American press showing particular interest. As far away as Imperial Valley, California, Americans reported on the intention of the Berlin exhibition "to prove to the world that German women have entered nearly every sphere of human activity and are now to be found toiling side by side with men in all the arts and industries."[725]

[724] Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin*, 130–6; Pepchinski, *Feminist Space*, 186–9.
[725] "Open Women's Exhibition," *Imperial Valley Press* 11, no. 140 (24 February 1912). Other examples are found in "In Woman's World," *Call* (San Francisco) 111, no. 74 (12 February 1912); *Las Vegas Optic* 33, no. 94 (24 February 1912); "Woman's Work in Many Fields," *New York Times* (25 February 1912).

The visibility of the exhibition in printed media bears witness to the success of its organisers in convincing the wider reading public (or at least the press) of its importance. In addition to reporting on the women's fair as an historic event, the press advertised it, occasionally through full-page news stories. The Berlin spectacle attracted with its grandeur and novelty. Attention across the Wilhelmine and international publications evidenced a growing interest in women's issues while also nurturing it. In many cases, it was to the credit of female journalists, some of whom were involved as exhibition organisers, that "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" achieved such widespread publicity; the reporting in the *Berliner Tageblatt* could, for instance, be traced mainly to Anna Plothow, one of the paper's regular journalists and co-chair of the exhibition's press section. Meanwhile, the exhibition served as a vehicle for expanding women's spaces in the public sphere, with women journalists and authors successfully styling themselves as experts and gaining greater prominence in their respective professional domains – at least temporarily.[726]

The preoccupation of *Der Confectionair* with the women's exhibition follows a similar pattern, as explored above. While figures such as Käte Herz had been influential, the prestige and commercial importance of major fairs was also reason for enough clothiers to engage with exhibitions in print. The N. Israel albums are a case in point. The 1905 album *A Journey Around the World* (*Eine Weltreise*) made the St Louis World's Fair of 1904 – in which N. Israel apparently did not participate – a central pitstop on its way through the American continent.[727] At least a further two albums appear to have been inspired by major exhibitions, including the album about hygiene from 1912, which followed the International Hygiene Exhibition in Dresden in 1911. The second is the *Woman in the*

[726] The exhibition may have inspired the founding of a bi-monthly journal for women in employment titled *Die Frau in Haus und Beruf: illustrierte Zeitschrift für die Interessen der erwerbstätigen Frau*, which first appeared in 1913. The illustrated publication, founded by Ernst and Bertha Rubien (who had no formal role in the exhibition), addressed a range of topics of potential interest for the working woman, with a preference, however, for topics with a tenuous connection to women's formal employment, such as housekeeping and motherhood (the former characterised by the journal, nonetheless, much like it was by Heyl, as economically important work); see for e.g., "Die Hausfrau als Verwalterin wirtschaftlicher Werke," *Die Frau in Haus und Beruf* [2], no. 11 (Edition B) (1 June 1914)). By 1914, the decidedly moderate tone of the publication became more pronounced, as the subtitle changed to *Ein Familienblatt fürs deutsche Haus*, a family paper for the German home. The journal is not to be confused with another called *Die Frau in Haus und Beruf* (no subtitle), which was published in Berlin by Sturm Verlag between 1907 and 1913, and after 1913 under the title *Die Frau in Heim und Erwerb* (possibly to distance itself from the exhibition).

[727] Eugen Zabel, *N. Israel, Berlin – Album 1905: Eine Weltreise* (Berlin, 1905).

Century of Energy from 1913, the very title of which evokes the original idea of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" as connecting women's modernity with gas. The album essays echo the exhibition's ode to the eternal woman, whose feminine being is manifesting in new works and behaviours. The illustrations revisit important woman figures of the exhibition including Elisabeth, the Queen of Romania and royal protectress of the German Lyceum Club – identified by her author's pseudonym Carmen Sylva – Alice Salomon, and Gertrud Bäumer. A host of photographic images recall the 1912 exhibition's encyclopaedic presentation of "new women," from female fencers and aviators to artists and equestrians. The essay "Ihre Seele" is most transparent in its reference to the exhibition, in picturing (and identifying) the artist Ida Stroever and including a full reproduction of Stroever's frieze "The Woman's Path" – a central propaganda element of the women's exhibition (Fig. 30; 31).[728] Reduced to fit the pages, the enormous painting is displayed in black and white in separate acts as snapshots from women's journey to liberation. While N. Israel does not mention "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" – possibly since it was not a named exhibitor – it consciously used the fair's feminism-inflected artwork to connect the company with this well-documented feminist event. In emphasising the role of these annotated pictures not just as decorative elements but as fruits of the female creative self, the 1913 N. Israel album rehashed the messages of the women's exhibition, keeping its sentiments alive. Since the album included two female authors at most, among eleven, it nevertheless failed to recreate the experience of the women's exhibition as a female-directed enterprise. As an offshoot of the fair in printed media, the N. Israel album manifested the women's public sphere only to a certain degree.

With all the commotion in the press and in other publications, not to mention the central involvement of Jewish women, one would expect German-Jewish newspapers to be teeming with enthusiasm to give their take on the affair – they were not. There is a confounding silence across the Jewish press; no major Jewish newspaper or periodical published an article describing the exhibition, its

[728] Pestalozza, "Ihre Seele." The photographs of the frieze reproduced in the N. Israel album, likely the same as those published in the *Illustrirte Zeitung* (exhibition organisers strictly controlled who could photograph), were taken by the press Berlin photo agency Zander & Labisch. The Posen-born Jewish co-owner, Siegmund Labisch (b. 1863), perished in the Theresienstadt ghetto in 1942.

significance for Jewish women's groups, or providing details as to exactly when and where it would take place, at least not in the main segments of the paper. The fact that most readers would also have read general German newspapers may have made such notices appear redundant. More likely, the women's exhibition was not considered a "Jewish enough" issue to warrant the attention. A strict separation of content based on the reader's gender may provide a further, partial explanation, with women's supplements of Jewish publications unfortunately not included in this analysis.[729] Whether or not the Jewish press rendered the exhibition a women's issue rather than a "general" Jewish issue, the prominence of Jewish company owners at the fair makes its relative absence in contemporary Jewish reports striking.

A rare mention of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* (henceforth the AZDJ) contributes to this dynamic with unintended irony. The business notices of the paper's community supplement commend the exhibition department of "Industry and Crafts" as "particularly successful."[730] In a chunky paragraph, the writer expresses their awe at the items presented by Singer Co. as being among the "most interesting of this department."[731] The notice details the various uses of Singer's family sewing machines as well as the company's "special machines for ready-made clothing." Singer's central displays of embroideries produced with its pioneering equipment give, according to the writer, "eloquent testimony to the efficiency of the Singer sewing machines in their capacity as embroidery machines" – not, as intended by the organisers, to the achievements of female workers. The piece underlines through repetition how the use of the Singer machines is demonstrated to the public by trained staff – once again, not for the purpose of underscoring women's professional and technical skills but "in order to give visitors of

[729] Most women's supplements to German-Jewish newspapers and journals, including the women's magazines of the *Jüdische Rundschau*, have not been digitised with the rest of the paper and have therefore not been accessible to me. The bulletins of the JFB, which have been digitised, only begin in 1924. Future research comparing the response to the exhibition in the general Jewish press versus that found in publications geared toward Jewish women would likely add interesting insights to the present research.
[730] "Geschäftliche Notizen," *Der Gemeindebote – Beilage zur "Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums"* 76, no. 11 (15 March 1912).
[731] Ibid.

the exhibition a correct picture of the performance and utility of the various machines."[732] The writer understands the exhibition as a typical industrial fair. As such, they miss its main point entirely.

Clearly, the women's fair meant different things to different people. The writer in the AZDJ saw it for what it represented for a particular group of Jews, based on the prominence of clothing production at the exhibition. Commercial companies regarded "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" as an opportunity to demonstrate new equipment to potential buyers, and, as the notice suggested, some potential customers similarly approached it with a keen business eye, ignoring the exhibition's blatant feminist propaganda. Because the text was placed among communal notices of one of Germany's largest Jewish newspapers, one may deduce that the exhibition was regarded at least by the AZDJ as an affair of inter-denominational Jewish communal interest, specifically among Jewish business and entrepreneurial communities. At the same time, the Jewish press reconceived the women's exhibition in this instance as serving the Jewish community, especially through equipping and inspiring local Jewish companies. Yet even so, the notice was placed just over a week before the closing of the exhibition. This was not a topic of primary importance for the AZDJ's editorial staff.

Weeks after the exhibition had ended, another inconspicuous reference to the exhibition appeared in the same AZDJ community supplement. The "Correspondences and News" section reported from the general assembly of the Israelite Association for Women's Support, which had taken place during (and perhaps in conjunction with) the women's expo.[733] The association's chairwoman, Henriette May – who had also chaired the section for JFB's social work at the women's fair – had provided an overview of the activities of the association over three decades, stating, according to the paraphrase by the AZDJ, that the "freer air that now blew around the fallen ghetto walls [since the emancipation of German Jews had] turned [Jewish women's activities] from charity to modern welfare." May pointed to increasing financial support for the association over the years, as well as to the "favourable reception" of the association's contribution to "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf," ostensibly in the form of photographs showcasing the work of the organisation. Once more, this minor and retrospective

[732] Ibid.
[733] "Korrespondenzen und Nachrichten: Deutschland," *Gemeindebote* (AZDJ) 76, no. 14 (5 April 1912).

mention could easily have passed under the radar of the paper's Jewish readers. By "favourable reception," May was surely not referring to the Jewish press.

As it was, the attention of Jewish periodicals and newspapers was elsewhere. Plans for an "Exhibition of Modern Jewry" dominated the two first pages of the *Jüdische Rundschau* on 23 February 1912, the day before the opening of the women's exhibition. The writer Davis Trietsch, a leading member of the Zionist arts and crafts lobby, proposed a general exhibition of Jewish achievements as a response to the need to show "not only the world [...], what we have achieved in Palestine but also ourselves what is yet to be done in Palestine."[734] The exhibition, Trietsch theorised, would be a way to strengthen Jewish connections to Palestine. The *Jüdische Rundschau* included a detailed overview of Trietsch's proposal, including its three major departments: Palestine, Modern Jewry and the Role of Jews in the Development of *Kultur*. The Palestine department was to include local produce from "Jewish colonies" and images depicting Jewish life in Palestine, while the second department showcased expressions of modern Jewish life in areas such as literature, art, science, and organisational life. The third and final department was to present a cavalcade of great Jewish men and their contributions to German culture, as politicians, businessmen, scholars and more, alongside demonstrating the influence of (male) Jewish ideas in "human life in its entirety."[735]

On the face of it, then, the *Jüdische Rundschau* was prioritising the case for adapting the concept of the universal exhibition to serve Jewish and Zionist causes over a focus on the "general" women's exhibition. The proposed approach was, in parts, directly analogous to the latter, with its "portraits of modern Jews" and its comprehensive demonstration of Jewish contributions to all areas of German civilisation. One sought legitimacy and acceptance for Jewish efforts, the other for those of women. Like the women's exhibition, the concept of a Palestine exhibition had its progenitor in the applied arts' exhibitions at Wertheim, where Trietsch and others collaborated with the Lyceum Club to publicise both Jewish "colonialism" and the work of professional women in the arts and crafts

[734] "Palästina-Ausstellungen," *Jüdische Rundschau* 17, no. 8 (23 February 1912), 59–60.
[735] Ibid., 60.

community – Trietsch even lectured at the Lyceum Club on at least one occasion in 1910.[736] By February 1912, however, Trietsch's aspirations had taken on a new level of ambition, perhaps emboldened by the hotly anticipated women's fair. Ironically, while Jewish women were about to stage the most significant collective display of Jewish achievements seen in Germany, Trietsch was preoccupied with a hypothetical exhibition which, in practice, focused on the accomplishments of Jewish men – and with him, so was the Jewish press.

