

Women Artists of the 1920s in the Hannover Region

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Seit Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts und im Zusammenhang mit der Industrialisierung drängten in Deutschland zunehmend bildende Künstlerinnen auf den Kunstmarkt. Einmal wegen der ihnen anerzogenen Wertschätzung für Ästhetik und Schönheit, zum zweiten aufgrund der Tatsache, dass diese Tätigkeit von einer breiten Öffentlichkeit als weniger „unschicklich“ wahrgenommen wurde als andere Formen des Broterwerbs, waren es zumeist Angehörige des gehobenen Bürgertums, die sich zu einer Künstlerinnenexistenz entschlossen.

Trotz vielfältiger Abwehrtendenzen seitens männlicher Kunsthistoriker, Sammler, Kunstfunktionäre und Künstler konnten sich einzelne Malerinnen durchzusetzen. Allerdings wurde ihre Arbeit erschwert durch das Verbot, an staatlichen Kunstakademien und Universitäten zu studieren. Vor allem Gründungen von eigens auf die Interessen von Künstlerinnen ausgerichteten Vereinigungen von Frauen für Frauen sorgten für Verbesserungen auch in der Ausbildungssituation.

Mit dem Frauenwahlrecht ging in den Jahren nach dem Zusammenbruch der Monarchie 1918/ 19 der Schritt einher, nun auch Künstlerinnen für das Studium an den staatlichen Institutionen zuzulassen. Freilich zeigte sich bald, dass viele von ihnen auch in den so genannten ‘Goldenen Zwanzigern’ angesichts Beschränkungen und Diskriminierungen Schwierigkeiten hatten, ausschließlich von ihrer Kunst zu leben. Weiterhin bedurfte es der Unterstützung einflussreicher Frauenorganisationen. Eine von ihnen war die 1926 in Hamburg gegründete GEDOK (Gemeinschaft Deutscher und Österreichischer Künstlerinnenverbände aller Kunstgattungen), die Dank ihrer prägnanten Struktur – hier Künstlerinnen, dort Kunstfreundinnen oder – förderinnen – in den folgenden Jahren und Jahrzehnten vielen Künstlerinnen wertvolle Hilfe zum selbständigen Arbeiten bot. Es folgten Gründungen in vielen deutschen Großstädten. Heute vereint die GEDOK ca. 4.5000 Mitglieder in 23 deutschen und österreichischen Gruppen.

1927 wurde die hannoverschen GEDOK mit zunächst 150 Mitgliedern gegründet, später wurden es zeitweilig über 300. Künstlerinnen und Kunstfreundinnen hielten sich auch hier zahlenmäßig die Waage, Männern war die Mitgliedschaft verwehrt. In der hannoverschen GEDOK waren von Beginn an neben den Förderinnen Architektinnen, Bildhauerinnen, Fotografinnen, Gymnastikerinnen, Journalistinnen, Kunsthandwerkerinnen, Malerinnen, Musikerinnen, Schauspielerinnen, Schriftstellerinnen und Tänzerinnen zur Mitarbeit eingeladen.

Ein großer Teil der GEDOK-Angehörigen unterhielt sehr gute Kontakte zur lokalen bürgerlichen Frauenbewegung und unterstützte wie diese Maßnahmen zur politischen Schulung von Frauen in der Weimarer Demokratie. Doch war auch die GEDOK letztlich um eine neutrale und ‚unpolitische‘ Haltung zum Zeitgeschehen bestrebt, was sie für viele politisch interessierte Zeitgenossinnen als langweilig erscheinen ließ. Ebenso stieß die diffuse Haltung zur weiblichen Erwerbstätigkeit auf Kritik. Neben Stimmen, die einer generellen weiblichen Unterlegenheit und mangelnden Befähigung für viele Berufsfelder das Wort redeten, standen andere in der GEDOK für eine Position ein, die qualitativ gleichwertige Fähigkeiten von Frauen und Männern betonten.

