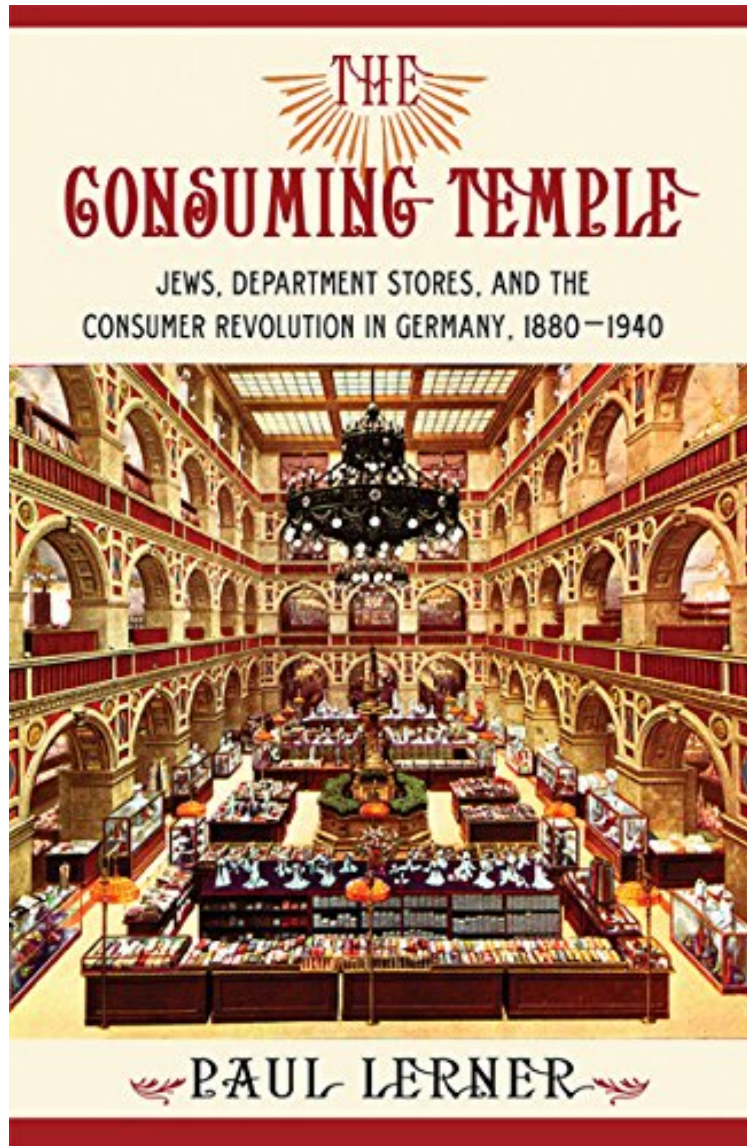


[E-BOOK] The Consuming Temple: Jews, Department Stores, and the Consumer Revolution in Germany, 1880ndash;1940

The Consuming Temple: Jews, Department Stores, and the Consumer Revolution in Germany, 1880ndash;1940

Paul Lerner

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Paul Lerner : The Consuming Temple: Jews, Department Stores, and the Consumer Revolution in Germany, 1880ndash;1940 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Consuming Temple: Jews, Department Stores, and the Consumer Revolution in Germany, 1880ndash;1940:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great readBy AaronThis was a fascinating book and the writing is

crisp and engaging. Exploring the role of the department store illuminated so many aspects of German history and culture. If you are interested in pre-war Germany, I highly recommend it. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Did not disappoint! By David Heard the author speak about his book in the Twin Cities and decided to buy the book when it went to print.

Department stores in Germany, like their predecessors in France, Britain, and the United States, generated great excitement when they appeared at the end of the nineteenth century. Their sumptuous displays, abundant products, architectural innovations, and prodigious scale inspired widespread fascination and even awe; at the same time, however, many Germans also greeted the rise of the department store with considerable unease. In *The Consuming Temple*, Paul Lerner explores the complex German reaction to department stores and the widespread belief that they posed hidden dangers both to the individuals, especially women, who frequented them and to the nation as a whole. Drawing on fiction, political propaganda, commercial archives, visual culture, and economic writings, Lerner provides multiple perspectives on the department store, placing it in architectural, gender-historical, commercial, and psychiatric contexts. Noting that Jewish entrepreneurs founded most German department stores, he argues that Jews and "Jewishness" stood at the center of the consumer culture debate from the 1880s, when the stores first appeared, through the latter 1930s, when they were "Aryanized" by the Nazis. German responses to consumer culture and the Jewish question were deeply interwoven, and the "Jewish department store," framed as an alternative and threatening secular temple, a shrine to commerce and greed, was held responsible for fundamental changes that transformed urban experience and challenged national traditions in Germany's turbulent twentieth century.

"This book does more than just providing another economic or business history of the rise of the centralized, rationalized and scientifically managed department store in Germany. In comparison with the existing literature, which has often taken the 'Jewishness' of German department store owners for granted, Lerner excels at questioning and reflecting the multiple perspectives on the 'figure of the Jew,' while analyzing their implications for the development of the German department store in general." — Gerulf Hirt, *Oxford Journals: German History* (June 2016) "Based on exhaustive research in primary archival, printed, and visual sources, *The Consuming Temple* persuasively argues that contemporaries characterized the department store as a Jewish phenomenon. Such associations were most often in the context of a critique of this new form of merchandising and anti-Semitic in nature. Paul Lerner's elaboration and specification of the linkage of department stores, Jews, and women is particularly original. This impressive book is, furthermore, an important intervention in the literature on the association between Jews and capitalism." — Leora Auslander, University of Chicago, author of *Taste and Power: Furnishing Modern France* "This is a phenomenally rich and revelatory book. Paul Lerner brilliantly uses fiction and drama as well as a vast array of other sources to plumb the complexities of Germans' ambivalence about that most enthralling and threatening 'Jewish' marvel: the department store. He captures the magic and magnetic pull of the stores and all they stood for. Long before anticonsumerism became the property of the Left, it had its home on the Right. Lerner explicates what makes the German aspects of this story so unique." — Dagmar Herzog, Distinguished Professor of History, Graduate Center, City University of New York, author of *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-Century History* "In *The Consuming Temple*, Paul Lerner draws on the methodologies of both business and cultural history to demonstrate the multiple meanings and profound social significance of the department store in imperial and Weimar Germany. Engagingly written and filled with fascinating analyses of images and literary texts, *The Consuming Temple* bristles with insights about the globalisation of commerce, urban modernism, gender anxieties, and anti-Semitism in modern Germany." — Derek Penslar, University of Oxford and University of Toronto, author of *Shylock's Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe* "Paul Lerner's new book offers an exemplary study of the ambivalence and anxieties surrounding consumer culture in modern Germany. In an analysis that sparkles on every page, Lerner explores how contemporaries experienced the department store as a thoroughly Jewish institution, one able to exert uncanny power over women in particular. *The Consuming Temple* should be required reading for anyone interested in European history, Jewish studies, or the history and theory of consumer culture." — Jonathan M. Hess, Moses M. and Hannah L. Malkin Distinguished Professor of Jewish History and Culture, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, author of *Middlebrow Literature and the Making of German-Jewish Identity* About the Author Paul Lerner is Associate Professor of History at the University of Southern California where he directs the Max Kade Institute for Austrian-German-Swiss Studies. He is the author of *Hysterical Men: War, Psychiatry, and the Politics of Trauma in Germany, 1890–1930*, also from Cornell, and coeditor of *Jewish Masculinities: German Jews, Gender, and History and Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870–1930*.