Adding to the absurdity of the situation was the fact that the women's exhibition coincided with the hundred-year anniversary of the Emancipation Edict of 11 March 1812, portrayed in the Jewish press at this stage as a critical juncture in the history of German-Jewish emancipation.[737] The centenary was widely discussed, including descriptions of lavish celebrations held across Prussian cities and provinces; in Königsberg, the local branch of the *Central-Verein* organised a special Sabbath service which culminated in a festive banquet; in Gleiwitz (Gliwice) the equivalent event was commemorated with speeches from distinguished Jewish men and a performance by an all-male choir, directed by chief cantor Magnus Davidsohn.[738] The contrast to what was concurrently unfolding at the Berlin *Zoologischer Garten* could not have been more striking. Many articles and public addresses referenced the continuing struggle for Jews to assert themselves against the forces of antisemitism; few, if any, acknowledged that Jewish women remained unemancipated. Feminist Henriette May understood Jewish women's efforts as part of the long history of Jewish emancipation. Her observations found little resonance, however, in the Jewish press.

The women's exhibition was considered a decisive event by Jewish women's groups; women from Jewish lodges wrote enthusiastically about their efforts to revamp their organisational infrastructure

[736] "Eine Spitzenindustrie für Palästina," *Palästina* 7, no. 10 (1910), 211.
[737] On the limits of the so-called *Judenedikt* and the ambivalent response from German Jews at the time, see Andreas Brämer and Gideon Reuveni, "Introduction; Jews as German Citizens: The Prussian Emancipation Edict of 1812 and Beyond," *LBIYB* 59 (2014): 3–5; Michal Szulc, "A Gracious Act or Merely a Regulation of Economic Activity? A Daily Life Perspective on the Reception of the Prussian Emancipation Edict of 1812," *LBIYB* 59 (2014): 23–36.
[738] For e.g., "Zum 11. März," *Ost und West 12*, no. 3 (March 1912), 221–2; "Korrespondenzen und Nachrichten," *Gemeindebote* (AZDJ) 76, no. 11 (15 March 1912); "Die Seculärfeier des Emanzipationedikts," *Im deutschen* Reich 18, no. 5 (May 1912), 215–8; *Israelitisches Familienblatt* 14, no. 10 (7 March 1912), passim.

and team up with Jewish (and therefore also non-Jewish) feminists at the fair; Jewish women's welfare organisations flocked from near and far to exhibit their achievements; and Berlin Zionist women offered their members subsidised fares to the exhibition's ticketed events.[739] Yet with certain other "Jewish" events competing for the attention of the Jewish press, a monumental public petition by Jewish women to achieve equality was largely ignored. The positions taken on the women's exhibition in *Der Confectionair* and in the N. Israel albums, if seen as expressing those of a Jewish professional community, were apparently exceptional among Jewish publications in this period as public endorsements of the efforts of Jewish women alongside those of non-Jewish women to improve their status. While Berlin-Jewish clothiers fell short of acknowledging women's rights as a "Jewish" issue, *Der Confectionair* did make its position clear to a wide Jewish audience. Meanwhile, the disinterest of the German-Jewish press in the women's exhibition shows the extent to which the former was permeated by patriarchal culture and points to Jewish women's continued struggles to break through into the mainstream of German-Jewish public discourse.

[739] "Berliner Vereinskalender," *Jüdische Rundschau* 17, no. 4 (26 January 1912). The advertisement pertains to the *Jüdisch-nationale Frauenvereinigung*.

CONCLUSION:

A Jewish "New Man"?

This dissertation began as a study about Jewish women in the German workforce but finished as a study about German-Jewish men and their thoughts on women. It took many years to reach its final form, in part because I resisted the idea of abandoning my women subjects even though my sources were steering me in a different direction. In the end, I had to concede that Jewish women's experiences were too elusive in the context I was working on (the First World War) and their histories regrettably too fragmented to piece together with the sources available to me. The story that did emerge was, I discovered, nonetheless curious and one worth telling; about how early-twentieth-century Berlin-Jewish clothiers and department store owners expressed support and public sympathy for the women's cause and progressive models of female behaviour. I subsequently made it my focus to uncover how women actively influenced the making of these public discourses – since my initial observations of the sources and earlier research by other scholars suggested they were there to be found.

My three case studies have shed crucial light on the key questions I posed in my introduction. What position(s) did Berlin clothiers take on the woman question? How and through what media were these positions formulated and expressed? The examples of the N. Israel albums, *Der Confectionair*, and the 1912 women's exhibition offer insight into central arenas in which the "public opinion" of Berlin firms in the commercial clothing trade was formed and through which it was mediated to wider audiences. My research demonstrates the unwavering support that these businesses and their representatives lent the middle-class German women's cause at the height of its popularity (and controversy). A range of views probably existed among this community, which this research has not been able to gauge. Similarly, the findings are biased toward the companies that took a leading position in the field, in their professional representative roles and extraordinary commercial success. We are dealing, furthermore, with public self-fashioning that may or may not have corresponded to

clothiers' private views or practices. And still – all of these caveats notwithstanding – the level of enthusiasm exhibited by them is astonishing and in need of explanation.

In answering my final research question, concerning the underlying factors, I have focused on the intersection of business and Jewishness; neither the Germanness of companies like N. Israel or Seidenhaus Michels nor the gender of their owners or directors explain these public allegiances (though they do illuminate the forms in which they materialised). Rudolph Hertzog, the only relevant non-Jewish firm among the same cohort was, as mentioned, absent from these discussions by the 1910s either by choice or due to its possible isolation from the rest of the professional community (although I have found no evidence for the latter). The impact of class can, similarly, be detected in the ideological orientation of these positions but class has little explanatory power since most German middle-class men were not feminist sympathisers. It does, meanwhile, help explain the affiliation with bourgeois feminism rather than with socialism and the relative disinterest of clothiers toward working-class women's rights, which they shared with non-Jewish members of their class, including many feminists. The question then becomes whether influences from cosmopolitan business, particularly from the English-speaking world, sufficiently explain the apparent phenomenon. I have argued that they do not, given the anti-Americanism of Wilhelmine elites and the strong incentive of Jews to conform to predominant cultural norms. The events in America and Britain also unfolded in many cases parallel to, rather than preceding, those in Germany.

Jewishness, I have suggested, shaped the politics of *Konfektionäre* and department store owners. In public, their Jewish background always mattered, whether among Jews, non-Jews, or both, and clothiers were no strangers to this fact. Jewish considerations apparently help explain the vehement opposition by the collective clothing lobby to the regulation of homework, since the independence of the market was connected by leading German-Jewish ideologues with Jewish emancipation. Links between economic liberalism and bourgeois value liberalism, both of which garnered widespread support among German Jews, further show the proximity between professional Jewish politics and liberal feminism. In some contexts, I have indicated, Jewish religious and philanthropic practices

became a pathway to commercial activism. Finally, Jews were connected to the cosmopolitan and anglophone culture not just through business but through family relations and Jews further afield. For many among the business elite, such as the Israels, being Jewish meant, in addition to being German, quite literally being a modern man of the world.

What, then, can be said about these men, who so eagerly supported women's modernity? As Tara Macdonald has noted in her work on Victorian novels, "models of masculinity and femininity are best examined alongside one another" because, as she points out, citing Rosh and Michael Roper, gender is a "*relational* construct."[740] I have focused, in part, on the New Woman as an ideal type found in the promotional literature of N. Israel and in the construction of "Die Frau in Haus und Beruf" but also implicit in the commitments of the trade journal *Der Confectionair*. I have shown how commercial clothiers helped "produce" this ideal and, indeed, how they configured the New Woman as a producer, defined primarily by her public and professional activity as opposed to motherhood, homemaking, or even consumption. In advocating certain ideals of womanhood and a new(ish) gender order, however, commercial clothiers were also constructing their own public identities, as German Jews, as business owners, and as men. In Victorian literature, the New Woman frequently appears alongside a complementary type: the radical New Man. "The New Man," writes MacDonald, is best understood as the political ally to the New Woman, supporting and aiding her attempts at social and political liberation[...]."[741] Although a "utopian figure"[742] in the heyday of New Woman literature in the 1880s and 90s, "suffragents," as Brooke Kroeger denotes male supporters of women's suffrage, formed a visible and vocal presence in 1910s New York.[743] What might the male protagonists of this dissertation be called?

[740] Tara MacDonald, *The New Man, Masculinity and Marriage in the Victorian Novel* (London, 2015), 6.
[741] MacDonald, *New Man*, 1.
[742] Ibid.
[743] Brooke Kroeger, *The Suffragents: How Women used Men to Get the Vote* (Albany, 2017). Kroeger borrows the term from contemporary British sources.

I propose the "New Man" as a useful construct, not because Berlin's "feminist" clothiers were predisposed to anything in particular – they certainly did not identify as the romantic partners of the New Woman in this context, contrary to how the New Man was characterised in Victorian novels – but because, in consciously branding their businesses as progressive through reference to gender, clothiers also fashioned their own public masculinities, at least partially evoking an existing cultural ideal. There was, as far as I am aware, no organised movement of men supporting the women's movement in Imperial Germany despite endorsements from prominent figures such as socialist politician August Bebel. Because such a movement did not exist in Germany, male advocates of feminism did not "work[...] under the direction of the extraordinary women who led the suffrage charge in that period," contrary to members of the New York Men's League for Woman Suffrage, per Kroeger's assessment[744] – in other words, they were not "out" as feminists in a formal sense, if such an idea is even applicable to Imperial Germany. These "new men" acted, rather, ostensibly on their own accord forming therefore an interesting comparison to Kroeger's argument about "how women *used* men to get the vote."[745]

It is interesting to note further the similarities in depictions of the New Man, at least in Britain, to descriptions of the male Jew by prominent German-speaking thinkers and novelists, as an emasculated figure or beta male. The British satire magazine *Punch*, for instance, circulated portrayals of the New Man "as the effeminate and ridiculous partner of the manly and frightening New Woman."[746] The Viennese intellectual Otto Weiniger saw the Jew, in corresponding fashion, as lacking in great intellect and a moral compass, ruled, like the woman, in Weiniger's estimation, by concerns for family and procreation but "notably less potent sexually and less liable to be enmeshed in great passion."[747] The Jew and the New Man were, like the New Woman, archetypes onto which writers projected their anxieties about modernity and change. Yet, in Daniel Boyarin's

[744] Ibid., 5.
[745] Emphasis added. For a critical assessment of Kroeger's approach, see Kristina Graves, "Review of Kroeger, Brooke, *The Suffragents: How Women Used Men to Get the Vote*," *H-SHGAPE, H-Net Reviews* (February 2019). URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=53257.
[746] MacDonald, *New Man*, 2.
[747] Weiniger, *Sex and Character*, 311.

(somewhat unconventional) view, "there is something correct – although seriously misvalued – in the persistent European representation of the Jewish man as a sort of woman."[748] Jewish culture, or so the argument goes, has through the rabbinic tradition between influenced by a different – though equally inegalitarian[749] – set of gender ideals which essentially reverse bourgeois gendered separate spheres, placing men in the private realm of scriptural study and women in the secular, public marketplace. Can a whiff of this tradition, then, be caught through the case of Berlin-Jewish clothiers?

We cannot ignore the possibility that certain particularities of premodern Jewish society affected outcomes in the Wilhelmine era or that Berlin clothiers carried inherited views on women and gender practices which affected their take on the contemporary women's movement. At the same time, there is no evidence to suggest they did. Neither Berthold Israel, Fritz Gugenheim nor any other clothiers invoked the "eshet chayil" or virtuous and commercially active ideal biblical wife in their endorsements of women's modernity and professional work, at least in the examples explored in this dissertation; indeed, as mentioned, they rarely, if ever, reference marital relations. A more feasible scenario is that pragmatic considerations of Jewish economic life continued to shape ideas about gender and women's roles, in a manner similar to the ways in which the practical needs of early modern Jewish society, particularly the accommodation of male scriptural study, reinforced or even engendered the valorisation of women's public activities and work.[750] I have proposed the influence of market-positive liberalism as a decisive factor, as a secular German-Jewish response to the preservation of Jewish life. Like Ashkenazi Jewish tradition, economic liberalism apparently helped propel women into public work and careers – while reinforcing gender inequality in other ways under patriarchal capitalism, as under patriarchal religious tradition. The "feminism" of Berlin clothiers had, in other words, some deeply "unfeminist" undercurrents if placed in the context of today's liberal, inter-sectional feminism (which, as scholars, we should be careful not to do).

[748] Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct*, 3.
[749] Ibid., xxi–xxiii, and chaps. 3 and 4; Parush, *Reading Jewish Women*, especially 38–56.
[750] Ibid.