Wenn sich in der GEDOK auch Künstlerinnen fanden, die von der wirtschaftlichen Krisenzeit Ende

der zwanziger, Anfang der dreissiger Jahre in ihrer Existenz bedroht waren, so gilt doch, dass viele Vereinsmitglieder angesehenen und wohlhabenden bürgerlichen Gesellschaftsschichten entstammten – vor allem unter den Kunstfreundinnen fanden sich Ehefrauen von Lokalpolitikern, Beamten, Kunst- und Kulturfunktionären, Künstlern sowie Industriellen und Mäzenen. Doch Hilfsaufrufe für bedürftige Frauen in- und ausserhalb des Vereins blieben vielfach ohne Nachhall. Mangelnde Fähigkeit und wohl auch Bereitschaft, sich die Not jenseits der eigenen Lebenswelt bewusst zu machen, trugen dazu bei, dass das karitative Element bei vielen wohlhabenden GEDOK-Mitgliedern keine nennenswerte Rolle spielte.

Freilich waren ihnen auch in dieser Hinsicht die Hände gebunden: Einerseits profitierten diese GEDOK-Frauen in der Vereinsarbeit von ihren persönlichen, familiären und gesellschaftlichen Kontakten. Andererseits konnten sie sich, fest eingebunden in die soziale, politische und kulturelle Hierarchie der Zeit, nicht über den von ihren männlichen Ehemännern und Verwandten gesteckten Rahmen hinwegsetzen, wollten sie nicht ihre eigene Positionen in diesen Strukturen riskieren. Nicht das Sprengen von gesellschaftlichen, kulturellen und politischen Konventionen und Traditionen war das Ziel von GEDOK-Arbeit auch in Hannover, sondern allenfalls das Ausloten der eigenen Grenzen und die Nutzung der sich in dem vorgegebenen Rahmen bietenden Möglichkeiten.

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“PROFESSION WITHOUT TRADITION” - THE PIONEER WORK OF WOMEN ARTISTS SINCE 1850 IN GERMANY ¹

During the mid 1930s a Berlin art dealer offered a painting of a local woman artist to the Director of the Hannover art museum ². Because the museum’s director did not know her name, he began to enquire after both the artist and her painting. In the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (*General German Biography*), the following is said about the painter: “Margarethe Jonas has become an artist of great significance through her hard work, although she never enjoyed any formal training. Her exceptional portraits are outstanding in their execution, as well as their resemblance to the subject. She was living rather comfortably and was able to work for pleasure only. Several of her best paintings are owned by her home town museum and several are with the local Deaf-Mute Institute” ³. Apparently the museum’s director was not very interested. He never replied to the letter and never purchased the painting.

His decision might not be too surprising, given that the 1930s were a time of great economic despair when Jonas’ painting was offered to the museum’s director with a description that suggested mediocre work. There is mention of “much diligence” and that the

painting is of “significant value”, which leads one to conclude that there was not much to it. The main talent of Jonas was said to be to produce photograph-like portraits more or less for pure fun since she had not studied art and did not need to make a living out of it. Mentioning the Deaf-Mute Institute did not help either to convince a prospective buyer that this was a rare painting that one absolutely had to have. Since the turn of the century – at that time more than 30 years before – a broad range of new artistic styles had been developed in many European countries: Futurism in Italy, Expressionism mostly in Germany and in France the influence of the late Impressionism had then been significant. Also, in Switzerland, France and Germany Dadaism had been prevalent, while in England there had been Symbolism. Why then would anyone buy a painting from a mere craftsman, who had absolutely nothing in common with what you would call an artistic genius?

This example was chosen to illustrate how working conditions and life's circumstances affected women artists at the beginning of the 20th century and far into the 1920s in Germany. I will introduce the topic by first speaking of the social strata of female artists, especially those in fine arts, before I specifically discuss Hannover. Hannover is not chosen because its developments were exceptional. On the contrary, the circumstances of this city – with 430,000 inhabitants in the 1920s the ninth largest in Germany – were rather typical and can be considered generally similar, with slight variations, to other cities, such as Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Düsseldorf, Munich or Dresden ⁴.

One consequence of industrialization in Germany was a rising number of female artists pushing themselves into the art market during the mid 19th century. Many of them belonged to the upper middle-class. The desire to be employed and to achieve greater self-esteem coincided with the slowly developing necessity of contributing to the family income or to securing one's own existence ⁵. These women risked a lot. Depending on their social class, working women were stigmatized as “incapable” and, hence, it demanded courage and conviction. If a middle-class woman earned money, she conveyed the idea that she needed it and reduced, by this, her chances of a personally desired or socially expected marriage fitting her status.

