

# Book review of dagmar herzog: intimacy and exclusion: religious politics in pre- ...

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



In this book review, firstly the book's content and general structure will be analyzed and presented, followed by an analysis, which historical research approach the author utilized and how she applied this approach regarding the choice of primary sources to substantiate her argumentation. Finally I will reflect on her approach and assess the whether it was convincing.

### Review of Content

In the book *Intimacy and Exclusion: Religious Politics in Pre- Revolutionary Baden* from 1996, Dagmar Herzog elaborates on the significance of religious influence in the public debates on themes of sexuality, gender, love, politics, human rights and religiosity during a time that is depicted as a predominantly liberal secularization era in Baden. She aims to tackle the research question whether the historical view on German liberalism in Baden as the most progressive and clearly liberal state needs to be re- evaluated. Herzog advocates this re- evaluation based on the ambiguity in the discourse of support likewise intimacy and exclusion, two originally contradicting attributes. She wants to show, that the parts of religious history “ need to be reintegrated into the history of political development” in order to understand that the liberals did not implement a ready-made political concept, but to see this time as an ideological discourse of polarization, which shaped the liberal program. The main processes of that time, liberalization and secularization or religious predominance were interplay between political liberals and religious conservatives, wherein other historians missed the erratically discussions and instable political conditions in ideological conflicts.

Therefore, Herzog highlights how liberal Christian men discussed and struggled with institutions and representatives of the church(es) and inside their own political wing to define political campaigns that conquer the relationships of men and women as well as Christians and Jews, with the outcome of being a driving force in the 1848/1849 revolution of Germany. The book is separated in five chapters, which show different opinions and development of opinions on the role of sexuality, questions of Jewish Emancipation and equality of women.

### Chapter 1, Bodies & Soul

In this chapter, Herzog elaborates on the relationships of men, women and aspects of sexuality by providing argumentations from different liberal camps and strains inside the Catholic Church regarding themes of celibacy and mixed marriages.

Firstly, the inner dispute inside the Catholic Church regarding celibacy is examined. Therefore, Herzog outlines different opinions pro and contra the need for the celibacy vow for priests, wherein the discourse initiation can be ascribed to liberal reformers from inside the Catholic Church. In this dispute, the overall theme of the first chapter, sexuality, love and their influence on well-being, is already recognizable.

Herzog continues with the controversy, initiated by the opposite side of the Catholic Church, the conservatives, over mixed marriages between Catholics and Protestants. She exemplifies the discourse between liberals and conservatives as well as in church-state relations, which changed during the

last decades of Enlightenment and French Revolution. Through both discussions and the implicated rise of even more conservative strains inside the religious theology (neo-orthodoxy) and religious political ultramontanism, the first chapter provides insight into the process of “ radicalization” of liberals to shape their own program and identity sharply contradicting to conservatism.

### Chapter 2, Jewish Emancipation and Jewish Difference

The second chapter of the book deals with the theme Jewish Emancipation and how German liberals unified their opinion from a very ambivalent position towards it. Herzog argues contradicting to the most common consensus that several leading liberals at this time were definitely against Jewish Emancipation. To underline this ambivalence, she exemplifies their protest and caveats. As the controversy regarding mixed marriages and the Catholic Church’s position developed, German liberals identified themselves with ideals of equality, liberty and religious tolerance and therefore changed their attitude towards Jewish Emancipation and became proponents. Herzog describes this process as a conjunction from intrinsic inconsistent motivation and growing hostility to neo-orthodoxy, and highlights how this developmental process differs from the common historians’ assumption.

### Chapter 3, (Wo) Men’s Emancipation and Women’s Difference

In this chapter Herzog lays the focus on another group of people, which is dispossessed by law and society, but also was impacted by the consequences of the new self- identification of liberals, women. The author

examines, that the leading movement for women's equality was the religious dissenting movement in the 1840's. In detail, she works out that their attitude was very ambiguous. While proclaiming women's equality including voting rights, their calls for women's emancipation were bonded to conservative family roles with a fixed position for women in families and a strict presented difference from men. These images of women are depicted as contradictory. Furthermore, by exemplifying the ambiguity, Herzog illustrates that the role of religious liberals was different than the scholarly consensus claimed. While other scholars endorsed the dissenters' pro-women position, Herzog shows a distinctive attitude of dissenters men, by claiming that they were less concerned about the women's rights and equality, but more about their own hopes and fears.