Finally, we need to address what Peter Gay calls "[t]he myth of the mobile, the intolerably modern Jew"[751] and its particular association with Berlin. "Jews, it is said, making themselves at home in Berlin, transformed it, and imprinted upon it something of their rootlessness, their restlessness, their alienation from soil and tradition, their pervasive disrespect for authority, their mordant wit."[752] The Berlin milieu no doubt played a decisive role in forging the worldviews of commercial clothiers, their foreign connections similarly differentiating them from many other Germans. Fashionably dressed, self-designated "humorous" fellows,[753] many *Konfektionäre* embraced the part of the cultured dandy, enthusiastically embodying the so-called "Berlin-Jewish spirit." Yet as I have shown, building on earlier research on Imperial German Jews and gender, the community of Berlin-Jewish clothiers was by no means representative of German Jewry. They were an idiosyncratic elite among Jews as among Germans more generally. They were, moreover, anomalous among Berlin Jews, as shown by my work on the Jewish press. Berlin *Konfektionäre* belonged to a minority of quintessentially modern Jewish men who ostensibly inspired an enduring Jewish stereotype.

[751] Gay, *Masters and Victims,* 20.
[752] Ibid., 171.
[753] The entire industry of comedic *Konfektionsfilmen* in the 1920s, and the collaboration of clothiers with it, may be taken here as evidence (see brief discussion on page 130 of this dissertation). The exact description appears, furthermore, in Alberti's description of *Hausvogteiplatz* in the 1904 N. Israel album; "The figures of the humorous, self-confident clothing manufacturer and the always elegant, stately "Konfektioneuse" are popular types of Berlin life, hundreds of which can be studied here in this quarter." Sittenfeld [Alberti], "Die Stadt des Telephons," in *Gross-Berlin.*

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APPENDIX

Fig. 1. Map of central Berlin 1912. From left to right: (A.) Wertheim Leipziger Straße, (Hermann) Tietz Leipziger Straße, Hausvogteiplatz, (Herrmann) Gerson, (Rudolph) Hertzog, and (N.) Israel. *Baedeker's Berlin and its Environs*, 5th edition (Leipzig, 1912). Courtesy of DESSA (Deborah Petroz-Abeles), Private Archive.

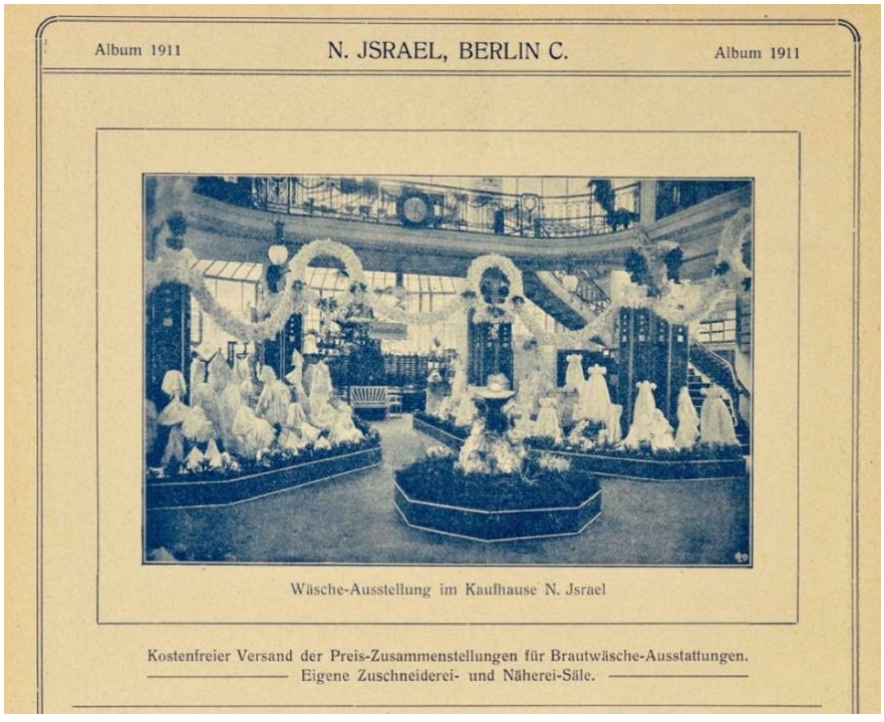

Fig. 2. Exhibition of bridal trousseau at *Kaufhaus* N. Israel. Reproduced in the 1914 N. Israel album, backmatter. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute.

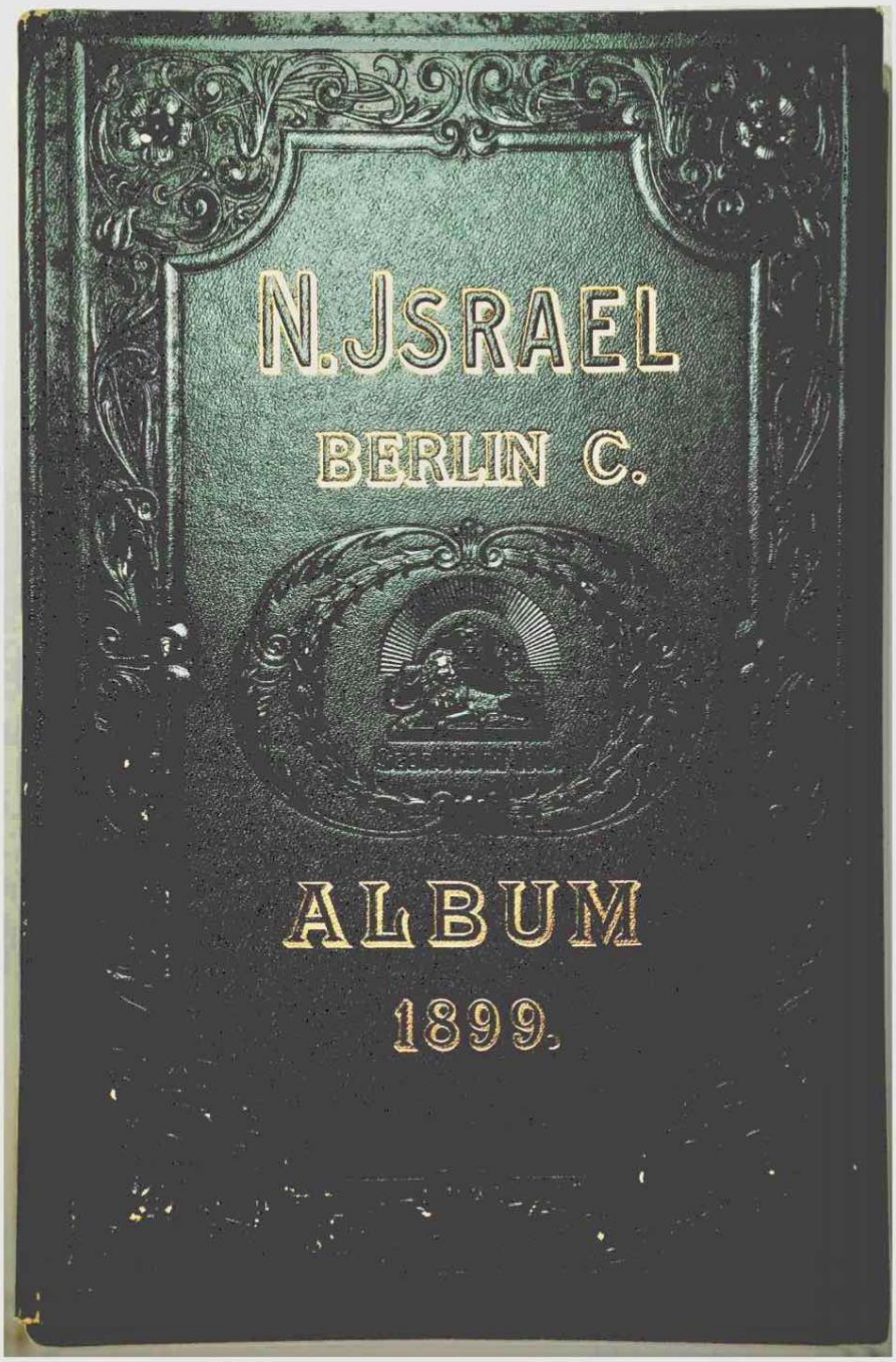

Fig. 3. Cover of *N. Israel: Berlin C. – Album 1899*. Courtesy of the Jewish Museum, Berlin.

Emmy Destinn
in ihren
verschiedenen Rollen

sagt sein sollte, diesem denselben gewaltigen Ausdruck zu geben, den die Auserwählten unter den Männern ihrem „seelenentströmenden Denken“ zu geben vermögen. — Ueberdies haben Frauen als Komponistinnen doch schon solche Erfolge errungen, die uns als Verheißungen für eine kommende Zeit gelten können. Ich will von den Kompositionen einer Maria Stuart absehen; ich will auch die seinerzeit vielbewunderten musikalischen Tändeleien der Marie Antoinette übergehen, nicht übergehen aber darf ich die Königin Hortense, deren „Depart pour la Syrie“ noch lange Zeit eine elektrisierende Wirkung auf das französische Volk übte. Auch die Deutschen haben eine Prinzessin, die musikalisch nicht unbedeutend war.

Adelina Patti

Und was in deinem Herzen tönt,
Das wird zu jauchzend hellen Liedern
Catulle Mendès

N. Jsrael

Fig. 4. Emmy Destinn (above) pictured in the 1910 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

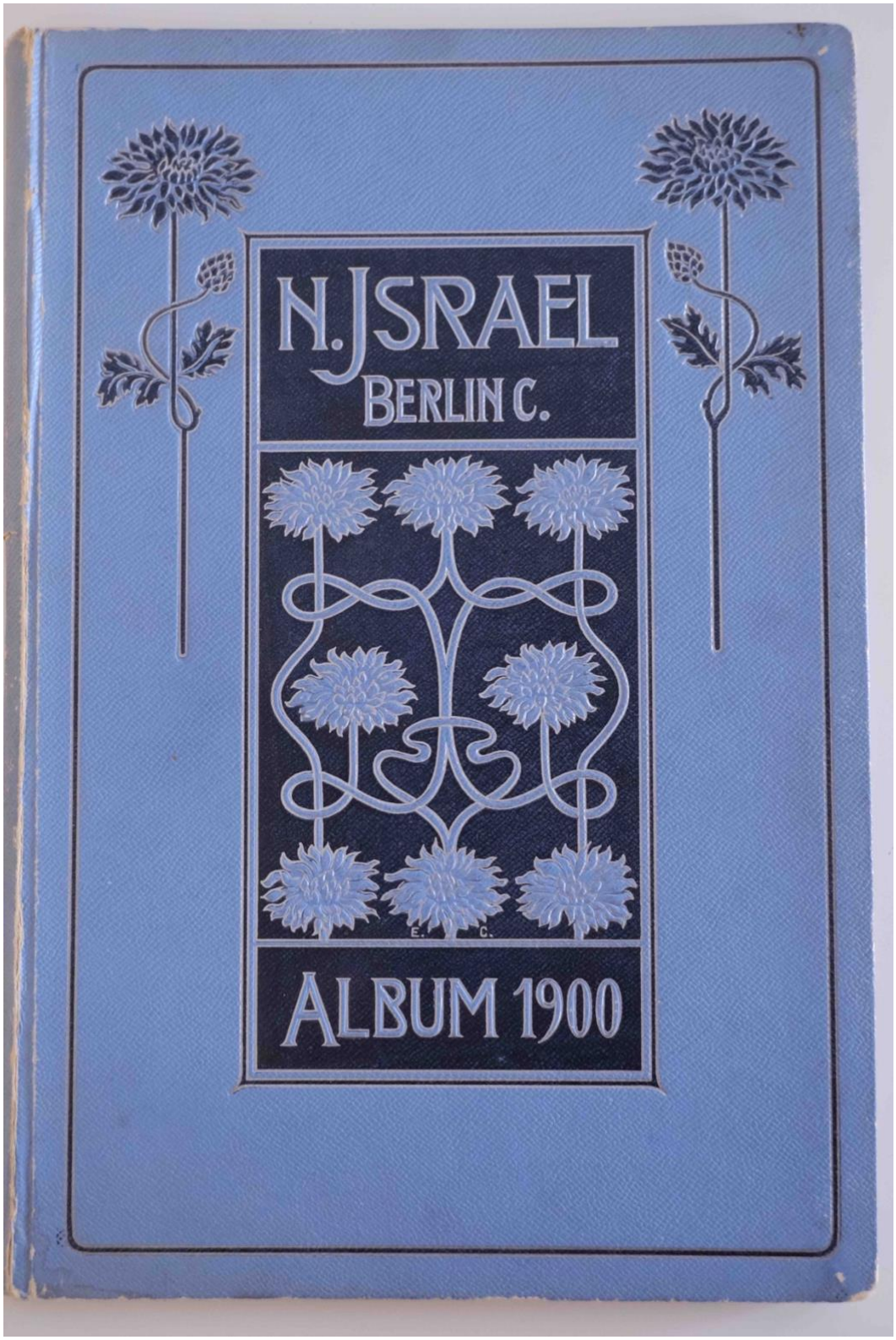

Fig. 5. Cover of the 1900 N. Israel album. Courtesy of DESSA (Deborah Petroz-Abeles), Private Archive.