Not without reason many women pursued a career in the fine arts. They had been raised to enjoy and value what was aesthetically pleasing, they had been taught needlework, drawing and painting and they had received piano lessons. However, it soon became obvious that the knowledge acquired did not further one's own career with respect to the arts. In a critical commentary in 1929 one could read the following: “When you see these young women painting porcelain, dying ties, sewing ribbons, or occupying themselves with designing things for every day life, one has to conclude without hesitation that women are trained to be societal dilettantes” ⁶. Weighing even heavier than the societal risks that employment brought with it was the fact that the first female painters, musicians, artisans, poets or writers did not have their own role models to turn to. Instead of developing their own style, the focus of many female artists of the 19th century was on the achievements of their male counterparts of the past and present. Nonetheless, in this way many were quite successful ⁷.

It comes as no surprise that the majority of male artists viewed their female competitors as inconsequential and distracting. It might be of interest that the art market at the time was



Fig. 1
Gathering in the Hamburg Women's Club, 1909.

rather unpredictable as a result of the movement away from the conventional, feudal art by demand toward art for more widespread consumption⁸. Art historians and critics as well as the male-dominated art scene reacted often in an equally negative way with respect to interested women. In 1908, for instance, the influential Berlin art critic Karl Scheffler wrote: "The creativity of a woman is limited to childbearing. She is not able to excell in any of the fine arts, let alone architecture and music. At best she is capable of dancing. Women are inferior to men, and foolish as men say them to be"⁹.

Until the fall of the last German Kaiser, women, with the exception of a few, were prohibited from attending state art academies. While they have always been accepted as models, subjects, or muses, women have been neglected or entirely forgotten as artists¹⁰. Their works often were lost. It is therefore not surprising that the search for Margarethe Jonas' painting, which had been offered to the museum's director in Hannover during the 1930s and which also was produced by an upper-class woman "without professional training", has been unsuccessful so far.

The quality of training at private art schools or acquired through private tutors was not comparable to that of official academies, especially since the central and essential studies of the (naked) human body was often perceived as "inappropriate for ladies" and therefore not permitted¹¹. Around the turn of the century there were only three state-subsidized art institutes that German women were able to attend. However, given the high admission fees only privileged daughters from good homes could attend¹². As a result the spectrum of women artists comprised professionals at one end and dilettantes at the other, with the emphasis being on the latter¹³. For the longest time, women were accepted as hobby artists who eagerly painted and stitched, composed and wrote poetry – as long as they did not directly threaten the existence of their male counterparts. At the moment, however, when women began to actively dispute preconceptions of female incompetence, and simultaneously began to associate a paycheck with their artistic endeavour, they no longer could expect any sympathy from most men.

The female protagonists of the 19th century were not lacking in self-esteem. Due to their upper middle-class upbringing, they brought with them two further prerequisites for artistic success: first, their names enabled them to enter the artistic world and market – and second, their financial situations permitted the establishment of professional associations to enhance the vocational situation of female artists ¹⁴. The founding of the Association for Female Artists of Berlin in 1867 marked the first step in women helping women. A series of similar groups followed in the beginning of the next century. The involvement of influential and wealthy friends of the arts in the Berlin Association enabled less financially fortunate women to receive an art education. In addition, there were scholarships, health and pension plans as well as networking opportunities with art collectors and museum people ¹⁵. A group of female artists, supported by the Berlin Association, was able to venture their first successful steps into female art production as a “profession without tradition” and from dilettantism to professionalism.

More than half a century later, in March 1919, German women were granted the right to receive an education at state academies, thanks to the Equal Rights Act of the Weimar Constitution. One might expect that circumstances thereafter improved dramatically, and the number of females at universities did indeed increase. However, studies alone did not bring the much desired prestige and financial success. What good was the Equal Rights Act for when museum directors and gallery owners refused to display women’s work, when art historians questioned their validity and talent, their male counterparts belittled them, and exhibitions and support programs targeted male artists only? ¹⁶ What was the tolerant climate of the so-called golden 1920s worth to women at a time of permanent economic crises and uncertainty? ¹⁷

Female artists continued to be daughters, sisters-in-law, wives and mothers, hence, an act of law did not simply change the expectations that their parents, relatives, husbands and children had of them ¹⁸. If women *did* have success, despite these traditional role expectations, it was largely due to their courage, conviction, creativity – and a ton of talent! Therefore, every critical discussion of the prevalent female image during the 1920s points to the contradictions inherent in this time and to the clashing of tradition with modernity, of progressive-liberal views with traditional values of past eras, which were not really past ¹⁹.