#### Chapter 4, Problematics of Philosemitism

The fourth chapter of *Intimacy and Exclusion* focuses on the problems of the Philosemitism, wherein Herzog elaborates on the struggle within Christianity with on the on the one side rising conservative theological trends of Catholicism and Protestantism and on the other side rising reaction of liberal-left Christian dissenting movement around the topic of Jewish Emancipation. Herzog outlines that the common scholarly consensus on Baden in the 1840's as mainly liberal is more complex by highlighting the contradicting movements of both, evenly strong strains. Therefore, she provides for the liberal dissenting movement the example of the Mannheim Monday Club, where a small group aimed to gather "socially Jews and Christian, women and men". Her main focus of this Club lies on two members, Carl Scholl, a

dissenting movement's preacher, as well as Gustav von Struve, liberal lawyer and journalist. She examines their roles in the Mannheim Monday Club and discusses broadly their ambivalent opinion on Jews' rights and equality.

For the conservative response on the Monday Club, Herzog exemplified different opinion of Church officials. Furthermore, Herzog placed the opinion from the Jewish point of view in the context of the debate, and outlines that not all Jews agreed with the including approach of liberals by claiming that they saw themselves faced with a loss of identity when erasing the barriers between the religions.

#### Chapter 5, The Feminist Conundrum

For the fifth chapter, Herzog presents a female contemporary author of the 1840's, Louise Dittmar, to tackle the notion of gender equality at that time. For all other themes discussed previously in this book, no women's opinion was accessible. Even during the argumentation regarding women's equality, exclusively men were discussing on unstable gender categories and the definition of the just difference between men and women. Herzog provides a few further female feminists and political activists, who also argued for the difference of femininity from men, but Dittmar is depicted as different. Dittmar is applauded for her "theoretical and philosophical quality of the female condition" while elaborating on contradictions and coherences of ideological frameworks of liberalism and religious criticism.

#### Methods and Sources

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Dagmar Herzog argues for a historical re- evaluation of a time period in the middle of the 19th century in Baden, Germany. To face this task, she uses the method of cultural history in order to examine the structure of power in combination with text and meaning. In the following, firstly the theoretical background of the method of cultural history will be stressed followed by an analysis of this approaches' application by Herzog in each chapter.

### Method of Cultural History in Theory

Characteristic for the method of cultural history is to use many contemporary, primary sources to examine the political, economical, sociological, technological and cultural relationships. When it is possible to reconstruct the power structures and how people lived at the specific time, the different sources can be compared and investigated for intertextuality.

Through the analysis of different identities and narratives, the researcher can gain profound insights into the culture, by interpreting but also understanding the meaning of sources. Common norms and values, but also individual and collective opinions can be examined that way. Especially in political discourses, where different ideologies and systematic knowledge can only be identified from speeches or statements through power- relations, knowledge and language, the interpretation is essential to reveal the underlying structures and strains of meaning.

### Application Analysis of Cultural History by Herzog

Herzog applies the approach of cultural history to gain insights into the ideological conflict of different collectives but also individuals in the politically contradicting camps of liberals and religious conservatives during that time by interpreting the different primary, mostly argumentative texts within the historical context.

## Chapter One

To outline and expose the different strains and opinions inside the Catholic Church regarding the topics celibacy and mixed marriages, Herzog uses different textual material. On the one hand she uses publications from proponents of the particular opinion in their relevant newspapers like the *Süddeutsche Zeitung für Kirche und Staat* for the conservative strain, on the other hand she inspects internal letters and instructions, publications in magazines and petitions that tackle the subject of discussion. Furthermore she examines transcripts from court trials and conferences regarding the question of mixed marriage between Catholic and Protestant couples. While the official transcripts are mainly used to gain insight into the discourse, the argumentative texts from, for example publications, are used to investigate the different opinions and reactions of other texts or opinions.

