

Catalog Advertisement: “Kaufhof is an Aryan Business!” (1935)

Abstract

Like other economic sectors, the retail sector underwent a process of “Aryanization” starting in 1933. As part of the process, Jewish owners were forced out of their positions and company assets were transferred to “Aryan” hands—in most cases, causing great financial loss to Jewish families. The measures were particularly devastating for department stores, which had already been targeted, before 1933, as allegedly parasitic, fundamentally “un-German” organizations. Jewish retailers and department store owners were routinely accused of cheating German consumers with low-quality merchandise and deceptive sales tactics. Because their higher sales volume allowed them to offer lower prices, department stores were also accused of putting smaller retailers out of business.

One famous department store chain, Hertie, was owned and operated by the Jewish Tietz family (the business was named after Hermann Tietzt). In 1933, the company was forcibly “Aryanized,” and the family lost control of the business. The Tietz family was fortunate to emigrate. Back in Germany, the company’s new board of directors was filled by non-Jews, and the store was rebranded as “Kaufhof.” Under this new name, “Kaufhof” launched an extensive advertising campaign that boasted about its newly acquired “Aryan” status, encouraging Germans to recognize the change and renew their faith in the company.

Source



Source: Kaufhof Christmas catalog, “Fulfilling the heart's desire” (“Herzenswünsche erfüllen”) (1935)

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