

Mädchenhandel between Antisemitism and Social Reform: Bertha Pappenheim and the Jüdischer Frauenbund

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In 1904, under the leadership of Bertha Pappenheim and Sidonie Werner, the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* was created in Berlin at the congress of the International Council of Women, a non-confessional group bringing together women's organizations from a variety of countries around the world (including The United States, Canada, Germany, Holland, and New Zealand). The *Jüdischer Frauenbund* was composed of patriotic Germans committed to their Jewish faith who believed that a synthesis of *Deutschtum* and *Judentum* was possible (Kaplan, *Frauenbund* 19, 22). Broadly, the *Bund's* principle aim was to offer resistance to antisemitism and its goals centered on representing Jewish women and ameliorating their socio-economic position (Knappe 153-154, Kaplan, *Frauenbund* 44, 83, 86). More specifically, Marion Kaplan has listed the *Bund's* tasks in 1904 as follows: fighting white slavery, raising the standards of morality, strengthening Jewish communal consciousness, lightening the

burden of Jewish working-class women, and improving education (*Frauenbund* 86). Yet, it was the first issue listed—fighting white slavery—that had been the actual motivating factor for the creation of the *Bund* (Kaplan, *Morality* 621). Pappenheim had first heard of white slavery in 1902 at a conference sponsored by the Jewish Committee. There, she learned that emigrant women were lured, sold or even, though rarely, kidnapped and forced into prostitution (Kaplan, *Morality* 620). From that moment on, she admitted in a letter, the issue had come to consume her thoughts (Kaplan, *Morality* 620-621). The *Israelitisches Familienblatt* reported the creation of the *Bund* and mentioned that the great social task (“*die große soziale Aufgabe*”) of the *Bund* would be the struggle against the white slave trade (*der Mädchenhandel*), literally, the trade in girls. Further, the condition of Galician Jews was also to be a focal-point of charitable and social work, especially since emigration was seen as adding to the larger problem of prostitution and the white slave trade.¹

Pappenheim’s concern for women involved in prostitution and the white slave trade was reflected in the volume of work and writing she committed to the subject. She wrote articles in various newspapers, presented talks at numerous conferences, traveled to Eastern Europe and the Near East in order to study the very lands from which most white slaves and prostitutes emigrated and published her reflections on this experience in her work entitled *Sisyphus-Arbeit*, and established and managed a house for “endangered or morally sick” Jewish girls, women and their illegitimate children in Isenburg (Kaplan, *Morality* 625). However great Pappenheim’s involvement in the struggle against

¹ *Israelitisches Familienblatt*, Hamburg, 23 June, 1904, p. 2.

prostitution and the white slave trade, her concern for Jewish women's issues also encompassed larger concerns and her energies were spread widely throughout the Jewish women's movement. Moreover, the topics of prostitution and the white slave trade were not unique concerns of the Jewish women's movement, but were shared by other confessional and non-confessional women's groups. The first conference dedicated exclusively to the struggle against the white slave trade was held in London in 1899, five years before the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* was called into existence. In 1904, the fourth conference on the topic was held in Zürich. Yet, the *Bund's* position vis-à-vis this issue was unique to the German-Jewish context, because, other than among antisemites, only in these circles was the issue of *Mädchenhandel* seen as a specifically Jewish one.

Assuming that there were objective causes to the negative stereotypes attributed to Jews, at least with regards to this one issue, Pappenheim and others set about stopping the white slave trade in order to help fellow Jewish women and thus ultimately prevent antisemitism. Their approach and assumptions were derived from the very particular historical context in which these Jewish women found themselves: at the crossroads of external and internal emancipation (Fassmann 38). This essay will explore the nature of Pappenheim's and the *Bund's* understanding of antisemitism and the particular context in which this understanding was formed and articulated between 1904 and 1933. While Pappenheim died in 1936 and the *Bund* officially continued to operate until 1938, life under the Nazi dictatorship substantially changed the nature of the *Bund's* work as well as their assumptions about the possibility of German-Jewish coexistence and harmony.