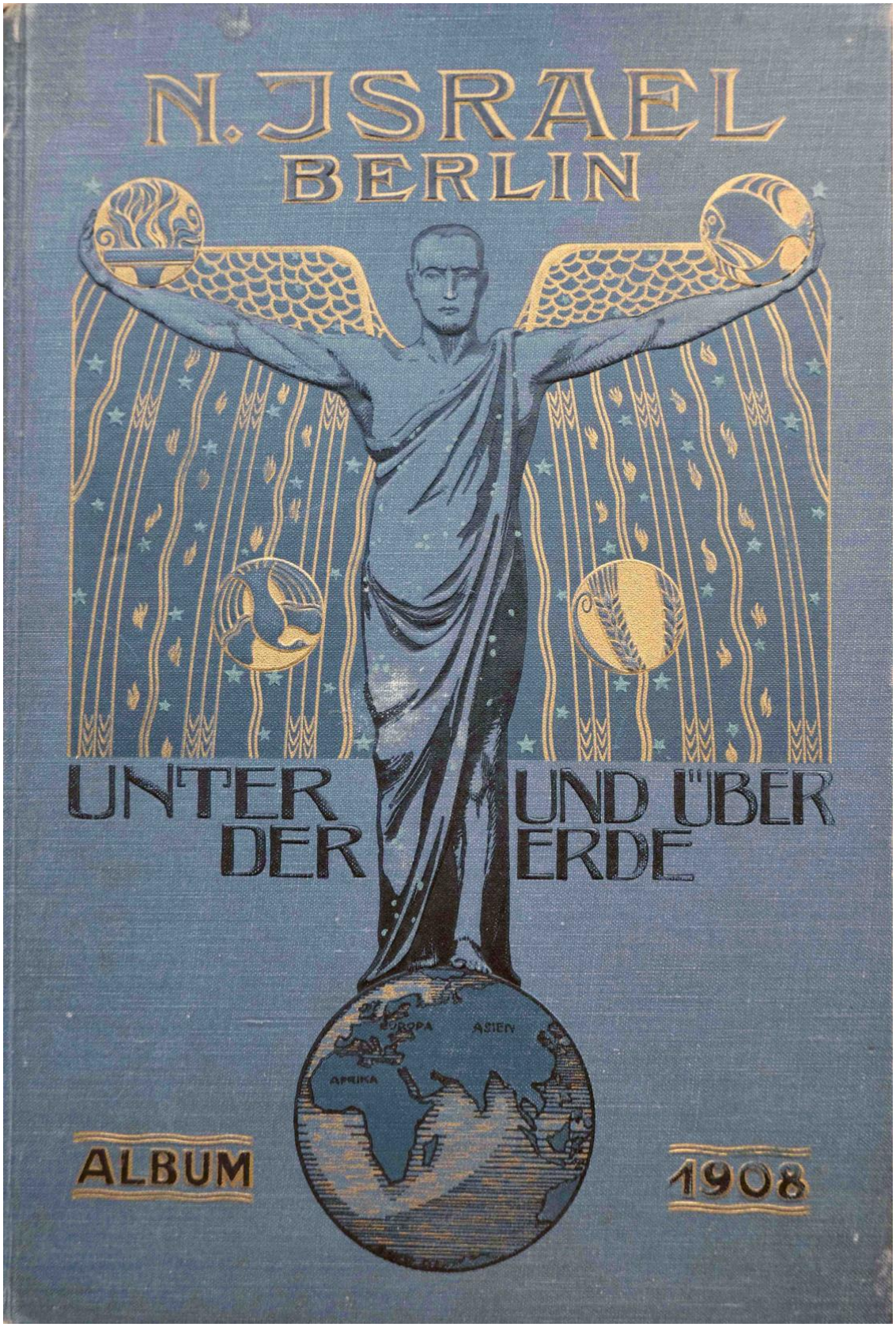

Fig. 6. Cover of the 1908 N. Israel album. Courtesy of DESSA (Deborah Petroz-Abeles), Private Archive.

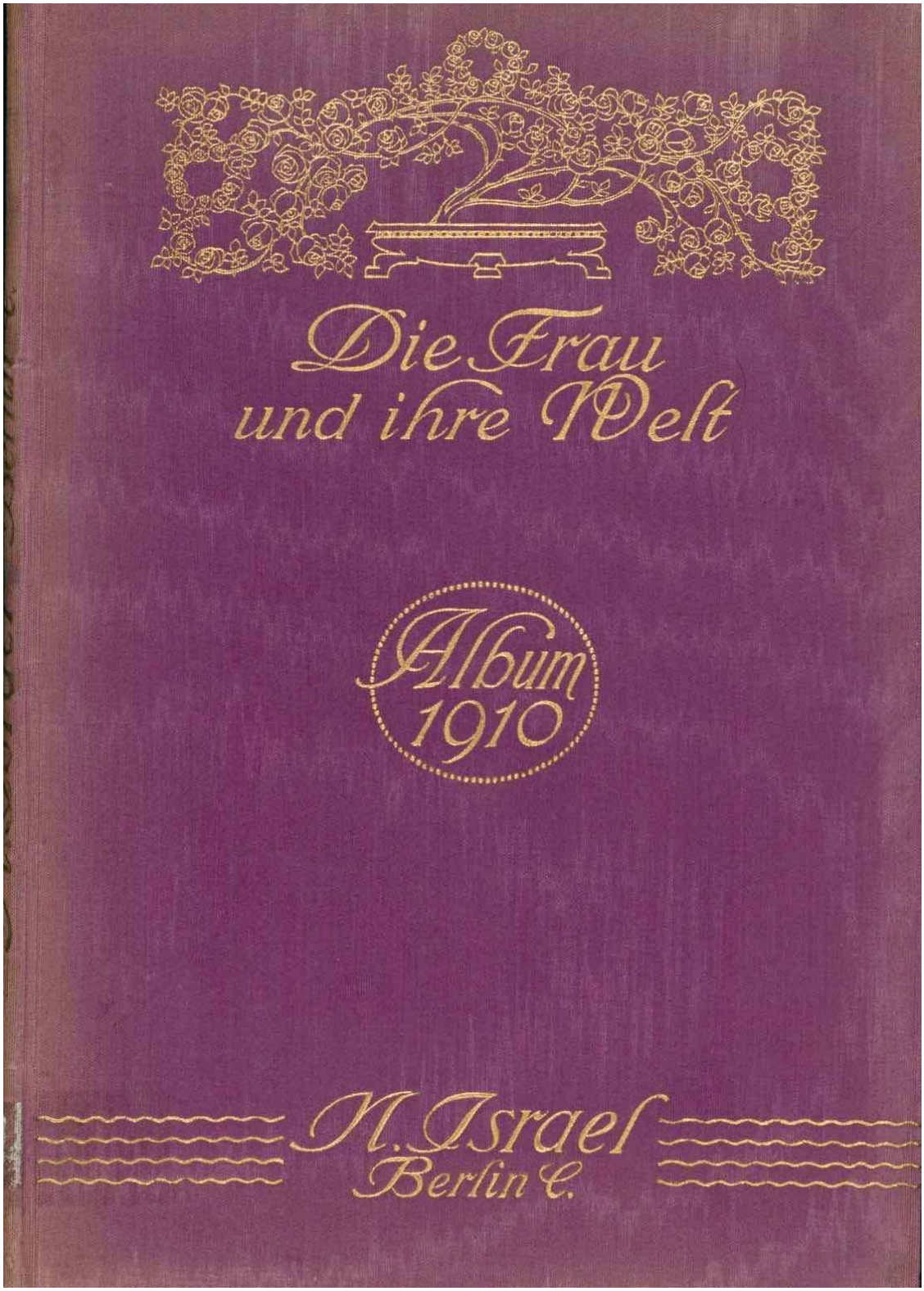

Fig. 7. Cover of the 1910 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

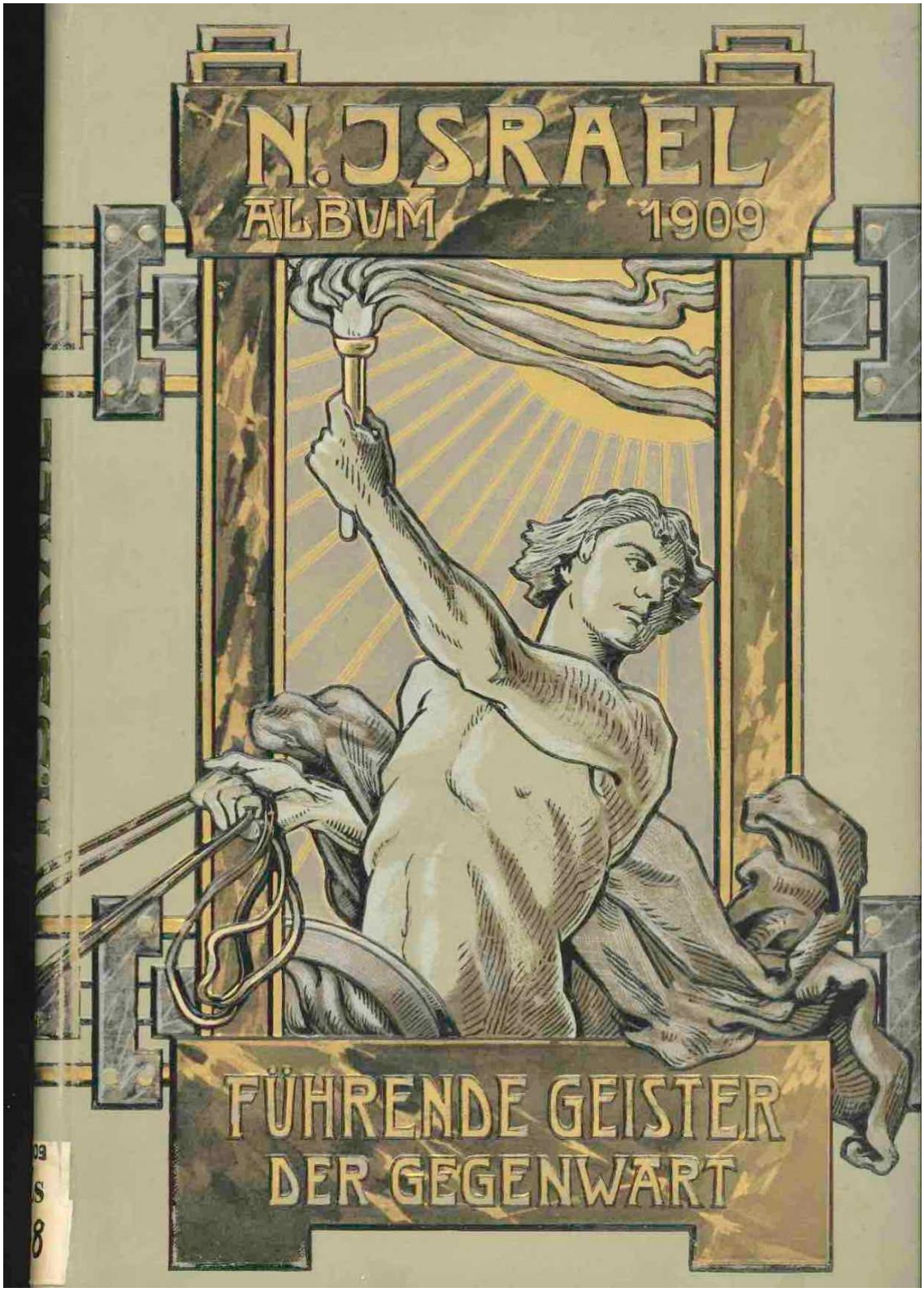

Fig. 8. Cover of the 1909 N. Israel album. Courtesy of DESSA (Deborah Petroz-Abeles), Private Archive.

