3. Modern Masculinity as Battleground of Identity Politics. Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character* (1903)

Following on from the previous analysis on Hans Blüher's "invention" of the *Männerbund* this chapter places a second influential response to the "masculinity-crisis-discourse" in the *fin de siècle* at its centre. Before discussing Otto Weininger's work in detail, the parallel development of the "masculine ideal" and the process of European nation-building is briefly sketched out.

At the time of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, the noble figures depicted by the French painter Jacques-Louis David and tempestuous, if dreamy, war heroes like the Kleistean *Prince of Homburg* embodied a new society, or at least a new, bourgeois ethos. Especially the German "wars of liberation" mark the beginning of the national myths of heroism and sacrifice. The volunteers of the Free Corps experienced a new model of equality and in giving their lives became patriots "who gladly laid down their lives on the altar of the fatherland" (Mosse 1977: 1). Poets and writers created a heroic national myth of masculinity, defined as the embodiment of the new ideals of law, virtue, morality and courage. At the same time, a cultural discourse contrary to this ethos grew up even then, and was intensified around 1900, among roving, nature-loving young people. This discourse found its first high point in Romanticism. In the unrequited lover *Werther*, and even more in the slacker good-for-nothing or the dreamer *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, concepts of delicate, partly unsocialized and above all "feminine" masculinity appeared alongside the normative models of rationally controlled citizen and courageous warrior. This shaping of the artist as an "effeminate man" was not "about the re-evaluation of the feminine, but rather about the valorization of masculine femininity" (von Braun 1989: 57-58). "The word 'effeminate' [also] came into general usage during the 18th century, indicating an unmanly softness

and delicacy" (Mosse 1995: 9). In spite of the revaluation that can be observed in romantic discourse, both the upheaval of the patriarchal order and the filial quest for identity continued into the middle of the 19th century, especially in the context of literary self-reflection (cf. Hohendahl 2002: 56-57). According to the American historian and specialist in masculinity studies, George Mosse (1995), this literary revaluation failed to call into question the normative national model of masculinity. Did that change with the German youth movement around 1900? In the turn-of-the-century *Wandervogel* not merely isolated, romantic (male) individuals but also a male collective (later called the male-band) and part of bourgeois youth acquired "female" and "erotic" qualities. As shown in chapter two Hans Blüher described the youth movement as an "erotic phenomenon" (Blüher 1912: 1). And we should also bear in mind that, with the slow detachment of sexuality from reproduction, with the women's movement, and also through the widespread awareness of male hysteria, nervousness and homoeroticism made increasingly evident by medicine, psychoanalysis and psychiatry, questions about male identity and sexuality pressed in a disturbing way into the discourses of cultural and political self-understanding.

As Uwe Hohendahl (2002) emphasized in a sketch of the problem in the "Crisis of Masculinity in the Late 18th Century," the *Storm and Stress* rebels who roved out from the shattered patriarchy and Enlightenment's cult of rationality could represent their bodies as the incarnation of both an aesthetic ideal and civic virtue. The second half of the 18th century also saw the birth of a stereotype of masculinity still effective today. Mosse dates the creation of a modern male ideal and a discourse of political masculinity to the same time as the rise of bourgeois society, that is, between the second half of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th. It was a slow process and many of the older, aristocratic norms and practices (such as duelling) took a long time to die, but eventually the bourgeois forms prevailed and the body itself (instead of its adornments) became the chief signifier of manliness. This image of man first appeared in France with the French Revolution and its ideal of the heroic fighter and martyr, embodied in ancient Greek figures such as Hercules and the Spartan king Leonidas. In the German-speaking countries, it was above all the aesthetic ideal of Laocoon and then models of bellicose heroism that developed around the so-called "Wars of Liberation" against Napoleon. In both societies, nationalism, a movement that emerged parallel to modern masculinity, played an important role because it adopted the masculine stereotype as a means of self-expression. Parallel to the establishment of a *religion*

civile for the nation, the idealized male body and the hero who knows how to bridle his strength were held up by artists like David as symbols of moral beauty. Jacques-Louis David painted his heroic *Leonidas at the Thermopylae* from 1813-1814. He used the ancient costume of Sparta and the Greek struggle for democracy against the superior force of the Persians to represent the heroes of the French revolution. The Spartan King Leonidas is shown against the backdrop of the mountain pass at the moment before he sacrifices himself and his 300 soldiers to defend Greek democracy; the noble and statuesque male body emphasizes the classical allusions. In the context of European nation-building, this new (ancient) model of ideal masculinity represented heroic self-assertion over death and the triumph of national spirit and progress.