The founding of the first Association of German and Austrian Women Artists and Patrons (GEDOK) ²⁰ in Hamburg in 1926 was marked by contradiction and diversity. With its two-tiered structure (on the one side artists, on the other patrons) GEDOK took on a leadership role. It was crucial for local women’s groups especially with respect to its exceptional position on social-political and charity issues, but also in making clear the significance of the women’s movement, in general, and the work of women artists and their identity, in particular ²¹.

“WE ARE ON A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY. WE WORK AND WE WANT TO GO AHEAD” – THE GEDOK IN HANNOVER ²²

In 1927, one year after the founding of the Hamburg GEDOK, the local chapter of the Hannoverian GEDOK was established. Apart from socializing, the goals of the association

included an exchange of ideas and experiences among women artists. With the patrons, these women artists were supposed to create a community and be part of “a nice coming together”²³. If one can believe the stories of the founding members, this event received very little attention from the general public of Hannover. A newspaper reported fairly bluntly that this community now gave women a greater chance to meet for coffee while keeping up with the latest gossip.

The Hannoverian GEDOK started out with 150 members, of whom 75 were artists and 75 were patrons. In the following years, the balance between these two groups seems to have been of equal importance in the planning by the board of directors. Until the 1940s the artists always comprised the majority, however, never exceeding more than 60%²⁴. Although men were excluded from membership, their presence at social gatherings was strongly encouraged. Working with male artists was accepted, but not financially subsidized, something which holds true up until today.

Apart from bigger festivities, GEDOK, partly in association with other institutions, organized dance matinees, house concerts featuring both works from past eras as well as timely avant-garde pieces. There were also exhibitions and readings. In addition to courses in painting, GEDOK offered book-keeping seminars and an introduction to associate law. Conversation courses in French, English and Italian, as well as afternoon tea parties and discussion circles completed the extensive program²⁵.

GEDOK grew quickly. Within two years after its establishment, the membership had increased to 340; it reached its peak in 1932 with 409 members. During the Nazi regime the numbers dwindled drastically. However, at the end of World War II, the GEDOK Hannover still had 118 members. After the Nazis had taken over, the GEDOK underwent the same incorporation into the National Socialist political system as other organizations. During World War II, the board gave consideration to dissolving the association, but later decided against it due to the “sense of duty its members felt towards the community and cultural circle”²⁶. Shortly after the war, the association was actually dissolved but permitted to continue under the British Occupation²⁷. Today the German GEDOK counts about 4500 members in 23 local groups in Germany and Austria; there are 170 members in Hannover.

Varying membership requirements for artists or patrons became evident during the 1920s and early 1930s. A female artist could join after showing her work to an appointed advisory board. This board consisted of 2-4 actual members. According to the nine different areas of competence of GEDOK, there were boards for architecture, sculpture, theatre, gymnastics, arts and crafts, painting, music, writing, and dance. In order for an applicant to be accepted as a patron, two GEDOK members were needed to sponsor her. Ultimate acceptance or refusal was determined by the 6 members of the Association’s Board of Directors.

Right from the beginning until World War II, the largest group was comprised of musicians. Every fourth GEDOK artist was either a music or singing instructor, pianist or violinist. If we include the dancers and gymnasts, these add up to almost half of the entire artist membership. Second in size was the group involved in arts and crafts (20% of the members). This group comprised a broad spectrum of clothing and ceramic designers. 15% of the



Fig. 2
The first women voters in
Berlin, 1919.

members were painters and graphic artists; another 15% were authors, poets, and journalists. The latter group showed the greatest reduction in number during the Nazi regime. Approximately 10% of the GEDOK members were either actresses or opera singers. Women photographers, architects and sculptresses were rare in the GEDOK.