## Chapter Two

Herzog attempts to illustrate the ambivalent position but also the development of opinion and formation against the Church's position inside the liberal wing by providing several kinds of sources. She tackles the pro and contra view in all its facets by providing publications in liberal and Jewish



newspapers or magazines next to protocols of court trials and parliament discussion based on petitions from delegates. She uses the same sources over a time span of five years to examine the change in opinion from Anti-Emancipation-delegates during the formation against the neo- orthodox position.

### Chapter Three

The role of women is examined as disenfranchised until the 1840's and Herzog aims to show that the liberal's position at this time in the dissenting movement was ambiguous. She elaborates on the process of opinion progression but also the rising influence inside the religious formation of Deutschkatholiken by providing their membership list, but also analyzing contextual sermons, tracts and publications in newspapers and magazines, including the example of a protest marriage from one of the leaders. Even acclamations, written down in meeting and discussion protocols and petitions are used to clarify the position against the conservative Catholic Church. Herzog investigates several publications on women's role, especially in marriage to outline that even the liberals proclaimed an equality for women, but only tightly restricted as a part of marriage and therefore ambiguously self- interested.

### Chapter Four

In this chapter, Herzog elaborates on the complex situation between liberal on conservative strains inside the church by illustrating the example of the Mannheim Monday Club, a liberal club where Christians and Jews, women

and men are invited to discuss with each other, which was unique at that time. She documents this procedure by providing club founding flyers and publications in newspapers and magazines like the Mannheimer Morgenblatt and its shows its relevance even with a lack of a membership list by the publications around these events, but also its uniqueness by revealing membership list from other clubs where women and Jews are missing.

Herzog highlights the club's explosive nature by providing harsh critique in conservative responses in relevant newspapers. Furthermore, she gives insights into the Jewish response to this inclusive campaign through annual reports from Jewish associations and newspaper articles, where they call for ambivalent consequences of the inclusion.

Herzog focuses in this chapter on two founders of the Mannheim Monday Club, Carl Scholl and Gustav von Struve. She based her research on several publications and own books from both reacting on contemporary developments and on each other to elaborate on their arguments.

## Chapter Five

In the fifth chapter Herzog focus on one contemporary author, Louise Dittmar, a self- educated women, who published nine books on her own, tackling questions of gender equality and difference, as well as the general contradictions and coherences on ideological frameworks of liberals and criticizes religious positions towards them. Therefore, Herzog used and examined the books and outlines Dittmar's difference towards other female scholars and her unique and clear opinion on the contemporary discussion.

## Assessment of the Book

In this book, Dagmar Herzog revises successfully the scholarly view on the pre- revolutionary time of the Vormärz by stressing the importance and influence of religious institutions and opinions as counterpart to the liberal movement and state in an era that was under historians consensually seen as predominantly liberal and secularized. Furthermore, Herzog highlights convincingly that the liberal position regarding crucial aspects of equality, sexuality and human rights inside the liberal strain was not unified and passed through a formation process with an interplay and change in self-identification as counterpart to conservative religiosity in politics and religion itself. This interconnectedness is sufficiently based on a big amount of high qualitative primary as well as secondary sources.

It is to emphasize that Herzog found a nearly unknown source with Louise Dittmar, which provided interesting and very rare insights into the discussion of equality from a feminist perspective, even if Dittmar was actually not from Baden and did not publish her works there, what gives a drop of bitterness to the relatedness of this extraordinary source.

## **CONCLUSION**

After examining the book's content and general structure and the followed analysis on the methodological approach, concluded by an assessment of this approach and book in general, it can be said, that the author of this book, Dagmar Herzog, successfully argued for a re- evaluation of the interrelations and roles during the Vormärz period in Baden, Germany.