Fig. 5: Jacques-Louis David: Leonidas at Thermopylae (1813-1814), Louvre, Paris.

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Mosse was one of the first to point out the complex relationship that has existed since the Enlightenment, and was particularly pronounced in the early 19th century, between the development of the bourgeois stereotype of mas-

culinity, the formation of the bourgeois nation and state, and an expressly political aesthetic. The modern "aesthetics of masculinity" was based on the imitation of ancient body images and postures. The ideal of the masculine body in ancient sculptures, characterized by solid contours and clear lines, would come to represent the political ideal of the nation. According to Mosse, the most effective form of this development was indebted to classicism's discourse on ethical beauty. Across Europe, the noble hero who dominates his instincts would now splendidly reflect the civic virtues and health of the state on, as it were, the very marble of his skin. The noble proportions of this white male body displayed discipline, self-control, loyalty, courage, obedience and, last but not least, the readiness to die. In Germany, especially at the time of the Wars of Liberation in 1813, the ideal of masculinity as a symbol of individual and national renewal played a decisive role (cf. Mosse 1990, 1995).

A momentous difference between the German love of country and the French or English sentiment was, according to Klaus Heinrich (Rack/Heinrich 2006: 100), that in the German case "nationalism […] was a substitute for a nation that was not there." Not least because of their compensatory role, both the imagined nation[1] and the stereotype of symbolic masculinity that stood for it underwent a phantasmatic exaggeration. This had already been expressed a few years before the Wars of Liberation in Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (*Reden an die deutsche Nation*) of 1807/08 and their emphatic equation of the heavenly and earthly German nation. Promptly thereafter, the Romantic poets of the struggle against Napoleon would conjure up the imaginary fatherland in wildly bloodthirsty metaphors:

> The imaginary fatherland undergoes a sacralization, the heroes become martyrs of the holy German cause. Christian and national motives flow together no later than when the Germans want to seal their union with "unadulterated blood." Beginning in the second half of the 19th century, the theme of blood removes itself more and more from Christology and is transformed, via a naturalization of morality, into the "concern for the purity of the blood." (Brunotte 2015: 30; quotations within the quotation, Foucault 1978: 178)

1 Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" refers to the fact that modern nations are generally to be understood as "felt" and media-produced communities. (Anderson 2006 [1983]: Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, London: Verso.)

In general it is no surprise that the "culture and ideology of hegemonic masculinity [also that of the martyr of the fatherland, U.B.] go hand in hand with the culture and ideology of hegemonic nationalism." (Nagel 2010: 249) Above all two scholars have decisively shaped the concept and theory of masculinity in gender studies and also as an independent field of research: one, the previously mentioned historian George Mosse, whose Jewish family was forced to flee Nazi-Germany to New York, and the other the Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell, whose name was Robert Connell before her sex change. Connell's book *Masculinities* (1995/2005) is still one of the most important approaches to masculinity studies. Building on Antonio Gramci's theory of hegemony as rule by agreement and consent, she coined the term "hegemonic masculinity." The special feature of her approach to gendered power dynamics is the integration of male-male relationality into the play of patriarchal power. For her the currently ruling configuration of hegemonic masculinity is defined not only in relation to subjugated women but also in relation to other forms of masculinity, or in her own words, "[h]egemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to subordinated masculinities" (Connell 2005: 77), such as homosexual men or men with a different skin color. Mosse created the term "countertypes" to define the constitutive Others of the above mentioned political-soteriological overloading of the white heterosexual masculine stereotype in nationalist discourse. (cf. Mosse 1995) They came increasingly into play at the end of the 19th century and may be seen as paranoid fission products representing the sick, ugly, impure and amoral. Before focussing on Otto Weininger's influential creation of a simultaneously misogynist, homophobe and antisemitic figure of the Other, this chapter will briefly sketch the outlines and central characteristics of the white, heterosexual and above all beautiful male norm. Mosse focuses his enquiry on the role and function of an ideal *Image of Man* (1995) within the process and representation of modern European nation-building. In this book he analyzes how the ennobled male body itself rather than its adornments became the chief signifier of ideal manliness. The beautiful masculine body, defined through allusions to ancient Greece and principles of harmony, proportion and (self) control, ensures both dynamic virility and social health and order. According to Mosse, every white heterosexual man could in theory ascend through processes of self-mastery and drill to the elevated domain of ideal political masculinity, which transcends the limitations of a particular gender:

> At the time when political imagery like the national flag or the Jacobin's *cocarde* became potent symbols, the human body itself took on symbolic meaning. Modern masculinity was to define itself through an ideal of manly beauty that symbolized virtue. […]. The masculine stereotype was strengthened, however, by the existence of a negative stereotype of men who not only failed to measure up to the ideal but who in body and soul were its foil, projecting the exact opposite of true masculinity. (ibid: 6)

This hegemonic model of middle-class masculinity was invoked not only as a symbol of personal and national regeneration, but also as basic to the self-definition of modern society. The "quiet grandeur" of the modernized ancient stereotype would henceforth reflect the bourgeois virtues and health of the state. The female national allegorical figures of *Germania, Britannia* and even *Marianne*, on the other hand, served in their statuesque chastity and respectability as guardians of tradition. They remained, according to Mosse, excluded from the politicized model of beauty represented by ideal form and hardened muscle. The connection between physical and moral constitution established by the anthropology of the Enlightenment was to be further developed scientifically in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, particularly in Lavater's theory of physiognomy (cf. Mosse 1995: 26).

The true founder of this modern classicist "aesthetic of masculinity", however, is held to be the German art historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768). Winckelmann was born in Stendhal in the Altmark region in 1717 and came from a lower middle-class background. In 1755 [English 1765] he published his book *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks* (*Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst*), which made him immediately famous. In the same year he travelled to Rome, where he was to live and work until his death. For Winckelmann, the study of the ancient Greeks, to which he devoted himself personally and professionally, meant much more than an aesthetic undertaking. The Winckelmann hero also represented an ethical ideal in the general classicist program of "noble simplicity and quiet grandeur," (Winckelmann, transl. Fuesli 1765: 30/31). In his classicistic striving for purity, Winckelmann stood against not only his Roman contemporary Piranesi and his somber visions of an underworld-like city, but also the baroque figures of Giovanni Bernini, which populated many Roman squares and displayed all the gestures of desire, violence and impermanence. Winckelmann's Greek ideal, on the contrary, was statuesque, purely masculine and noble in its proportions,

without a gram of excess fat and expressive of sublime self-control. Correct observation and, above all, imitation of ancient sculptures should, according to Winckelmann, lead not only to a new art but also "make life whole." Not only the German *Gymnasium* and German art history were encouraged to learn from the Greeks; every citizen could learn from them formative "discipline" and proper "bearing." Thus Winckelmann's work already contained the life-reforming impulse that became so effective in the physical exercise and gymnastics movement in the wake of the 19th century. The idealization of the healthy and hardened naked male body in Greek sculpture signified at once two things: its purification of all sensuality and its neutralization. In Winckelmann's interpretation, the *Apollo Belvedere* is as aloof from the shallows of individual peculiarities as it is from manifestly erotic carnality. In this emphasis on the ideal purity and divine beauty of the sculptured male body, we cannot overlook, as Heinrich Detering (1995) has noted, a homoerotic undertone. There is no lack of ironic tragedy in the fact that precisely this male ideal, arising as it did in a homoerotic context, was to become in the course of the 19th century the hegemonic model of masculinity in whose name homosexuals were excluded, pathologized and persecuted. (see Brunotte 2013: 80)

At the core of Winckelmann's still abstract anthropological ideal is the demand for harmony between dynamics and order. Mosse particularly emphasizes the role of Winckelmann's well-known interpretation of Laocoon in the construction of the modern stereotype of masculinity, which conforms to the triad of balance, proportion and moderation. According to Winckelmann, Laocoon shows no "anger" or any other affect even in the desperate death-struggle with the serpents, but is rather full of self-control. The pain of the body and the greatness of soul are set against one another in such a way that they hold the entire body in balanced tension. Emulating this great paragon, the ideal man should have his inner "rage" and desires under control through discipline. According to Simon Richter, "these two forces, pain and soul, are held in a permanent synchronic tension. Indeed this tension produces the single expressive contour that figures Laocoon's body" (Richter 1992: 45). As we can read in the following quotation (in the translation by Fuesli) from his famous book, Winckelmann describes the model of an ideal *habitus* vis-à-vis the pain and expectation of death as a "semiotic system of representation" (ibid: 44):

Fig. 6: Laocoon, Vatican Museum.