Regarding the Hannoverian artists, it is interesting to note that many of them had hyphenated last names (approximately 15% of the artists and 4% of the patrons). Unfortunately, most of the documents found from the late 1930s give us little insight into the family status of most of the members. Nonetheless the homogeneous structure of the membership leads one to suspect that prior to the 1930s 60% of the women artists were single. On the contrary, most of the patrons were married women. One can even go so far as to say that most of the married, divorced, or widowed women put such emphasis on keeping their identities that throughout their professional lives they carried their maiden names along with the last name of their husbands. Does this show a growing self-esteem or does it just reflect a trend of the time? Unfortunately very little can be said about the extent of actual employment of either group. It is uncertain whether the first group – single, married and/or with family – was actually able to support themselves – or if indeed they even wanted to!

“THE WOMAN AS BEARER OF SOCIETAL THINKING” – GEDOK AND THE CIVIL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT ²⁸

Immediately after its establishment, the GEDOK became a member of the Women's Organization of Hannover. In the 1920s, this association acted as an umbrella organization for all civil women's groups. Its main interest lay in coordinating social networking and in working towards an improved educational system for women ²⁹. Close personal ties existed between the GEDOK and other groups belonging to this organization. Strengthening women's position as a citizens was a characteristic goal of the organization. During the world economic crisis and the political radicalisation of the 1930s, it offered courses help-

ing women to vote, which was actually an important political move³⁰. In the end, however, GEDOK had to distance itself from any political and religious affiliation. In a proclamation in February 1929 it stated: "The dispute of the parties may be fought in parliament, but there is no room for it within women's groups. There is one personal outlook shared by all women – and rightly so. These are the morals in one's bosom"³¹. For this reason, some members saw the GEDOK politically as "too conservative, too tame"³². Maybe this explains why during such a tumultuous time as the late 1920s and early 1930s, the GEDOK's program with respect to political and social matters remained largely the same, even though its membership comprised women of rather different political colours: at several events members of the Communist Party were found sitting next to Nazis, Social Democrats next to nationalists.

"FEELING AND EMOTION IS EVERYTHING!" – GEDOK'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS FAMILY AND WORK³³

When looking both at the yearbooks of the late 1920s and early 1930s as well as at the correspondence and other documents of that time, one might be surprised by contradictory views with respect to women's employment and the family. Some female authors stressed the importance of motherhood, which allowed women to behave more "naturally"³⁴ than men and enabled them to judge matters in a more "passionate" rather than "rational" manner, both qualities which rendered women ill-suited for a number of art professions³⁵. Other GEDOK members denied an essential male superiority in these fields. In an article entitled: "Courage toward Architecture" it is stated in 1928 that female architects were by no means worse than their male colleagues, they only were trained worse: "Talent was not a matter of one's sex, but rather tied to that which is thus far not understood, i.e. heredity"³⁶. If GEDOK female artists had something in common despite all their differences regarding the image of women and women's employment, it was the effort to present only work of exceptional quality to the public. The sometimes very critical reviews by male journalists in the local papers made it evident that keeping up standards was vital.

"LADIES WITH INFLUENTIAL NAMES" – WOMAN ARTISTS AND PATRONS IN HANNOVER³⁷

It was common for the Hannoverian GEDOK group to meet at a person's home, since in the first years there were no official meeting rooms available. Striking is the fact that many of the members – artists as well as patrons – lived in generous apartments or homes in the best areas of the city, often with large properties. Rightly so, a newspaper in 1930 stated that GEDOK was comprised of "ladies with influential names"³⁸. Based on birth or marriage, both artists and patrons counted between 6 and 10% aristocrats within their ranks. Among the patrons were wives of representatives of art and culture at the local and provincial levels, the wife of the director of the Hannover general museum, the former city director, and the wives of high-ranking civil servants and well-known industrialists.

Among the GEDOK artists – especially among the painters and graphic designers – it is apparent that followers of more conventional styles coexisted with the (few) women who are named in connection with Hannover's pronounced avant-garde blossoming during the



Fig. 3
The “new woman”: a secretary in a Berlin broadcasting company, 1931.