Fig. 9. Atrium of *Kaufhaus* N. Israel, department for silk goods. Pictured in the 1900 N. Israel album. Courtesy of DESSA (Deborah Petroz-Abeles), Private Archive.

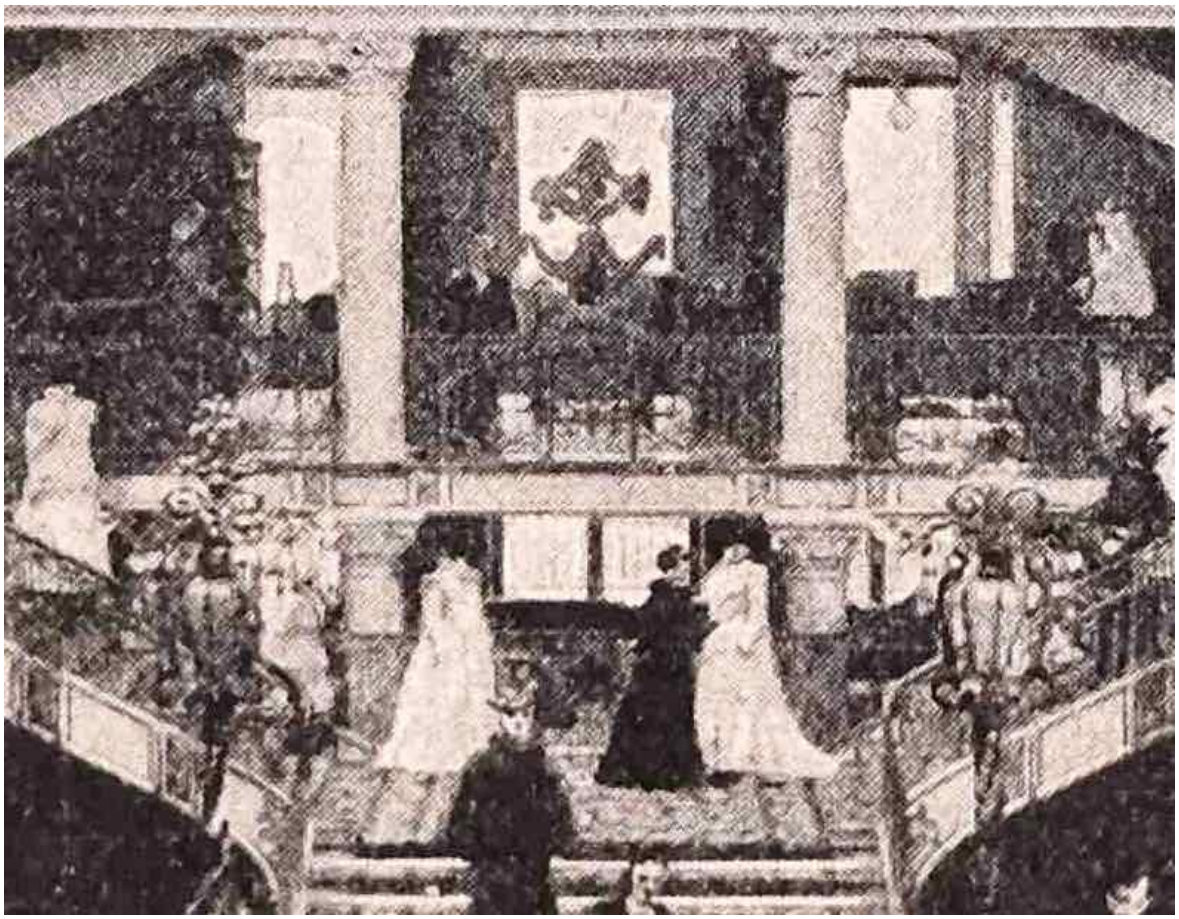

Fig. 10. Close-up of Fig. 9.

Isadora Duncans Freitanz-Schule.

Vor einigen Wochen ist, nach einer Zwischenpause von mehreren Monaten, Isadora Duncan wieder einmal öffentlich aufgetreten. Sie tanzte im Neuen Königlichen Opern-Theater oder, wie wir Berliner einer alten Gewohnheit folgend immer noch sagen, „bei Kroll“. Die Duncan tanzte diesmal pro domo — im eigentlichen Sinne des Wortes: für ihre „Freitanz-Schule“ im Grunewald, die der Volksmund „Barfuss-Akademie“ getauft hat.

Die schon seit einem halben Jahre bestehende Schule, welche die berühmte

Album 1906: Das Theater. Isadora Duncan. N. Israel, Berlin C.

Verächterin des Trikots aus eigenen Mitteln errichten liess und unterhält, bedarf nach der Ansicht der Begründerin einer Erweiterung. Für diesen Anbau suchte nun die Duncan ein ausgewähltes Publikum zu interessieren und versandte an die bekanntesten

Fig. 11. Isadora Duncan, pictured in the 1906 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

ELLEN KEY

Ellen Key: Der Name bedeutet ein Programm. Alles, was in der Frauenwelt von heute nach sozialer und politischer Befreiung von den Fesseln alter Vorurteile ruft — zuweilen auch schreit —, alle Bestrebungen zur unterschiedslosen Gleichstellung der beiden Geschlechter in bezug auf den Beruf und dessen akademische oder technische und handwerkliche Vorbereitung, besonders aber die Bemühungen um eine radikale Reform des höheren und niederen Schulunterrichts, sowie um eine Revision der gesellschaftlichen Anschauungen von dem Recht des weiblichen Teils der Bevölkerung auf die freie Befriedigung des Liebesbedürfnisses: alle diese Forderungen, Sehnsuchten und Wünsche blicken vertrauend auf die temperamentvolle, geistreiche und beredte Schwedin, als könne sie die Erfüllung bringen. In Ellen Key wurde eine Lehrerin zur Schriftstellerin und Wanderrednerin. Ihre zahlreichen Bücher sind umfänglich wie ihre Verfasserin, belesen in allen Literaturen der Welt, angeregt von Goethe und Nietzsche, nicht immer ganz klar im Aufbau der Gedanken, doch stets zum Nachdenken einladend, nicht zuletzt durch eine Neigung der Kultur-Reformatorin zu paradoxer Zuspitzung der Sätze zu kampffrohen Thesen. Friedrich Paulsen hatte nicht recht, wenn er mir vor Monaten schrieb: „... Gewiß, sie hat viel guten Willen; aber zum Bücherschreiben muß man auch ein wenig Verstand und Nachdenken haben: absolut abwesend! Lauter nachahmende Geschwätzigkeit! Hieße die Dame Amanda Müller, so läse sie kein Mensch. Aber Ellen Key! aus Schweden!

Album 1909. Ellen Key. Phot.: Rud. Dührkoop.

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Fig. 12. Ellen Key, pictured in the 1909 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Landesarchiv, Berlin.

Die erste amtliche Predigerin in England: Gertrud von Petzold.

Der erste weibliche Universitäts-Professor: Frau Curie an der Universität in Paris.

für die Key ohne Zweifel mit dabei, und diese bilden keinen kleinen Bruchteil ihrer Gemeinde. Aber es lesen und schätzen sie doch auch reifere Menschen, gebildete Frauen und Männer, die dem Ausland ganz frei gegenüberstehen, ja die sogar daneben Professor Paulsens Bücher studieren! Und der Name — hat „Ellen Key" nicht erst Klang bekommen, seit sie ihm diesen Klang verlieh? Wie viele Ausländerinnen schreiben, von wie wenigen wissen wir?! Und der deutsche Name Müller: heißt nicht der berühmte Sanskritist, der die heiligen Schriften der Inder übersetzte, Max Müller, und sein verdienter Potsdamer Kollege — mit ähnlichem Sammel-Namen — Theodor Schulze? Also „Schulze und Müller" stehen an der Spitze der buddhistischen Studien der Gegenwart; und Erich Schmidt hat den auch nicht eben seltenen Familiennamen aus der Masse rühmlich herausgehoben. . . . Das Leben ist der fast

Die Frau als Anwalt: In einem Pariser Gerichtssaal während der Verteidigungsrede der jungen Advokatin Frl. Miropolski.

Fig. 13. Professional "new women" pictured in the 1909 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Landesarchiv, Berlin.

Mrs. Pankhurst in der Sträflingskleidung des Holloway-Gefängnisses

Das Tambourkorps der Londoner Suffragettes

Mrs. Pankhurst als Arrestantin des Holloway-Gefängnisses

Die Frauen und die Politik

Die Frauen und die Politik — das sind, wie es scheint, Gegensätze, die sich nicht vereinigen lassen. Wenigstens in Deutschland hat sich bisher das politische Interesse bei den Frauen nur auf kleine Kreise beschränkt. Mit Verwunderung lasen die in diesen Fragen sehr zurückhaltenden deutschen Frauen in den Tageszeitungen und Zeitschriften, daß in einigen Staaten Amerikas und Australiens die Frauen das Stimmrecht erhielten und ausüben, daß auch die skandinavischen Frauen am öffentlichen Leben aktiven Anteil nehmen, daß die englischen Suffragettes selbst vor dem Gefängnis nicht zurückschrecken, um ihre Forderung: „Votes for Women" durchzusetzen.

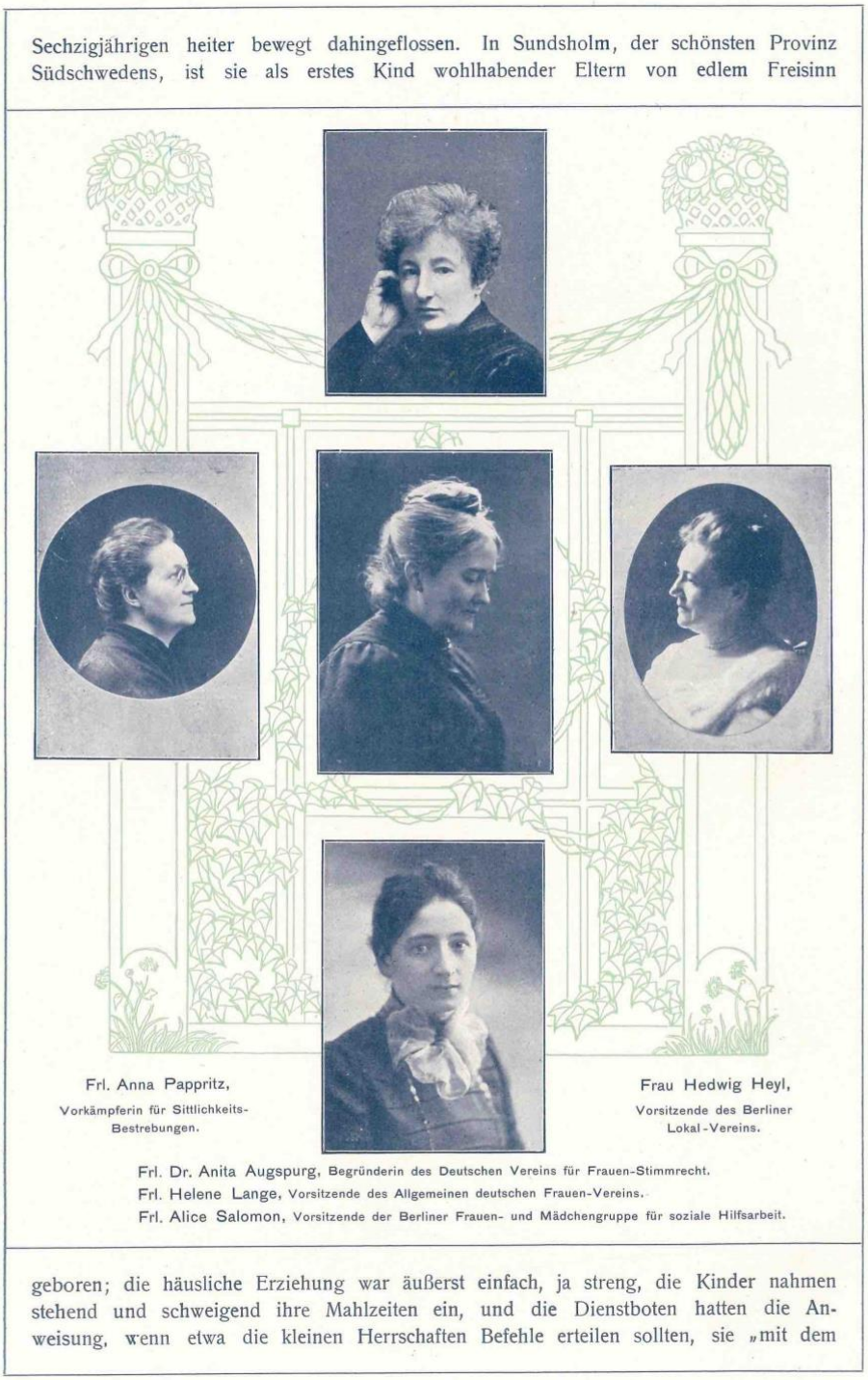
Auch Deutschland hat seit langem eine Frauenbewegung. Die in dieser Bewegung stehenden Frauen, wie Helene Lange, Dr. Alice Salomon, Dr. Gertrud Bäumer, Anna Pappritz, Ilka Freudenberg, Else Lüders, Dr. Agnes Bluhm und viele andere kluge Vertreterinnen weiblicher Interessen, bilden zahlreiche Vereine, teils mit religiösen, teils mit sozialen Zwecken. Für die Frauenbewegung im engeren Sinne, also für die politische Gleichberechtigung des weiblichen Geschlechtes, sind gleichfalls Vereine tätig, und in der Sozialdemokratie haben seit langem Frauen eine nur zu hervorragende Rolle gespielt. — Aber die große Masse der deutschen Frauen überließ es bisher den Männern, sich für alle die zahlreichen Fragen des politischen, wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Lebens zu interessieren. Diese Frauen lebten ihrem Hause, der Familie, der Wohltätigkeit oder sie gingen ihrem Berufe und ihrem Erwerbe nach. Viele Frauen sind damit nicht nur ganz zufrieden,