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> The last and most eminent characteristic of the Greek works is a noble simplicity and sedate [quiet] grandeur in Gesture and Expression. […] thus in the face of Laocoon this soul shines with full lustre, not confined to the face, amidst the most violent sufferings. Pangs piercing every muscle, every labouring nerve; pangs which we almost feel ourselves, while we consider – not the face, nor the most expressive parts – only the belly contracted by excruciating pains: these, however, I say, exert not themselves with violence, either in the face or gesture. […] the struggling body and the supporting mind exert themselves with equal strength, may balance all the frame. […] The expression of so great a soul is beyond the force of nature. (Winckelmann 1765: 30/31)

Henceforth a well-trained and as it were asexual, abstract male body was to be staged as a national symbol in the bourgeois societies of Europe (and later the

USA). This pure male body and its noble proportions display the core bourgeois virtues: discipline, self-control, loyalty, courage, obedience and readiness to die. The "massive popularization of the idealized male body on the 'purified' Winckelmannian basis of, above all, Greek sculpture, can hardly be underestimated" (Schmale 2003: 170). Winckelmann's body-soul model gained currency with classicistic elites and their artists "through the mass of copyists and media duplication, spreading into the gymnastic ideals of a Jahn and volunteer armies, and ultimately permeating the entire imaginary world of the nation with the abstract ideal of the male body" (ibid: 171). The social and cultural production of the modern male *habitus* as a biopolitical model, through drill, sports and paramilitary training, reflects the double aspect of gender-enactment and gender-embodiment.

With the help of the new masculine ideal, the rebelling sons were able to break free of their empirical existence around 1800 in the form of revolutionaries or gymnasts and volunteer soldiers, and set themselves up as symbols of the new patriotic universal. Like the patriarchal two sphere gender order, this split between politicized "neutral" virility and empirical sexuality was then called into question in fin-de- siècle "crisis of masculinity" discourse. This was owing not least to the accelerated historical dynamic brought about by the suffrage movement and the rising public visibility of those oppressed by the bourgeois class and gender order. Together with a gradual loosening of bourgeois morality and the waxing discourse on male hysteria and homosexuality in science and society, the bourgeois patriarchal construct of hegemonic masculinity as a neutral ideal of the universal began to suffer fundamental cracks. More and more it came into direct tension with sensuality, nervousness and ambiguous sexuality, and thus in a frighteningly different way with the concepts of the *terra incognita* of imagined femininity. Exactly this fact, however, "this permeation by the sexual, expresses itself at the end of the 19th century as the phantasm of a feminization of man [and yes, finally as a fearful vision, UB], of a feminization of culture" (Bublitz 1998: 39). Now beginning to act as Oedipus or Adonis, the subject of the Enlightenment as representative of the universal, which was encoded masculinely but was obliged to be as neutral as Odysseus tethered to the ship mast, ends up roaming the uncertain terrain of gender tension – a tension which, as a dynamic of knowing, as the story of Paradise and the Hebrew verb *jadà*[2] teach, is not snared in the limits of sex-

2 The Hebrew verb *jadà* means both sexual and spiritual "knowing." It linguistically sums up the gist of the Paradise story with its protagonists of Serpent, Eve and Apple on one

uality. It affects all processes of knowing, just as it by no means stops at the borders of "biological" sex drawn as bulwarks against comingling. On the contrary, according to Klaus Heinrich, "gender tension (Geschlechterspannung) also exists in each individual" (Heinrich 1995: 206). If now the male subject, which as rational subject detached from its sensual concreteness must embody the whole of the nation and the state, becomes sexual and nervous, then within the framework of the bourgeois gender polarity, as reconstructed by Karin Hausen (1978), this means it becomes feminine.