1920s³⁹. Generally, however, one can say that not all GEDOK members were financially as well off as the records might suggest. Testimonies of hard times are known. For instance, a GEDOK painter described the ice flowers on the windows of her small bachelor apartment in a loving manner: Previously she had resided in a modified dog house⁴⁰. One of her colleagues, also single at the time, tells of her life in an attic with a view of rats dancing and garbage piling up⁴¹.

Especially in the 30's, several GEDOK artists asked for financial aid from the city. When these women actually did receive assistance, it was not only from the city and provincial offices, but also from the GEDOK itself. But this was more of a moral gesture than a recognition of financial needs. Other GEDOKs in other cities pursued direct methods to support the needy artists during the economic crisis, among them fund raising, bridge competitions, food banks and the distribution of painting supplies⁴². The Hannover GEDOK rejected such methods and was convinced that direct material support would be “demeaning”⁴³. Instead, a financial aid fund was established. This fund, however, did not receive much

member support despite permanent appeals from the board. If one takes a look at the social events organized by the GEDOK, one can conclude that financial problems were not responsible for lack of support for the fund. For instance, the ticket for an cabaret evening in the GEDOK cost 8 RM – the equivalent of a worker's daily income or 20 kg of bread ⁴⁴. So, the lack of empathy for other people's poverty rather than one's own material circumstances seem to be responsible for the fact that the charitable element did not play much of a role among Hannover's ladies with influential names.

CONCLUSION

GEDOK's character was determined by its members' social status. The important names allowed the GEDOK to develop a healthy self-esteem. If an event ended in the red, municipal or provincial authorities picked up the tab. This was even the case after the Nazis came into power – protection from the highest level was also guaranteed ⁴⁵. During World War II too the institution was safe due to its non-political partisanship and its patronage by influential persons. But this also forced the GEDOK to conform – and here lies the key to another aspect of GEDOK's work and, beyond this, to civil women's associations in general: these women profited from their personal, family, and social networks in many ways by being related or acquainted with influential figures in society. These contacts engendered self-esteem and a certain financial security, while still maintaining boundaries. The relationships worked as long as these influential men were not undermined in their authority. Rules and laws of their social class had to be respected, should the female artists or patrons not want to risk their positions in society. This especially is true for the rules governing women in the arts and the art market ⁴⁶. Women artists and women patrons – not only in the GEDOK, not only in Hannover, and not at all only in Germany – in the 1920s and 1930s were still ruled by traditional rules and traditional role expectations.

NOTES

- ¹ This is the title of an exhibition catalogue: *Profession ohne Tradition. 125 Jahre Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen*, ed. by the Berlinische Galerie, Berlin 1992.
- ² Letter of the art dealer Hermann Gotter to the Art Gallery of the Landesmuseum Hannover, 11.09.1936 (Landesmuseum Hannover, file II.2.1.a/ II.2.2.a: Ankauf alte und neue Meister 1936-37).
- ³ *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, Bd. 14, 1881, pp. 498-499.
- ⁴ See Ines Katenhusen, "... das Bedürfnis nach geistiger Anregung". *GEDOK-Künstlerinnen und Kunstfreundinnen im Hannover der zwanziger und dreissiger Jahre*, in Schröder K.E.C. (ed), *Adlige, Arbeiterinnen und... Frauenleben in Stadt und Region Hannover*, Bielefeld 1999, pp. 211-239.
- ⁵ See Berger R., *Malerinnen auf dem Weg ins 20. Jahrhundert. Kunstgeschichte als Sozialgeschichte*, Cologne 1982, pp. 78 ff. Nobs-Greter R., *Die Künstlerin und ihr Werk in der deutschsprachigen Kunstgeschichtsschreibung*, Zurich 1984, pp. 60 ff. Stelzl U., 'Die Zweite Stimme im Orchester'. *Aspekte zum Bild der Künstlerin in der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung*, in Frandsen D., Huffmann U. (eds), *Frauen in Forschung und Lehre*, Bonn 1982, pp. 39-54. Muysers C., 'In der Hand der Künstlerinnen fast allein liegt es fortan...' *Zur Geschichte und Rezeption bildender Künstlerinnen von der Gründerzeit bis zur Weimarer Republik*, "Feministische Studien", 14. Jhg., 1996, pp. 50-65. Schulz I., *Die Frau als Künstlerin. Über das Leben und Werk von Künstlerinnen früher und heute*, Hamburg 1986.