Those familiar with the nature of antisemitic accusations in

early twentieth-century Central Europe will also be familiar with Adolf Hitler's claim that the Jews of Vienna directed prostitution and the white slave trade:

When thus for the first time I recognized the Jew as the cold-hearted, shameless, and calculating director of this revolting vice traffic in the scum of the big city, a cold shudder ran down my back.(59)

Yet, Hitler was certainly not the only antisemite to accuse the Jews of being the cause or directors of such vice, and he was not the first. Otto Glagau, also an antisemite, was the first person in Germany, in 1879 and 1880, to publish on the existence of Jewish white slavery in his periodical *Der Kulturkämpfer*. In 1892, Alexander Berg published his book *Jewish-Bordello—Revelations from dark Houses (Juden-Bordelle—Enthüllungen aus dunklen Häusern)* (Knappe 173). These antisemitic works focused on the assumption that Jewish men were procurers and Christian women were their victim-prostitutes. They never mentioned Jewish women as victims of prostitution (Bristow 310). Similarly, in an article titled “Der Mädchenjude” published in the antisemitic and anti-feminist periodical, the *Oesterreichische Frauen-Zeitung*, the author cites a Catholic clergyman by the name of Josef Seidl who had suggested that only Jews were *Mädchenhändler* (traffickers of women). The article continues with a list of cases in which Jews were involved in the traffic of Christian women. The author argues that Jewish men were explicitly forbidden from trading in Jewish women, but Christians were (supposedly) considered animals by Jews and were thus perfectly acceptable “wares.”² The article contains an entire set of antisemitic tropes

² *Oesterreichische Frauen-Zeitung*, Vienna, 27 February, 1899, II. No. 8, p. 1-2.

and prejudices—from the greedy merchant to the sexually predatory Jew. For all of its obvious falseness, the article highlights the very reason the women of the *Bund* saw combating antisemitism as their main aim. Yet, they were not the first Jewish organization to discuss the white slave trade.

In 1894, George Tush, at the Henry Jones Lodge of the B'nai B'rith organization, became the first German-Jew to speak of white slavery publicly and demand that a solution be found (Knappe 174; Bristow 316). He was motivated by the rising tide of antisemitism and, in particular, the spread of antisemitic accusations that Jews were behind the white-slave trade (Knappe 173-74; Bristow 316-17). In 1897, B'nai B'rith established the *Hamburger Komitee zur Bekämpfung des Mädchenhandels* motivated by both the desire, once again, to prevent antisemitism and also by a fuller understanding of the plight of *Ostjuden*, and how the two issues were connected (Knappe 173-174). The conceptual points of departure for both the B'nai B'rith's organization against the white slave trade and the *Bund* highlight the singularity and complexity of the crusade against the white slave trade within German-Jewish culture. In short, both groups saw the white-slave trade as a Jewish problem.

Bertha Pappenheim was born in Vienna on February 27, 1859, was educated in a Catholic school though she was raised in an Orthodox Jewish household. She remained tied to her faith, though took issue with the assigned role of women in orthodoxy, as wives and mothers. In early adulthood she suffered from hysteria and was treated by Dr. Joseph Breuer. Sigmund Freud, having reviewed her case, later dubbed her Anna O. By the age of 30, she had found her place within the women's movement and dedicated her life to helping improve

the lives of Jewish women (Edinger 11-13). Her understanding of the roots of the white slave trade reflect a sense of frustration with the place of women in her society, but it also reflects ideals of *Bildung*, familiar to the course of Jewish emancipation (though for Pappenheim, now used in the process of female emancipation). Simply, in Orthodox Judaism, women were not assigned any value except for their ability to bare children:

Only in rare cases could they assert their individuality, their wishes and inclinations, because they possessed strength and moral greatness that is not ordinary. (Ihre Individualität, ihre Wünsche und Neigungen können sie nur in den seltensten Fällen geltend machen, weil sie eine Kraft und sittliche Größe gehört, die nicht alltäglich ist...) (34).³

When a daughter is born to a traditional Jewish family, Pappenheim writes in her work “Das Jüdische Mädchen,” the reaction is disappointment. A girl is valued for her beauty, not for her mind, and little attention is paid to her education (Pappenheim 118-120). While Pappenheim clearly disagreed with this inattention to education for individualistic reasons (in keeping with Enlightenment ideals of individual striving for learning and knowledge), this lack of education was all the more disastrous when Jewish women were left without any means to support themselves and were thus vulnerable to falling into prostitution (Werner 25). Moreover, traditional religious marriages were not legally binding, since they were not civic unions. If a woman were abandoned by her husband, she was often left without means to support herself, and unless her