Mrs. Mackay, die berühmte Multimillionärin und Führerin der amerikanischen Frauenbewegung

„Politisch Lied ein garstig Lied", ganz richtig, aber es muß schrecklich sein, immer um süße Lieder zu flöten
Bernhard Shaw

Album 1910

Fig. 14. The Pankhursts pictured alongside members of the WSPU and "Mrs Mackay, the famous multi-millionaire and leader of the American women's movement." 1910 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.



Sechzigjährigen heiter bewegt dahingeflossen. In Sundsholm, der schönsten Provinz Südschwedens, ist sie als erstes Kind wohlhabender Eltern von edlem Freisinn

Frl. Anna Pappritz,
Vorkämpferin für Sittlichkeits-Bestrebungen.

Frau Hedwig Heyl,
Vorsitzende des Berliner Lokal-Vereins.

Frl. Dr. Anita Augspurg, Begründerin des Deutschen Vereins für Frauen-Stimmrecht.
Frl. Helene Lange, Vorsitzende des Allgemeinen deutschen Frauen-Vereins.
Frl. Alice Salomon, Vorsitzende der Berliner Frauen- und Mädchengruppe für soziale Hilfsarbeit.

geboren; die häusliche Erziehung war äußerst einfach, ja streng, die Kinder nahmen stehend und schweigend ihre Mahlzeiten ein, und die Dienstboten hatten die Anweisung, wenn etwa die kleinen Herrschaften Befehle erteilen sollten, sie „mit dem

Fig. 15. Leaders of the German women's movement, including Alice Salomon (below), according to the 1909 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Landesarchiv, Berlin.

in den beiden großen Congressen hervortreten, die in jüngster Zeit in Berlin und Brüssel stattgefunden haben.

Ausgezeichnete Rednerinnen behandelten hier die wichtigen Fragen, die zur Diskussion gestellt waren mit einer Schärfe der Dialektik, einer Feinheit des Ausdrucks und einem Reichthum von Wissen, die jeden Denkenden mit ehrlicher Bewunderung erfüllen mußten. Den Aelteren unter den streitbaren Damen, welche noch die Wege geebnet hatten, ohne sie selbst beschreiten zu können, gesellte sich die Schaar der jüngeren Kämpferinnen, die ihr Recht auf Wissen und Können, auf selbstständiges Denken und Streben schon durch die That bewähren durften: eine Fülle interessanter Erscheinungen, deren einige wir im Bilde unseren Leserinnen vorführen.

Da sehen wir gleich links den geistvollen Kopf von Lily Braun-Gizycki, der Gattin des Redakteurs Dr. Braun vom „Sozialpolitischen Centralblatt" und vor ihr die imposante Erscheinung von Marie Stritt aus Dresden, die mit Recht als eine der glänzendsten Rednerinnen der Bewegung gilt und deren tadelloses Französisch in Brüssel die größte Bewunderung erregte. In der zweiten Reihe hat das enfant chéri des Berliner Congresses, die schöne Dottoressa Montessori Platz gefunden, während neben Marie Stritt die klugen und gütigen Züge einer der ersten thätigen Kämpferinnen, der Frau Henriette Goldschmidt (Leipzig) erscheinen. Etwas weiter nach hinten zeigt sich im Schatten eines gewaltigen Hutes die energische Madame Vincent aus Paris, die in Berlin das Jubiläum ihres dreißigsten Congresses feiern konnte und deren männliches Antlitz eine männliche Kraft und Ausdauer verräth. Auf der rechten Seite unserer Abbildung interessiren zunächst die beiden Leiterinnen des Berliner Congresses Frau Lina Morgenstern und Frau Minna Cauer.

Lina Morgenstern ist eine geborene Breslauerin, aber schon seit den fünfziger Jahren in Berlin ansässig. Sie trat früh in die Oeffentlichkeit, um mit nie ersterbendem Eifer, mit immer gleicher Geschicklichkeit gemeinnützigen Bestrebungen zu dienen. Der Verein zur Beförderung der Kindergärten, der Volksküchenverein, der Hausfrauenverein verdanken ihr Förderung und zum großen Theile Entstehung. Eine große Anzahl von Schriften dienten der erwähnten Sache mit scharfer Dialektik und gewandter Ueberredung. Neben ihr trat in den letzten Jahren als Führerin Minna Cauer, die kluge, gewandte, durch organisatorisches Talent ausgezeichnete Herausgeberin der Zeitschrift die „Frauenbewegung" in den Vordergrund. Frau Cauer ist ebenso wie Lina Morgenstern eine gewandte Rednerin und hat gleichfalls bereits in einer ganzen Reihe von Schriften ihren Ueberzeugungen Ausdruck verliehen.

Hinter diesen Damen erblicken wir Frau Anna Schepeler-Lette, die verdienstvolle Leiterin des Lette-Vereins und das kecke, vom Geist erfüllte Antlitz des ersten weiblichen Dr. jur. in Deutschland, des Fräuleins Anita Augspurg, eine der streitbarsten und schneidigsten Verfechterinnen der Frauen-Emancipation. Endlich sei noch — last, but not least! — die Delegirte des Womans Medical-College of Pennsylvania, Dr. phil. Lydia Rabinowitsch erwähnt, deren jugendliche und anziehende Erscheinung eben auf der Rednertribüne zu sehen ist.

Diesen Typen vom Congreß seien zwanglos noch drei Einzelbilder von Damen angereiht, die in ihren wissenschaftlichen Bestrebungen von besonders hervorstechender Eigenart sind.

Diese Frauen haben sich Gebieten zugewandt, die im Allgemeinen auch in unseren Tagen noch den Frauen weniger Interesse abgewinnen: der Mathematik, der Naturwissenschaft, der Sprachenforschung.

Dr. Sophie Kowalewski.

Die bekannteste unter den drei Damen ist wohl Frau Dr. Sophie Kowalewski, Privatdocentin der mathematischen Wissenschaften an der Universität in Stockholm. Frau Kowalewski, geborene Gräfin Corvin-Krukowskoi zeigte von Jugend auf großes Interesse für die mathematischen Studien. Sie heirathete den bekannten russischen Forscher Georg Kowalewski, der ihr Streben verstand und förderte.

Fig. 16. Use of female portraiture in the Rudolph Hertzog 1898 Agenda. Courtesy of the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin.

1. Hetty Green, das größte Finanzgenie der Welt
2. Miß Kellogg, berühmter Architekt, Miterbauer der Womans building
3. Senhora Volhart, Eisenbahndirektor der Coïmbra- und Leira-Linie, Oporto

Die Frau im Beruf

Dichter sind Propheten. — Vor nicht ganz zehn Jahren schrieb Charles Everard Blunt: „Ja, meine Liebe, die Frauenbewegung ist unaufhaltsam, und wer sich ihr entgegenstemmt, ist ein Narr. Wie lange wird's dauern und der Frau stehen nicht nur alle Berufe offen, sondern sie hat, dem Manne gegenüber, einen Beruf mehr. Jenen herrlichen, durch den die Natur sie, in bezug auf die Erhaltung der Menschheit, weit über uns gestellt hat und den wir ihr nun einmal nicht streitig machen können".

Dreißig Jahre vorher waren die Berufe, die der Frau „auch sonst noch" offen standen, an den Fingern abzuzählen, und es waren meist jene Handlangerberufe, die nie zur Selbständigkeit führen, und nur ab und zu „drängte sich ein Weib in einen andern Beruf ein und man staunte es an wie ein Wunder". — Noch zur Zeit, da Blunt jene Zeilen schrieb, waren selbst in Amerika der Frau noch 28 Berufe verschlossen, heute aber stehen ihr schon alle frei, vom „Scharfrichter bis zum Seelsorger", wie ein Spötter in ironischem Sinne meinte.

Während in Europa ein Frl. Doktor noch immer als ein ziemlich merkwürdiges Kulturprodukt betrachtet wird, das des Anstaunens wert ist, und während eine ganze Reihe europäischer und vor allem auch deut-

Der erste weibliche Schmiedemeister in Deutschland

Die Frau kann alles, was sie will
Kettner

Album 1910

Fig. 17. Opening page of the von Gaffron-Oberstradam essay, 1910 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

Fig. 18. “Novel female jobs.” Featured in von Gaffron-Oberstradam, “Die Frau im Beruf” in the 1910 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

Fig. 19. “A Veteran of work” (lower right) and other female figures from Gaffron-Oberstradam, “Die Frau im Beruf” in the 1910 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

Fig. 20. The N. Israel vacuum cleaner. Featured in the 1906 N. Israel album. Courtesy of DESSA (Deborah Petroz-Abeles), Private Archive.