- ⁶ Buddemann Dr., *Warum Kunstgewerblerin?* in: *Frau und Gegenwart, vereinigt mit Neue Frauenkleidung und Frauenkultur*, H. 10, Karlsruhe 1929/1930, p. 364.
- ⁷ See Muysers.
- ⁸ See Nipperdey T., *Wie das Bürgertum die Moderne fand*, Berlin 1988, pp. 10f. Vgl. Lenman R., *Painters, Patronage, and the Art Market in Germany, 1850-1914*, "Past and Present", 123, 1989, pp. 109-144, pp. 132-133.
- ⁹ Scheffler K., *Die Frau und die Kunst*, Berlin 1908, p. 17.
- ¹⁰ Schulz, pp. 3-4.
- ¹¹ See Berger, p. 144, and on pp. 87-93 further information on the vocational situation. Schulz, pp. 18-19. Germaine Greer, *Das unterdrückte Talent. Die Rolle der Frauen in der bildenden Kunst*, Berlin-Frankfurt-Vienna 1980, p. 325.
- ¹² Sauer M., *Diletantinnen und Malweiber. Künstlerinnen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, in *Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst e.V.*, Berlin (ed), *Das verborgene Museum I. Dokumentation der Kunst von Frauen in Berliner öffentlichen Sammlungen*, Berlin 1987, pp. 25 ff.
- ¹³ See Sauer, pp. 21 ff.; Nobs-Greter, pp. 61-62.; Berger, pp. 78-86.
- ¹⁴ Muysers, pp. 52 ff.
- ¹⁵ Jestaedt K., Fuhrmann D., 'Alles das zu erlernen, was für eine erfolgreiche Ausübung eines Berufs von ihnen gefordert wird'. *Die Zeichen- und Malschule des Vereins der Berliner Künstlerinnen*, in *Ausstellungskatalog Profession ohne Tradition. 125 Jahre Verein der Berliner Künstlerinnen*, Berlin 1992, pp. 353-367.
- ¹⁶ See Gatermann B., 'Malweiber'. *Bildende Künstlerinnen in den zwanziger Jahren*, in *Ausstellungskatalog Hart und Zart. Frauenleben 1920-1970*, Berlin 1990, pp. 99-105.
- ¹⁷ See Frevert U., *Frauen-Geschichte. Zwischen Bürgerlicher Verbesserung und Neuer Weiblichkeit*, Frankfurt 1986, esp. pp. 171-172.
- ¹⁸ Sauer, pp. 22 ff.
- ¹⁹ Frevert, pp. 171 ff.
- ²⁰ GEDOK is the acronym of *Gemeinschaft Deutscher und Österreichischer Künstlerinnenvereine aller Kunstgattungen*.
- ²¹ Weber A.-K., *Die Geschichte des Verbandes der Künstlerinnen und Kunstfreunde e.V. (GEDOK)*, thesis, University of Oldenburg, pp. 57 ff., unpublished, GEDOK Archives Hannover.
- ²² Froelich E., *Jahresbericht*, "GEDOK – Jahrbuch", 2, 1929, p. 1.
- ²³ Froelich E., *Jahresbericht*, "GEDOK – Jahrbuch", 1, 1928/29, p. 3.
- ²⁴ Membership lists as indicated in the yearbooks; see also GEDOK Archives Hannover, file 1929-1944.
- ²⁵ See GEDOK Archives Hannover, file 1929-1944. See also the GEDOK Hannover news in the journal of the Frauenstadtbund Hannover, *Frauenstadtbund (FSB)*, (January 1929 - June 1933).
- ²⁶ GEDOK Hannover news, October 1941 (typed copy, GEDOK Archives Hannover). See Dietzler A., 'Gleichschaltung' des Kulturlebens in Hannover. *Ein vielschichtiger Prozeß*, unpublished copy (Archives of the City of Hannover), (1994), p. 37 f. Bremer I., *Zur Geschichte der GEDOK. 1929. Ein Jahr von Bedeutung*, in *50 Jahre GEDOK. 1927-1977*, Hannover 1977, p. 33.
- ²⁷ *Hannoversche Frauenvereine III*. GEDOK, *Hannoverscher Kurier*, December 16, 1931.
- ²⁸ GEDOK Archives Hannover, letter of Else Froelich to the Board of Directors, June 17, 1932.
- ²⁹ FSB, vol. 1/1, January 1929. As concerns the history see FSB, vol. 5/ 6, June 1933. See Reagin N.R., *Die bürgerliche Frauenbewegung vor 1933*, in Schröder C., Sonneck M. (ed), *Ausser Haus. Frauengeschichte in Hannover*, Hannover 1994, pp. 137-145, esp. p. 145.
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- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ See Katenhusen I., *Kunst und Politik. Hannovers Auseinandersetzungen mit der Moderne in der Weimarer Republik*, Hannover 1998.
- ⁴⁰ Reinhardt, p. 11. As concerns Grethe Jürgens: Seiler H., *Grethe Jürgens*, Göttingen 1976. Katenhusen, *Kunst und Politik*, pp. 262 ff.
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- ⁴² See Else Froelich's talk on the occasion of the female patrons on December 3, 1931 (typescript, GEDOK Archives Hannover).
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ Mlynek K., *Hannover in der Weimarer Republik und unter dem Nationalsozialismus 1918-1945*, in Röhrbein W.R. (ed.), *Geschichte der Stadt Hannover*, vol. 2, Hannover 1994, p. 450.
- ⁴⁵ See GEDOK's letter to the City Administration, January 3, 1936, also the letter of the local head of the Reichskammer der bildenden Künste to the City Administration, January 21, 1936 (Archives of the City of Hannover, HR 15, No. 818).
- ⁴⁶ See Reagin, *Bürgerliche Frauenbewegung*, pp. 141 f.