The discovery of bisexuality by Fliess and Freud and Magnus Hirschfeld's theory of intermediate sexual types is only a further milestone in a general process of awareness in which male desire gains in terrifying ambiguity. In this context, Freud's theorem of a purely male libido too turns out to be a defense thrown up against the dissolution of difference and identity. Sexuality, however, also figures as the ventriloquist of the more extensive shocks delivered to form and difference by the process of modernization in the upheavals around 1900. If, as Albrecht Koschorke (2000: 152) emphasizes, confusing body states of all kinds "present themselves in contemporary semantics as an intrusion into the male constitution of the body, it is because categories such as clarity, demarcation, distinction are given the predicate 'male,' while those such as comingling, dissolution and formlessness are given the predicate 'feminine.'" No wonder then that in the fierce cultural crisis debates of the time, both in Vienna and in Berlin, the supposedly moral "degeneration" of society was always described "as a crisis of male identity, […] at whose center a nightmarish feminization of culture flashes up" (Bublitz 1998: 19). In general, a now predominantly defensive, dualistic and naturalistic gender struggle discourse conveys far more than the real gender struggles, because "the gender difference [now] becomes a suitable *metaphor* for other, more abstract crises of differentiation" (Koschorke 2000: 152-153) and thus a salient medium of modern reflection itself.

Michel Foucault, in the first volume of *History of Sexuality* (1978/1979), delineates the 19th century cultural process of the construction of homosexuality as a gender identity. He addresses the knowledge production initiated by sexualities in close relation to the evolving new power structures of modern society. Formerly in civil law, "sodomy" was a crime whose perpetrator was condemned only as a legal subject. Then, around 1900, homosexuality became

side and Adam on the other. Knowledge of wisdom is not possible without eros; it can be achieved only within the gender tension.

a sickness, relabeled and "medicalized." (Foucault 1978/1979) The new "science of sexuality" fostered increased attention on and the discursive production of so-called "perversions." At the same time, supported by European urbanization, an early homosexual rights movement was inaugurated in Berlin, whose first representative was the Jewish physician and Social Democrat Magnus Hirschfeld (cf. Beachy 2015: 85-101).

Antisemitism and Misogyny: The Case of Otto Weininger

As Jacques Le Rider and others have noted, in both Berlin and Vienna the "crisis of modernity-" (Le Rider 1993: 17) discourse condensed the political-cultural crisis into a perceived "crisis of masculinity." No other work of the turn of the century better gathers together, at once pathographically and seismographically, all the insights, fears and defense mechanisms of the polyphonic, simultaneously misogynous and antisemitic gender struggle discourse than Otto Weininger's bestseller *Sex and Character* (*Geschlecht und Charakter*) of 1903. According to Christine Achinger (2013: 122), "Weininger was not (only) defending the 'male' rational, bounded subject against the threat arising from sexual urges associated with 'woman,' but also against a threat to the autonomous subject emanating from modern society itself, associated in Weininger's work particularly clearly with the 'Jewish mind'." Jacques Le Rider (1993) and Sander Gilman (1995) have already pointed out the intersection of the figure of the "effeminate Jew" and the "modern woman" in *Sex and Character*. The first part of the work, which is more positivistic and medical, was submitted as a dissertation to the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Vienna. A year later, the 23-year-old Jewish doctoral student who had converted to Christianity published the work as a monograph, now supplemented by a second, more psychological-speculative part. "The book stuck the 'nerve of the times;' it belonged to a kind of 'philosophical journalism' that provided the bourgeoisie with a *Weltanschauung* until World War II" (Brude-Firnau 1995: 172). Shortly thereafter, the author committed suicide. For Gilman, the misogynous and antisemitic work, which immediately became a bestseller and decisively influenced both fin-de-siècle popular and scholarly discourse on women and Jews, is an expression of "intense, undisguised self-hatred" (Gilman 1995: 103).