Olga Nethersol in ihrem Auto

Gudrun Hildebrandt als Automobilistin

Krieger, geb. Baronin von Cramm, ist gewissermaßen aus der Mitzlaffschen Schule hervorgegangen. Wer von den Damen vor ihrer Hannoverschen Zeit schon den Sport auf dem Rücken des Pferdes als ästhetischen Genuß liebte, der lernte in Hannover erkennen, daß es gerade auf dem Pferderücken nur hohe Ziele, aber keine Spielerei gab. So wußte dieser Sportsmann in den Reiterinnen jenes erhabene Gefühl zu erwecken, das jeden überkommen muß, wenn er ein temperamentvolles, feinnerviges Tier am Zügel hat, mit dem man in jeder Minute beschäftigt ist und arbeiten muß — mit dem man darum kämpft, welche Kunst, die des Menschen oder die des Tieres, größer ist —, welches Blut heißblütiger: das des Menschen oder das des edlen Tieres unter ihm. Frau Major Seiffert, deren Namen als hervorragende Gelände- und Jagdreiterin einen guten, weitbekannten Klang hat, erwarb sich viele erste Preise. Dasselbe gilt von Frau Klara Burow (Lyck). In Berlin erregt die Gräfin Clara von Wartensleben, deren verstorbener Gatte in jüngeren Jahren ein berühmter Rennreiter war, berechtigtes Aufsehen. Während sie sich weniger an Spring- und Reitkonkurrenzen beteiligte, ist ihr feines Sportsverständnis, ihr ästhetisches Empfinden im Sport

Die belgische Rennfahrerin Cloquet

Miß Levitt, die englische Champion - Automobilistin, die an allen hervorragenden Veranstaltungen des Auto-Sports teilnimmt

Kein größer Glücksempfinden gibts,
Als hin durch Raum und Zeit zu jagen
Ada Negri

N. Jsrael

Fig. 21. Famous women in sport, including “Miss [Dorothy] Levitt [b. Levi], the English Automobile Champion, who takes part in all pre-eminent events in motor sport” (below) and the Belgian competitive cyclist “Cloquet,” pictured in the 1910 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

der Zeit noch für ein artig Ententümplein heut geworden". Gewaltsam wurde dann der neue Geist geweckt. Nach vorwärts aber drängte der Strom, und die Unterströmung drängte nach vorwärts einem gemeinsamen Ziele zu: der Geistesbefreiung. Und während die Hauptströmung wieder den Geist des Mannes in neuer, ungeahnter Kraft zeigte, schwoll die Unterströmung, die wir als Frauenbewegung kennen, selber zum neuen mächtigen Strome an, der der neuen Zeit seine Richtung gibt. Der Geist der Frau siegt auf allen Linien. Rücksichtslos räumt er mit den Vorurteilen der früheren Zeiten auf, die bis in die unsere hineinragen. Der Geist der Frau will sein Recht, er will nicht mehr wie bisher unerkannt oder zumindest unanerkannt wirken, denn die Zeit bedarf seiner. Sie kann ohne den Geist der Frau, der tiefer ist, als man denkt, nicht mehr auskommen. Sie kann seiner nicht mehr entraten. Mit suggestiver Macht setzt sich der Geist der Frau, der sich in der Zähigkeit und dem Elan ihres Könnens und Wollens zeigt, in unserer Zeit unaufhaltsam durch, so daß der Satz Spencer-Jones wohl seine Berechtigung hat, der da sagt: „Geistvolle Frauen gab es wohl jederzeit, der Geist der Frau wurde aber erst heute geboren". Wie lange ist es her, und die Mehrzahl der Männer verstand, wie Rudolph Goldscheid hervorhebt, unter der „Frauenfrage" nur das, was den Don Juan Tenorio beschäftigte, wenn dieser sich mit der Frauenfrage befaßte. Damit aber hat das Problem der Frauenfrage nichts mehr zu tun. Ja selbst durch die Mutterfrage wird es nicht mehr erschöpft. Die Frauenfrage ist durchaus keine rein ethische mehr, sondern eine rein materielle. Die Zeit hat den Geist der Frau geschmiedet. Die Zeitverhältnisse haben die Frau vor neue Anforderungen ge-

Frau Geheimrat Muthesius

Sinaida Hyppius, die berühmte russische Romanschriftstellerin

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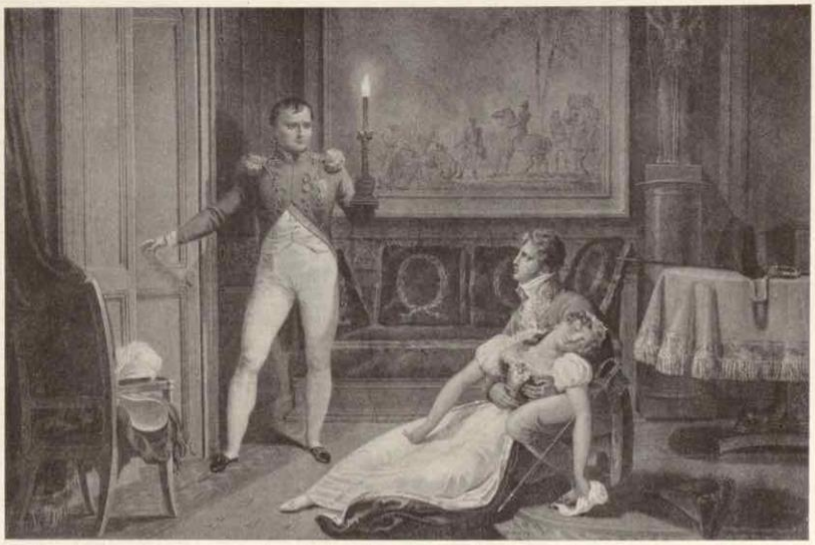
Fig. 22. German designer Anna Muthesius (above) and Russian author Zinaida Gippius (below) featured in the 1913 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.



N. Jsrael Napoleons Ehescheidung. Nach einem Gemälde von Chasselat Album 1913

IHRE SCHÖNHEIT

Die Schönheit der Frauen erfüllt unsere Welt. Sie ist die große, schaffende Kraft unseres Lebens. Ihr dankt die Welt jegliches Große: das Leid und die Lust, die Kraft zum Guten und Bösen. Ihr dankt sie die Tat. Und nur aus Taten besteht unser Leben. "El sal de la tierra", nennt der Spanier die Frau. Das Salz, die Würze des Lebens. Das Salz dieser Erde. Schal und leer würde es sein ohne die Schönheit der Frau. Kein Dichter hätte zu singen gelernt. Kein Maler zu malen. Kein Bildner zu meißeln. Kein Künstler wäre uns erstanden und keine Kunst. Wir würden leben, ohne zu leben. Denn auch keine Heldentaten wären geschehen. Nichts. Und die Welt wäre ohne Geschichte. „Die Größe des Mannes ist die Schönheit der Frau," sagt Mérimée. Hinter allen seinen Taten steht sie. Sie ist die Begeisterung. Sie entflammt in seinem Herzen den Drang der Betätigung, sie gibt ihm die Kraft, das Wollen, das Können. Je größer der Geist, je gewaltiger das Ver-

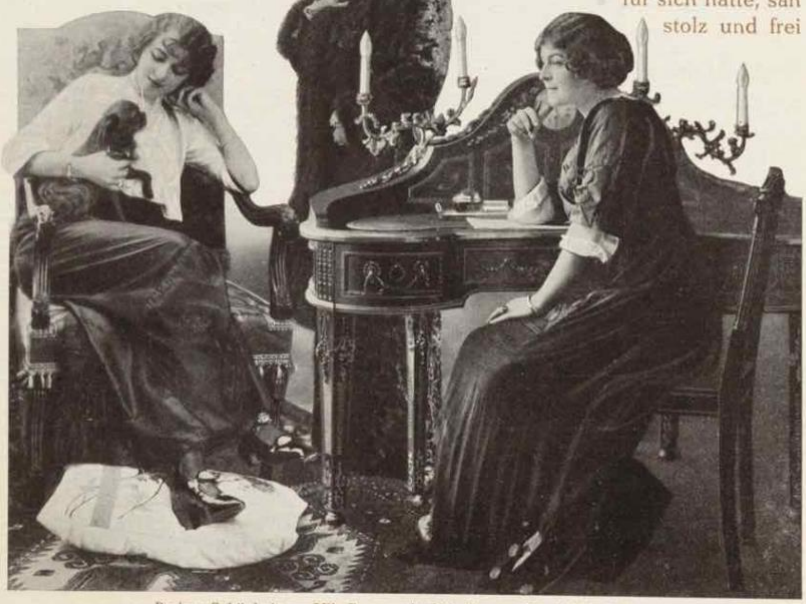
Josephine im Kaufhaus von Rouen

Fig. 23. Josephine Bonaparte at the department store in Rouen, featured in Langenberg, "Ihre Schönheit," in the 1913 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

Moderner französischer Schönheitstyp

Mme Derny Mlle Mistinguette Mlle d'Ormond

auch in ihrer Schönheit aus. Ich! ich! sagte diese, mit ihrem entzückenden Lächeln. Und dann kam das Ende auch dieser Zeit. Und die Französin sah, daß es mit Schönheit, Geist und Temperament allein nicht gemacht sei. Daß ein Volk von heute sein Wissen erhöhen muß, wenn es bestehen will, und daß die geistige Kraft in allem den Ausschlag gibt. So lernte die Französin das Lernen. Und — so schwer es ihr — die jahrhundertelang in einer glücklichen Unwissenheit und Oberflächlichkeit erzogen war, auch wird, sie, die an sich das moderne, mondaine Weib ist, ringt jetzt nach Vertiefung, und ein neuer Geist, ein neuer Zug verschönt ihre Schönheit. Wurde die Französin in glücklicher Unwissenheit erhalten, so die Italienerin in drückender. Das schöne Land konnte ja nur schöne Frauen hervorbringen, denn die Rassen und Menschheitstypen werden ja von Land und Klima bestimmt, aber die zerrütteten, zerrissenen politischen Verhältnisse, die mit menschenunwürdigen materiellen Hand in Hand gingen, warfen einen seltsam müden Zug auf das Volk und die Schönheit der Frauen. Nur die Römerin, die eine jahrtausendealte Tradition für sich hatte, sah stolz und frei



Pariser Schönheiten: Mlle Benouardt, Mlle Terroy, Mme Nelly Maré

2*

Fig. 24. “Parisian beauties”, featured in Langenberg, “Ihre Schönheit,” in the 1913 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

wicklung der Frau förmlich die Entwicklung des Volkes, zu dem sie gehört, erkennen und studieren, und kann aus ihr, aus ihrer Erscheinung, ihrem Wesen, ihren Zügen auf die Kraft desselben schließen und auf seine geistige Höhe. Es ist bei der Weiterentwicklung unserer Kultur und bei den Freiheitsbestrebungen der Frau, die ihr die erstrebte Freiheit und das Nebenher mit dem Manne eintragen werden, darum ein Unsinn, von dem Débacle der Schönheit zu sprechen, wie dies jetzt so häufig geschieht. Arbeit adelt. Und wenn sich die Frau das Feld geistiger und politischer Arbeit erobert, so wird ihre Schönheit eine neue Vergeistigung erfahren, die ihr nur zum Vorteil gereichen wird. Der Alarmruf, daß die Schönheit darunter leiden und zugrunde gehen muß, darf uns darum nicht weiter schrecken. Wohl wird die süßliche Puppenschönheit verschwinden. Das ist gewiß, aber die Schönheit der Frau wird immer mehr an Charakter gewinnen. Die Schönheit unserer Frauen wird dieselbe Vertiefung erfahren, die die Frau selbst durch ihr erhöhtes Wissen, erhöhtes Wollen und erhöhtes Können erfahren wird. Der Mannweibtypus, welcher sich bei den Frauenrechtlerinnen hervordrängen wollte, ist keineswegs der Typ der Zukunft. Im Gegenteil, er ist der Typ einer ganz kurzen, vorübergehenden, vorübergegangenen Zeit, und schon heute sehen wir unter den Vorkämpferinnen des Frauenrechts und der Frauenrechte Frauen, deren Schönheit uns ebenso einnimmt wie ihr Geist, ihre Energie und ihre Weibheit.

Eine Schönheit in Ceylon

Die Dichterin Yosutoga. Japanischer Schönheitstypus

N. ISRAEL ~ ALBUM 1913

Fig. 25. “A beauty in Ceylon” (above) and “The poet Yosutoga. Japanese Beauty type” (below). Featured in Langenberg, “Ihre Schönheit,” in the 1913 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