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SOURCES

Margarethe Jonas wurde durch eigenen Fleiss, ohne eigentlichen Unterricht eine Künstlerin von nicht geringer Bedeutung, deren vortrefflich ausgeführte Porträts hinsichtlich der Ausführung wie der Ähnlichkeit nichts zu wünschen übrig lassen. Sie lebte in günstigen Verhältnissen und arbeitete zu ihrem Vergnügen. Mehrere ihrer vorzüglichsten Arbeiten besitzt das Städtische Museum ihrer Vaterstadt und einige ausgezeichnete Porträts das Taubstummneninstitut daselbst.

Margarethe Jonas has become an artist of great significance through her hard work, although she never enjoyed any formal training. Her exceptional portraits are outstanding in their execution, as well as their resemblance to the subject. She was well off, and able to work for pleasure only. Several of her best paintings are owned by her home town museum and several are with the local Deaf-Mute Institute.

(Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie/ General German Biography, 1936)

Die Kreativität der Frau erschöpft sich im Gebärakt, keine der Künste kann sie ausüben, am wenigsten die Architektur und die Musik, gerade der Körpersprache des Tanzes ist sie noch befähigt; Frauen sind so mittelmäßig und dilettantisch wie die Männer berufen.

The creativity of a woman is limited to childbearing. She is not able to excell in any of the fine arts, let alone architecture and music. At best she is capable of dancing. Women are inferior to men, and foolish as men say them to be.

(Karl Scheffler, Art Historian, 1908)

Der Streit der Parteien soll in den Parlamenten mit aller Deutlichkeit und Schärfe ausgefochten werden, aber in den Frauenorganisationen darf dieser Streit keinen Platz finden. Es gibt eine Weltanschauung, die alle Frauen und alle Frauen binden sollte, das ist das Sittengesetz in der Brust.

The dispute of the parties may be fought in parliament, but there is no room for it within women's groups. There is one personal outlook shared by all women - and rightly so. These are the morals in one's bosom.

(Civil Women's Group, Hannover, 1929)

Architektinnen waren in der Vergangenheit nicht schlechter als ihre männlichen Kollegen, sondern nur schlechter ausgebildet. Talent ist nicht an das Geschlecht, wohl aber an die unfasslichen Begriffe der Vererbung gebunden.

Female architects were by no means worse than their male colleagues, they only were trained worse. Talent was not a matter of one's sex, but rather tied to that which is thus far not understood, i.e. heritage.

(GEDOK Hannover, 1928/ 29)