³ Unless otherwise noted, the English translations which are followed by the German original, are by the author.

husband obtained a divorce from her or his death was witness by a Jew, she could not remarry. In a time when many Jews emigrated from Eastern Europe, the legality of marriage was made all the more complicated. Upon arriving in a new country, some men abandoned their wives or even made them prostitute themselves. Once again, since their marriages were not necessarily recognized by the authorities in their new country, Jewish women were left with few options to support themselves (Kaplan, *Feminism* 46-47).

In the early years of the *Bund*, there was little doubt among its members that Jews *did* play a disproportionately large role in the white slave trade, both as traffickers and as prostitutes. From the very earliest days of the *Bund*, *Mädchenhandel* was a Jewish problem that had to be solved through Jewish organizations. At the second conference of the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* held in Frankfurt am Main on October 7, 1907, Pappenheim gave a talk in which she stated:

We know that a large number of Jewish women are involved in the profession of prostitution; we know that in all bordellos around the world one can find Jews, and we know that in the white-slave trade—as traffickers and “goods”—the largest portion are Jewish [...] (Wir wissen, daß eine große Anzahl jüdischer Mädchen das Gewerbe der freien Prostitution betreibt; wir wissen, daß in allen Bordellen der Welt Jüdinnen zu finden sind, und wissen, daß im Mädchenhandel—Händler und Ware—größtenteils jüdisch sind [...]) (32).

In an article entitled “Introduction on the Workgroup for the Welfare of Endangered Jews” (“Einführung in den Arbeitskreis für Jüdische Gefährdeten-Fürsorge”) also written by

Pappenheim, she states:

If we Jews today are exposed to strong enmity, it is because among us too the purity of decency and the laws of morality have been violated and evaded. (Wenn wir Juden heute starker Anfeindung ausgesetzt sind, so ist das, weil auch bei uns die Reinheit der Sitten und die Gesetze der Sittlichkeit übertreten und umgangen werden.) (91)

Only a handful of scholars have studied antisemitism (or anti-Judaism) within the German women's movement. Antisemitism is used in this essay to describe modern, political and racial anti-Jewish hatred and anti-Judaism to describe more traditional forms of anti-Jewish hatred. The focus in these studies has been to investigate antisemitic or anti-Jewish actions against individual Jewish women in the German women's movement generally and against the *Jüdischer Frauenbund*, and members thereof, more specifically. In general, the entire feminist movement was seen by numerous antisemites of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries as yet another manifestation of pernicious Jewish influence. Irmgard Maya Fassmann cites an antisemitic article from *Hammer: Blätter für deutschen Sinn* (from the publishing house of the notorious antisemite, Theodor Fritsch) entitled "Frauen-Bewegung oder Frauen-Rasführung" (Fassmann 11). The author of the article, F. Wage, writes:

Everywhere within the women's movement Jewesses have the last word [...] After the Jews have taken away our material and spiritual goods, they hold lectures about charity! (Überall in der Frauen-Bewegung führen Jüdinnen das große Wort [...] Nachdem die Juden unsere materiellen und geistigen Güter abgenommen haben, halten sie uns Vorträge

über die Mildtätigkeit!) (Fassmann 11).

Yet, antisemitism did not only come from outside of the German women's movement. Richard Evans highlights antisemitism within the German women's movement using the example of the German-Evangelical (Lutheran) Women's League, a conservative group which positively reviewed Adolf Bartel's *The German Degeneration (Das Deutsche Verfall)*. Bartel argued that the regeneration of Germany would happen only by banishing "judaized liberalism" (Evans 195-200).