The book is a response to both the often imputed "crisis of masculinity" and the increasing role of the women's movement in turn of the century Vienna. At the center of its radically modernity-critical remarks is the danger

that emanates from a "feminization" of culture. Since for Weininger women primarily embody sexuality, the question he poses from the start is "What is woman?" (Gilman 1995: 173), and the question is animated by the deeply ethical concern to protect culture against the threat of female domination. Although proceeding from the thesis of a general bisexuality (cit. Le Rider 1990: 140), which had just emerged at the time, he develops the comparison of M (ideal man) and W (ideal woman) for heuristic purposes. It is no accident that W is defined by solely negative qualitative characteristics. The subtitle of Weininger's work is "an investigation of principles" and "it is indeed a grandiose attempt to trace every aspect of human life back to ontological dualism – chiefly to the polarity of male and female principles and toward the end of the book, the opposition of the 'Aryan' and 'the Jew' as well" (Achinger 2013: 124). In the first part of the book, Weininger develops a critique of dichotomous conceptions of gender difference, arguing that the basis and reason for sexual attraction is the existence of both male and female aspects and qualities of mind in men and women. Thus the starting point of the work lies in the assumption of a general human bisexuality: "Between Man and Woman there are innumerable gradations" (2003: 13), expressed in "intermediate sexual forms" (2003: 13). In the second part, however, he creates the "ideal Man M" and the "ideal Woman W" as ontologically different and "begins to identify M and W with empirical men and women […] and largely adheres to a dualist model of gender, governed by strict polarity" (Achinger: 2013: 130). His fears are focused to begin with on female sexuality, and women embody more or less the threat of the modern sexualization of life. As a genophobic, Weininger particularly fears the dissolution of traditional images of chaste masculinity and sees male chastity being held up to ridicule:

> It is now apparent from where this demand for "seeing life," the Dionysian view of the music hall, the cult of Goethe in so far as he follows Ovid, and this quite modern "coitus-cult" comes. There is no doubt that the movement is so widespread that very few men have the courage to acknowledge their chastity, preferring to pretend that they are regular Don Juans. Sexual excess is held to be the most desirable characteristic of a man of the world, and sexuality has attained such pre-eminence that a man is doubted unless he can, as it were, show proofs of his prowess. (Weininger 1906: 242)

These men are in the process of submitting to the female values of sexuality, understanding masculinity only sexually and no longer "purely" and in an ethical sense. Although Weininger adopts the thesis of bisexuality, the poles of

the gender struggle are sharply distinguished for him: "W, the female principle is, then, nothing more than sexuality; M, the male principle is sexual and something more" (Weininger 1906: 78). As the embodiment of sin, woman threatens the entire culture, for she represents "negation, the opposite pole of the Godhead, the other possibility of humanity" (Weininger 1906: 218). In Berlin of 1918, too, Walter Rathenau, Weimar's first foreign minister, had similar thoughts about radical moral decline in the German Republic when he lamented that "women [seduce] to hedonism" and that the "insecure sense of maidenhood," which slumbers in every woman, is perverted into "the disposition of the prostitute ("den "haltlosen Mädchensinn, der in jedem Weibe schlummere, zum "Dirnensinn" verkehre"). "Here is the blame," so Rathenau's fearful fantasy, "for the rising up of primitive, negro-like desires, tamed for millennia, in the women of our time, whose misery and degradation will horrify their grandchildren." (Rathenau 1918, in Lubich 1997: 251)

For Weininger, one thing is certain: in this fatherless "final battle of the sexes," redemption and salvation of the higher Christian culture is to be hoped for only in the absolute asceticism of the man, for "only if the man redeems himself from sex […] can he redeem woman" (Weininger 1906: 250). For Weininger, not even the chastity of men is sufficient surety, and at the end of his six hundred-pages work he calls for the abolition and sublation of the sexes, because "death will last so long as women bring forth, and truth will not prevail until the two become one, until from man and woman a third self, neither man nor woman, is evolved" (ibid: 250). In a very similar way to Hans Blüher, Otto Weininger was driven by the shock-like self-reflection brought about by the thesis of bisexuality. For Weininger, the homosexual, converted Jew, this self-reflection ultimately turned into self-hatred. In *Sex and Character* he adopts and reinforces the equation of women with (male) Jews that was already widespread in the antisemitic discourse of the time. He develops the figure of the "effeminate Jewish man" as a deviant antithesis of the Aryan male. For him it was ominously certain that "the male has everything within him, and, as Pico of Mirandola put it, only specializes in this or that part of himself. It is possible for him to attain to the loftiest heights, or to sink to the lowest depths; he can become like animals, or plants, or even like women, and so there exist woman-like female men." (Weininger 1906: 144). He sees the same possibility of adaptation with respect to Judaism. For Weininger, Judaism is therefore neither a "race" nor a "people," but a spiritual possibility for every human being:

> I must, however, make clear what I mean by Judaism: I mean neither a race nor a people nor a recognized creed. I think of it as a tendency of the mind, as a psychological constitution which is a possibility for all mankind, but which has become actual in the most conspicuous fashion only amongst the Jews. (Weininger 1906: 222)

As the virile man is confronted by the effeminate man, so too the modern Aryan man is confronted by the Jew: as a psychological possibility of himself. Christianity, as the author further emphasized in this passage of his book, already used Judaism to define itself by opposition. Weininger, and this is an essential part of understanding his work, was an antisemite and himself a Jew. As already mentioned, shortly after the publication of his book, at the age of twenty-three, he took his own life. In *Sex and Character*, antisemitism and misogyny come together inextricably in the thesis of the femininity of the Jews. Introductory to the chapter on "Judaism" (224), Weininger declares: "But some reflection will lead to the surprising result that Judaism is saturated with femininity, with precisely those qualities the essence of which I have shown to be in the strongest opposition to the male nature." At the end of his work, Weininger sees women and male Jews as without "mind" (225) and even "without an I" (225), and therefore without "intrinsic value" (225). According to him femininity and Judaism converge in secular-liberal modernity: "Judaism," he writes (239), "has reached its highest point since the time of Herod. Judaism is the spirit of modern life." To determine what this "Jewish" element of modernity primarily consists in, Weininger intones the conservative litany of the decline of culture and morals, and ends as follows: "Our age is not only the most Jewish but the most feminine. It is a time when art is content with daubs and seeks is inspiration in the sports of animals; the time of a superficial anarchy, with no feeling for Justice and the State. […] It is the time when coitus has not only been approved but has been enjoined as a duty" (ibid.: 239).

What the Jewish homosexual is to Blüher, the Jewish man in general is to Weininger: a paradoxical figure. "More womanish" and hence sexually less potent than the Aryan man, but also "more womanish" and therefore "always more absorbed by sexual matters than the Aryan, although he is notably less potent sexually and less liable to be enmeshed in a great passion" (Weninger 227). It is not sexuality as such, however, but the drive and urge to "coitus" and "match-making" in which, for Weininger, the ambivalent "essence" of women

with the equally questionable "essence" of the Jews converge (all terms from 227).

Woman, according to Weininger, strives with all her power to copulation. "For all this it is again manifest that femaleness and match-making are identical" (ibid: 212). "Match-making" is also "an organic disposition of the Jews" (cf. 227). If nothing else, their lack of understanding for all asceticism suggests this. Like "women," the "I-less" Jew is incapable of a life separated from the other people and demarcated by boundaries, and is instead as a "breaker down of limits" (227) and an "inborn communist" (ibid.), at once a mass man and a master of formlessness. Above all, however, he is a match-maker, because "Men who are match-makers have always a Jewish element in them" (ibid.). For Weininger, here the point of greatest correspondence between femininity and Judaism has been reached. Like the supposedly excessive sexual desire of Jews, woman's overwhelming desire for sexual union does not stop, in Weininger's emotionally charged imagination, with the private sphere but presses beyond into the social. Proceeding from her own coitus, which in match-making becomes the practice of "coitus in general," woman strives for union:

> Whether as a mother seeking reputable matrimony, or the Bacchante of the Venusberg, whether the woman wishes to be the foundress of a family, or is content to be lost in the maze of pleasure-seekers, she always is in relation to the general idea of the race as a whole of which she is an inseparable part, and she follows the instinct which most of all makes for community. (Weininger 1906: 212)

While the fear of comingling that Weininger expresses in this passage draws on antisemitic and misogynous discourses, it also points to a more general social ferment in a "crisis of modernity". It is no accident that, at the end of Weininger's project of salvation and purification, redemption consists in the extinction of the feminine and "woman." As we know, Blüher did not follow Weininger's model here. On the contrary, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, his response to the crisis of patriarchal masculinity and the women's movement was a new model of power that simultaneously appropriates homoerotism and projects femininity on the "homosexual Jew": the male band (*Männerbund*) as the elite of a purely male society.

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