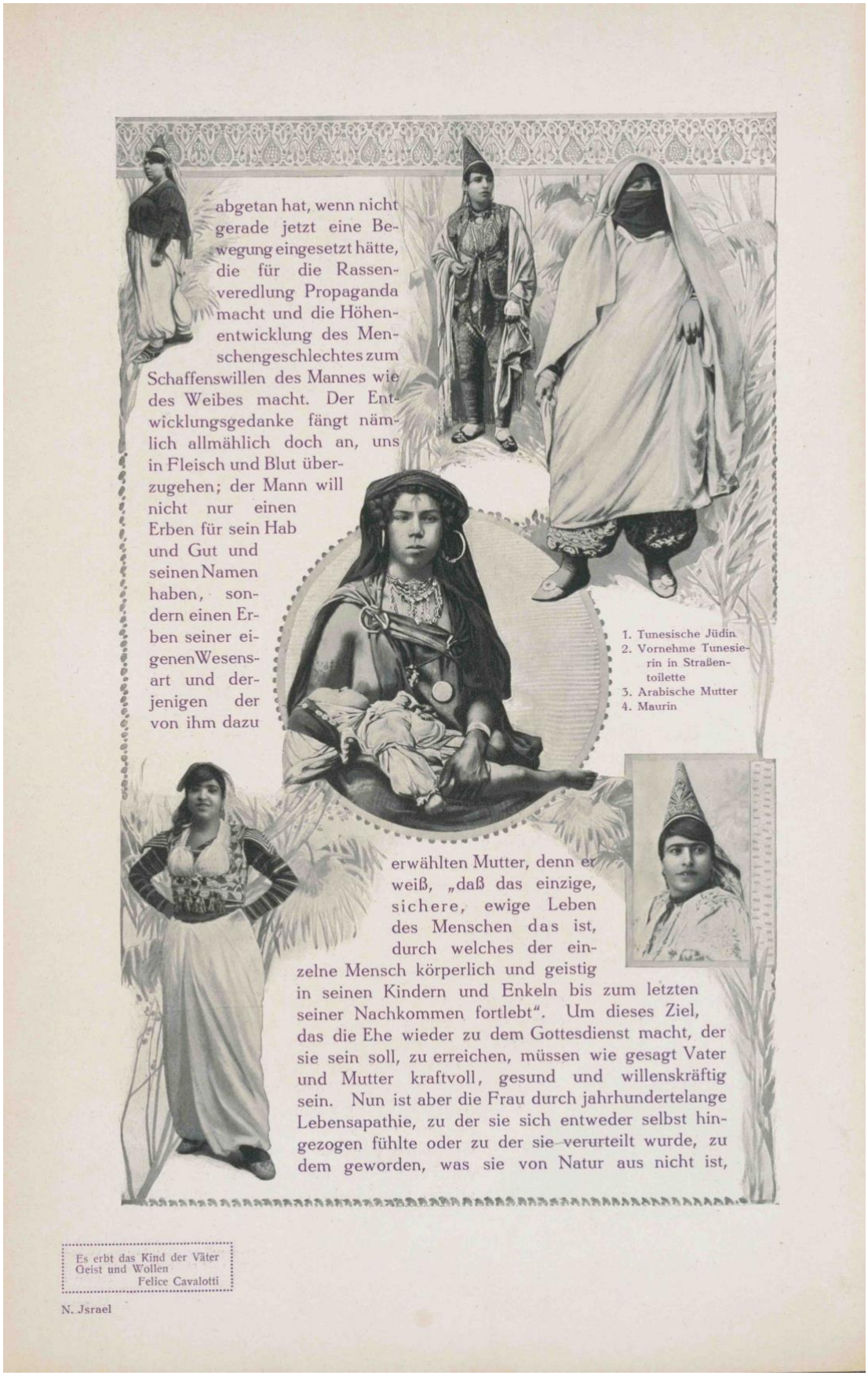


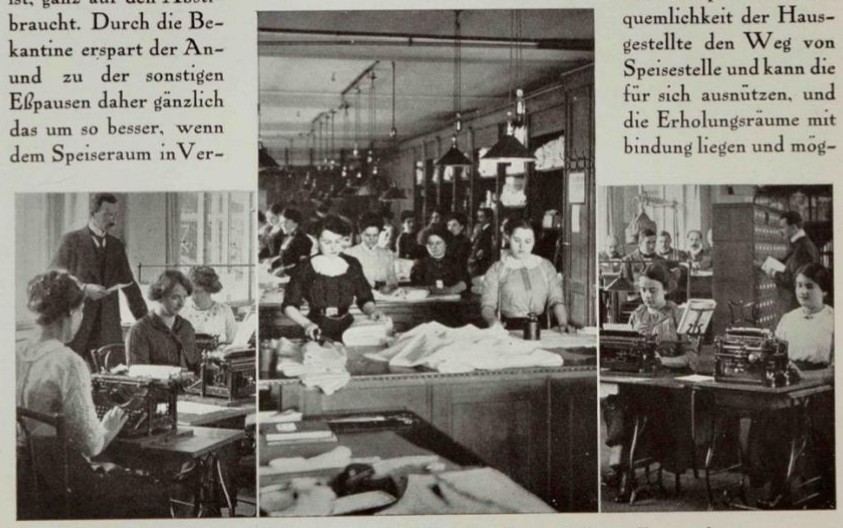
Fig. 26. The “Oriental” delegation (my label). Pictured in Andersen, “Die Frauen der verschiedenen Völker,” in the 1910 N. Israel album.

Fig. 27. Designer: Paul Poiret (French, Paris 1879-1944 Paris). 1911. Fancy dress costume. Place: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; https://www.metmuseum.org/. https://library.artstor.org/asset/SS7731421_7731421_11648714.

N. JSRAEL Das Kaufhaus N. Israel ALBUM 1914

Schluß fröhlich herumtummeln. — Eigene Erholungsräume finden sich jetzt schon in vielen Großbetrieben. Diese Zimmer sind zuweilen recht anheimelnd und gemütlich ausgestattet, enthalten Zeitungen und Zeitschriften, auch oft ein Klavier zu musikalischer Unterhaltung. Dem Lesebedürfnis wird auch durch eine Bibliothek Rechnung getragen, die den Angestellten gratis unterhaltende Lektüre liefert. Sogar Spielzimmer finden sich, mit Billard versehen, Turnsäle mit allerlei Apparaten für gymnastische Übungen u. dgl. m. ::

Solche Erholungsräume werden in besonders großen und besonders umsichtig und wohlwollend geleiteten Betrieben zu ganzen Erholungshäusern, die oft mit Restaurationsbetrieb verbunden sind und den Arbeitern und Beamten Gelegenheit geben, gut und billig zu essen. :: Der Vorteil einer gut geleiteten Kantine liegt auch schon darin, daß dem Alkoholmißbrauch gesteuert werden kann, ohne daß man sich deshalb, wie es in England und Amerika der Fall ist, ganz auf den Abstinenzstandpunkt zu stellen braucht. Durch die Bequemlichkeit der Hauskantine erspart der Angestellte den Weg von und zu der sonstigen Speisestelle und kann die Eßpausen daher gänzlich für sich ausnützen, und das um so besser, wenn die Erholungsräume mit dem Speiseraum in Verbindung liegen und mög-



Aus dem Betriebe des Kaufhauses N. Israel: Wäsche-Fabrikation und Versand-Korrespondenz

Fig. 28. N. Israel store front (above, pre-1901 illustration) and the company's women workers pictured in the 1914 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

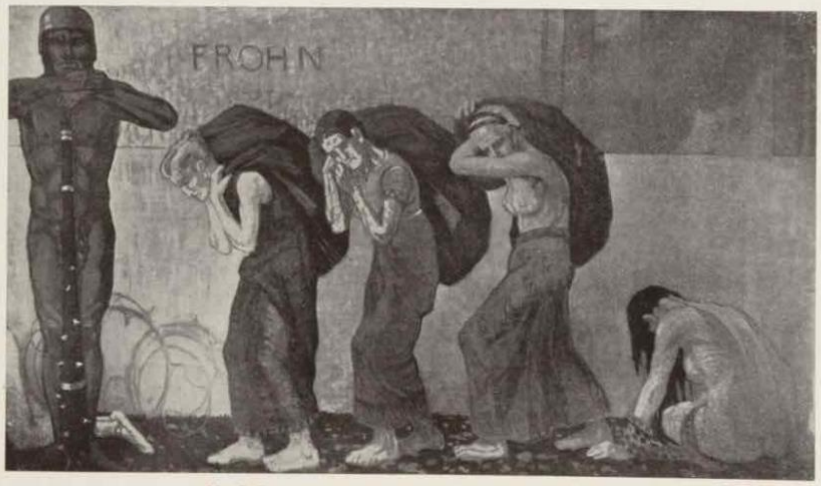
Fig. 29. Hall I of the 1912 women's exhibition, including Stroever's mural on the top left. Image by Zander and Labisch, featured in Emma Stropp, "Die Ausstellung 'Die Frau in Haus und Beruf,'" *Illustrirte Zeitung* 138, no. 3584 (7 March 1912), 448.

N. Jsrael Ida C. Stroever: „Der Weg des Weibes" — I. Barbarei Album 1913

IHRE SEELE

Es rang sich ein Weib von seinem Alltag los, um Festliches zu suchen, weil seine Seele brennend war von metaphysischem Bedürfen. Da fand es sich vor dem „Weg des Weibes" und ward von den Gestalten des Bildes und ihren Gebärden gefesselt in die willkommenen Bande geistigen Schauens über die Zeit, ihr Sein und Geschehen und gelöst von den Ketten, die seinen Blick zur engen Stunde zogen, und ihr armselig Ding.

Nun wünschte das Weib sein Erleben vielen. Vielen seinen Wert, der sich darstellte in einem sich Vertiefen und Verbreitern des Weltgefühls — wünschte sein Erleben denen, die ihm entbehrungsgeborenes, bewußtes Sehnen entgegenbrachten, und denen, welchen es in der Fülle ein Mehr bedeutete. Und wollte gern auch denen mit wenig lebender Sehnsucht und geringem Besitz dieses Bild vor die Augen tragen, weil es glaubte, daß die bildliche Darstellung von Zuständen, die der Seele gehörten, unmittelbarer wirkten als



Ida C. Stroever: „Der Weg des Weibes" — II. Frohn

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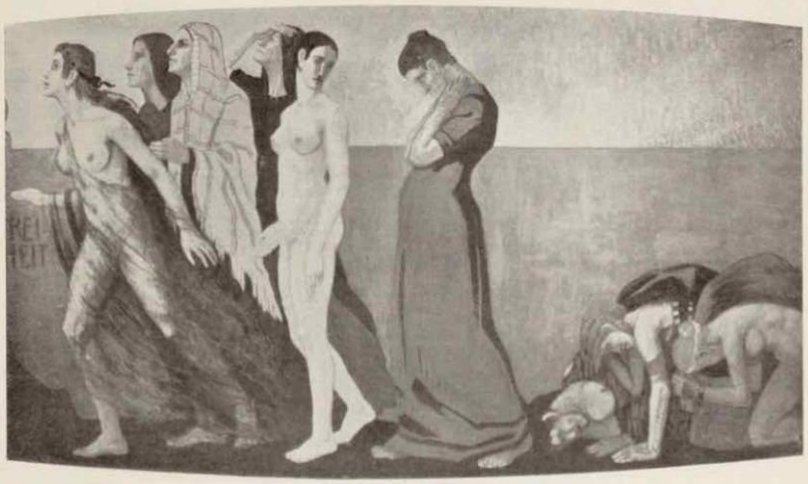
Fig. 30. Parts of Stroever's frieze featured in the 1913 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.



es sich unter der Mühe des Kindes und den aus ihr kommenden persönlichen Verlusten unter einem Joche wähnte, wie es gefesselt war an die alte Kraft zur Selbstkultur und an die neue Schwachheit zum Kinde. Und es hatte Qual zwischen ihm und dem Manne gelebt. Aber dann war sie auch wieder eine vor dem Morgenrot gewesen; das war ja das Zeichen seiner Zeit, daß man gleichsam mit der Luft, die man atmete, verheißende Kraft empfing, das Dasein neu zu beleben. Und weil das Weib nun ganz im Dienst am Kinde stand und ganz im Dank gegen den Mann für das Glück der Empfängnis, mußten doch wohl Sonnenstrahlen es umfließen; Muttertreue mochte ihm zu Füßen blühen wie eine hundertblättrige dunkle Rose, die zur Nacht so viel stärker duftete als am Tage, Mutter — Weibesglück wie eine weiße hängende Blumenkrone. Vor die Seele des Weibes trat Gebundenheit in anderer Gestalt, die Gebundenheit der mütterlichen Generation und der vor ihr, und es schien ihm, als habe das Neue, das sein Jahrhundert geboren, die Energie der Frauenseele, ihr zielbewußtes, tatfrohes, früchtefrohes Sein und Verhalten zuerst nur einzelne ergriffen, Auserwählte, und begänne erst jetzt in diesen Tagen, doch noch oft von Altem umgeben, die jungen hellen Scharen zu erfassen.

Ida C. Stroever, die Malerin des Zyklus: „Der Weg des Weibes"

Das Weib überschaute auch, daß sich an die fortschreitende Zahl der zeitlichen Jahre bis zum Mittag des Lebens bei einem Menschen die Erwartung seiner sich vollendenden seelischen Entwicklung hing, daß der Mittag dem einen früher, dem anderen später läutete, daß ein Mensch auch einmal weit in seinen Abend hinein in seiner Seele in die Höhe wuchs — daß das Leben den einen mit einer schönen Stetigkeit im Entfalten begnadete und den anderen

Fig. 31. The artist Ida Stroever and part of her frieze featured in the 1913 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York.

Fig. 32. Decorative title page for the 1912 N. Israel album. Courtesy of the Leo Baeck Institute.