More disturbing, perhaps, are incidences which occurred within the more "progressive" circles of the German women's movement. Heidemarie Wawrzyn enumerates the most notable cases of anti-Judaism within the women's movement between 1904 and 1918, and several of the cases are echoed in accounts given by Marion Kaplan, Mechthild Bereswill and Leonie Wagner. One of the most notorious incidents occurred in 1915, when at the 28th general congress of the General German Women's League (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Frauenverein*) Helene Lange gave a speech thanking the various organizations affiliated to the league and specifically referenced the many confessional groups while conspicuously leaving out the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* (Wawrzyn 30; Kaplan, *Frauenbund* 83-84; Bereswill & Wagner 10-18). To summarize the nature of the lengthy discussions and disputes that followed this slight, the league refused to accord Jewish women the same right to confessional expression that they accorded Christian women (Bereswill and Wagner 16). To be accepted as equal members within the German women's league Jewish women had to be more discreet about their religion than other Germans. Simply, the women's movement

stated the assimilationist demand that Jews must forsake their Jewishness in order to be accepted by German society. Though it must be conceded that in 1899, when Protestant women formed their own women's group, the women's League feared that this too would create discord within the women's movement (Hackett 175–176). Yet, clearly, by 1915, this fear of Christian women's associations had passed; only traditional anti-Judaism remained. For all these discussions on the specific instances of anti-Judaism and antisemitism experienced by Jewish women within the German women's movement, no historian has heretofore analyzed Pappenheim's and the *Bund's* understanding of antisemitism—the causes thereof and its remedies.

Shulamit Volkov has argued that German Jews did not only attempt to assimilate into German society but more specifically into German bourgeois society (369-391; Aschheim 7). She suggests that there were four basic requirements demanded of the Jews in order to completely assimilate: 1) the reform of the community's occupational structure; 2) the use of German; 3) the adoption of the ideal of learning (*Bildung*); and 4) the absorption of the newly formed bourgeois ethos of moral behavior (*Sittlichkeit*) (Volkov 373). In contrast to George Mosse, Volkov understands *Bildung* and *Sittlichkeit* not as opposite expressions reflecting a change in bourgeois values, but as components and expressions of the same German bourgeois culture. *Sittlichkeit*, decency and respectability, was, as Mosse has reminded us, a key component of sexual mores at the time. Sexual perversion was thought to be nearly as threatening to middle-class existence as working-class agitation (Mosse 4, 25). Pappenheim and other members of the *Bund* were exemplary bourgeois Jews in both their concern for *Sittlichkeit*, as well as for

their acceptance of *Bildung* as a guiding principle. Emerging out of Enlightenment discussions, the ideal of *Bildung* was founded on the assumption that progress and advancement for society at large through individual striving and education was possible. All that was necessary to achieve this goal was for the individual to leave behind his or her self-imposed tutelage (“der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit” (Kant 20)).

Pappenheim, in particular, approached prostitution and the white slave trade from both the perspective of *Sittlichkeit* and of *Bildung*. Prostitution and the white slave trade were clearly defined as unacceptable and transgressive forms of sexual behavior, and the solution for this sexual transgression was to be found in the education of Jewish society at large and of individual Jewish women. In a speech given to the Center for Private Welfare (*Zentrale für private Fürsorge*), Pappenheim spoke of her plans for a home for endangered women, which was later founded in Isenburg. She envisioned a program for these women that would keep them occupied with lessons (*Unterricht*), housework, and outdoor exercise. The women would be encouraged to read books and newspapers, in addition to experiencing the benefits of the morally uplifting atmosphere of a small town, while dressed in simple and modest attire (Pappenheim 19). The house also provided a strong Jewish atmosphere: strict dietary laws were maintained, and the Sabbath and holy days were observed (Knappe 177). It was in this framework of *Bildung* that Pappenheim also explained the root causes of the white-slave trade: the lack of educational and thus professional possibilities open to Jewish women in traditional Jewish society (Kaplan, *Feminism* 46). Not doubting, at least initially, the statistics of Jews involved as Mädchenhändler or as

prostitutes, Pappenheim and the *Bund* set about educating Jews on the need to prevent Jewish women from falling into vice.

Marion Kaplan cites statistics gathered in 1903 and 1910 according to which in Germany out of 182 traffickers, 19 were Jewish. In Austria, out of 102, 65 were Jewish; in South America, 80 of 93 were Russian or Polish Jews, while in Galicia 38 out of 39 were Jewish. In Russia, 104 out of 124, in Hungary, 68 out of 105 and, finally, in France, 34 out of 127 were Jewish (Kaplan, *Frauenbund* 111). Unfortunately, Kaplan does not discuss the nature of these sources. How was this information gathered? How accurate is it?⁴ However, the same sources and an additional two (*Zeitschrift für Demographie und Statistik der Juden* and Bruno Blau's "Die Juden als Sexualverbrecher") are also cited by Edward Bristow, who describes Jewish involvement in the white slave trade as "breathhtaking" (Bristow 301, 304). It seems necessary to take these figures, of which the majority provided by Kaplan derived from a single survey conducted for the first Jewish International Conference on White Slavery in 1910, as a trend, at best. Moreover, the fact that the survey was conducted by a Jewish organization also reveals the concern over and perception of Jewish involvement in the white slave trade within Jewish circles. What makes this perception all the more curious is that within the more general women's movement in Central Europe, the white slave trade was not always or even mostly associated with Jews or conceived of as a Jewish problem. Several examples should suffice to make my point. The topic of the white slave trade was discussed in several women's journals. Even in articles summarizing the struggle against the white slave

⁴ The difficulty in ascertaining the accuracy of such statistics is made all the clearer when one considers that, though only in rare cases, Jewish women

trade from either an international or national perspective, there is a surprising lack of reference to the Jewish angle of this problem. From *Neues Frauenleben's* article in 1902 about the white slave trade in Hungary, to four articles on international and local attempts at combating global prostitution in *Der Bund* written over a course of seven years, the articles exemplify a tendency within the women's movement to treat the white slave trade as first and foremost, if not entirely, as a woman's issue.⁵ The report on the international conference against white slavery held in Amsterdam on the third and fourth of October, 1901, mentions Jews only as potential partners in the struggle against white slavery, not as perpetrators of it.⁶ The report from the International Women's Congress held in Berlin in 1904 (the very same at which the *Bund* was founded), includes numerous references to and talks on white slavery, and not a single one discusses the problem with reference to Jews, as agents or as victims (see Stritt). Counter-examples do exist: *Dokumente der Frauen* published an article on November 1, 1899, "Mädchenhandel. Zum Congress der 'Internationalen Criminalistischen Vereinigung' in Budapest" written by Dr. S. R. Landau. Dr. Landau repeatedly noted that Jewish women clearly made up a noticeable number of the prostitutes associated with the white slave trade. Yet, Jews are only mentioned as prostitutes in this article, not as traffickers (407-412). Nevertheless, for Pappenheim, the white slave trade was most certainly a Jewish

registered as prostitutes so as to live in Russian cities (Nathans 104).

⁵ *Neues Frauenleben* No. 8, August, 1902, p. 17; *Der Bund: Zentrallblatt des Bundes österr. Frauenvereine* (Vienna), Year 1, No. 2, January 1906, p. 6-7; Year 2, No. 1, January 1907, p. 15-16; Year 4, No. 7, November 1909, p. 10-12; Year 8, No. 1, January 1913, p. 15.

⁶ Rapport de la conférence internationale sur la traite des blanches tenue à Amsterdam les 3 et 4 octobre 1901 (Amsterdam, 1901), p. 28.

issue, and a Jewish issue which exposed the fault lines between Eastern and Western communities.

While Pappenheim was concerned for all Jewish women, her travels to Eastern Europe and the Near East clearly indicate that she saw her role as the Western European Jewish representative of Enlightenment and *Bildung* whose task it was to bring this level of education to her fellow Jews in the East. In 1909, she had the occasion to travel to Romania and meet the Romanian queen to discuss the problem of the white slave trade. Pappenheim wrote of her encounter and her travels to Romania in a short article published in *Israelitisches Familienblatt* published on April 29, 1909 and entitled “Gegen den Mädchenhandel” (Pappenheim 11). She characterized the queen as kind, intelligent, charming, and as a woman who understood Pappenheim’s concerns over women’s conditions, prostitution, and the “Jewish question.” Pappenheim also presented a petition to Romanian officials and had the opportunity to speak to a deputy, Mr. Constantin Alessien, about the white slave trade from a socio-political and *volkshygienischer* perspective. Finally, Pappenheim also spoke with local Jewish communal leaders in order to raise their awareness of the issue and to help promote her cause. In conclusion, Pappenheim wrote that she felt about this trip:

[...] that we have begun along the path of combating the white-slave trade to achieve success in that we have valiantly acted for law and common decency. ([...] daß wir anfangen, auf dem Wege der Bekämpfung des Mädchenhandels Erfolge zu erringen, indem wir unerschrocken für Recht und

gute Sitte eintreten.)⁷

Later that year, another article in *Israelitisches Familienblatt* reported that Pappenheim had traveled to the United States and Canada, two frequent destinations for Eastern European Jewish emigrants, in order to talk about the white slave trade in both countries.⁸ In North America, too, Pappenheim presented the concern as a Jewish issue, though the article does not make it clear whether Pappenheim spoke to Jewish or non-Jewish organizations, or a combination thereof. We have more detailed information about her trip to the East two years later. In 1911 and 1912 she visited Budapest, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Lodz, Warsaw, St. Petersburg, and many other cities and towns. Upon returning, her travel notes were collected in the publication *Sisyphus-Arbeit* (1924). Her notes speak of both help and cooperation, and ignorance and frustration. On March 9, 1911, in Budapest, she met the secretary of the Chevra Kadisha, the richest association in the city. She asked him how the association disposed of the funds and what programs were offered. His answer was simple, “everything,” but when she questioned him whether there was a women’s committee allied to the association, his reply was that “so long as I have any say, no woman will come in.” (“So lange ICH was zu sagen habe, kommt MIR keine Frau herein.”) (Edinger 48). She continued her voyage to Palestine and visited, among other things, an orphanage for girls. Pappenheim bemoaned the fact that the girls did not go to school and had only recently begun learning how to sew (Edinger 51). Despite the problems she saw in Palestine, she wrote while still in

⁷ Pappenheim, in *Israelitisches Familienblatt*, April 29, 1909, p. 11.

⁸ *Israelitisches Familienblatt*, August 5, 1909, p. 11.

Jerusalem that the misery and poverty in Eastern Europe was far worse. The Jewish population in Palestine, she continued, in terms of decency and morality was just as solid as it had been for centuries (Edinger 56). Back in Europe, Pappenheim discussed the white slave trade among Jews and non-Jews, speaking to a rebbe in Alexandrov and to a multi-faith group of women assembled in Warsaw. In both cases, her contact was successful in that both the rebbe and the women's group recognized the problem, the need to address it, and made promises to begin efforts to combat white slavery.⁹

Yet, Pappenheim not only set about trying to change the minds of members of Jewish communities and influential non-Jews across Eastern Europe, she and the *Bund* engaged in concrete work to stop the traffic of women where it often began—at ports and railway stations. Knowing that traffickers often procured women as they first entered a city, the *Bund* created a program of railway station aid (*Bahnhofshilfe*). Volunteers would meet unaccompanied women at ports or train stations, the *Bund* would provide food, shelter, financial help and information, including job counseling and job placement. By 1907, the *Bund* had volunteers in ports and railway stations in border towns and large cities; the next year, they advertised their services in third-class coaches; and in 1909, aid was available at twenty railway stations (Kaplan, *Frauenbund* 132-133). At the fourth conference of the *Bund*, held in Leipzig in 1913, Isabella Heim announced that a commission for railway station aid had been established of which she would be the chairwoman.¹⁰

⁹ Pappenheim, Lodz, May 6, 1912; Warsaw, May 10, 1912, in Edinger, p. 59-60, 61-63.

¹⁰ “Die 4. Delegiertenversammlung des jüdischen Frauenbundes” in

With World War I, a lull in the white slave trade was noticed (Kaplan, *Morality* 625). Clearly, this coincides with a more general slow-down in emigration and immigration due to the war. After the war, the League of Nations began to address the issue and noted an overall decrease in the traffic of prostitutes (Kaplan, *Morality* 625). In 1924, the *Bund* began publishing its own newspaper, *Blätter des Jüdischen Frauenbundes*. The topic of white slave trade continued to appear in this newspaper, but it did not dominate the discussions. Marion Kaplan has argued that this decrease in interest in white slavery was probably due to a decrease in traffic and the dislocation of German-Jews as a result of the economic and political instability (Kaplan, *Morality* 625). While these are both important factors, Bristow offers another motivation: the greater role of antisemitism in German society (Bristow 326). If one examines the articles in the late 1920s on white slavery one can see a shift in attitudes towards the white-slave trade. While still considered an important issue and one which Jews could help resolve, a suspicion over the previously accepted numbers of Jews involved in the white-slave trade is apparent. Further, this suspicion is coupled with increased attention to antisemitism. In an article entitled “Die deutsche Frauenbewegung und die jüdischen Frauen” written by Dr. phil. Gertrud Ehrmann, the author briefly surveys the accomplishments and undertakings of the *Bund* since its creation and begins her concluding paragraph with these words:

This is how it stands today. The internal reasons for this development are clear. They exist because of the nationalism or volkish chauvinism of our time, and especially because of the strong antisemitic currents. (So steht es heute. Die

Israelitisches Familienblatt, April 24, 1913, p. 3-4.

inneren Gründe für diese Entwicklung sind klar. Sie bestehen in dem Nationalismus oder völkischen Chauvinismus unserer Zeit im allgemeinen und in der starken antisemitischen Strömung im besonderen.)¹¹

In this context of heightened awareness to antisemitism, writers in the *Blätter des Jüdischen Frauenbundes* still maintained that Jews had to do everything they could to remove any and all objective causes for antisemitism. Reporting on the Jewish International Conference against the white-slave trade which convened in London in 1927, Paula Ollendorff wrote:

Even if the accusations that more Jews and Jewesses are involved in the white-slave trade than non-Jews have been proven false, we must work so that there is not even one single Jew working as a trafficker or as a prostitute. (Wenn auch die Beschuldigungen, daß mehr Juden bzw. Jüdinnen bei dem schändlichen Geschäft des Mädchenhandels beteiligt sind also Nichtjuden, sich als durchaus unwahr erwiesen hat, so haben wir dafür zu arbeiten, dass auch nicht ein einziger jüdischer Händler und nicht ein einziges jüdisches Mädchen als Ware dabei sein.) (1).

Another article of the same year makes it clear that the members of the *Bund* had taken a new position with regards to the number of Jews active in the white-slave trade. While still actively encouraging Jewish action against this evil, the author calls the white-slave trade a “supposedly” (*angeblich*) international-Jewish evil.¹² Thus, with the late twenties, the *Bund* became more

¹¹ Israelitisches Familienblatt, April 24, 1913, p. 4.

¹² “Zur Londener jüdischen internationalen Konferenz zur Bekämpfung des Mädchenhandels” in *Blätter des Jüdischen Frauenbundes*, August/September, 1927, p.1.

skeptical of the veracity of claims that Jews played an overwhelming role in the white-slave trade. Yet, they insisted that the problem still deserved their attention and their action. Believing that by eliminating every trace of Jewish presence in the white-slave trade, they would be able to deal a blow to the growing antisemitism of the time. Having fully accepted the terms of bourgeois emancipation – including reforming the occupational structure of the community and accepting the standards of bourgeois morality – members of the *Bund* struggled to conform to these expectations.

Having accepted the path of bourgeois assimilation, the *Jüdischer Frauenbund*, under the direction of Bertha Pappenheim, framed its activities according to the tenets of this model. Pappenheim and others channeled their efforts to stop the white-slave trade in accordance with the values of *Bildung* and *Sittlichkeit*. By educating society at large and Jewish society more particularly, they attempted to control transgressive sexual activities of Jews. These attempts brought the Western Jew into contact with her *Ostjüdische* sister, with the German-Jew playing the role of mature and wise older-sister. Yet, most curiously, the efforts of the *Bund* and of Pappenheim to combat the white-slave trade centered on an assumption that Jews played an important role (and early in the *Bund's* history, an overwhelming one) in the white-slave trade and that this participation in the white-slave trade was a cause of antisemitism. As such, they believed that by ending Jewish participation in the white-slave trade, they could help end antisemitism. Even in the late 1920s, when a consensus emerged that Jews were not, in fact, as involved in the white-slave trade as had earlier been accepted, there was the hope that by ending all Jewish participation in the

white-slave trade, antisemitism could be stopped or, at least, diminished. The insistent tone of the articles written in the *Blätter des Jüdischen Frauenbundes* in the late 1920s suggests that rather than fading, the belief that the behavior of Jews was directly responsible for antisemitism, among Jews, was strengthened. Wedded to a path of assimilation which preached improvement and renewal before full rights, Jews in the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* continued to look to objective conditions as the cause of antisemitism.

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