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The Afrikaner Women Of The Garment Workers Union, 1918-1939

Brink, Elsabe

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working-class nobility amongst them and it established a code of conduct to govern social relationships in the factory.

In 1937, in defence of their good name, the garment workers reacted very strongly when their decency and respectability were threatened and called into question by the chairman of the Spoorbond, Mr P.J. Kock. In an Afrikaner nationalist attempt to damage the credibility of the GWU, he claimed with regard to female industrial workers, that "dogters van die Vrystaat gaan na Johannesburg om daar met kaffers (sic) te dans" (daughters of the Free State go to Johannesburg, there to dance with 'kaffirs').[76] At a special general meeting on the first of July 1937 attended by some four hundred people, Johanna Cornelius, under loud applause, reacted on behalf of all garment workers,

> Alhoewel hierdie mnre.(menere) wat ons aanval algar Dokters, Predikante, Professore en geleerdes is, kan ons hulle verseker dat ons klerewerkers net so skoon van karakter en liggaam is as hulle dogters en vrouens.
> (Even though these men who attack us [illegible] all doctors, ministers, professors and learned men, we can assure them that we garment workers are just as pure of character and body as their daughters and wives.)[77]

Some time later, she vividly expressed the feelings of the garment workers,

> ....Aanstote, beledigings en valse beskuldigings is ons toegevoeg deur mans van ons eie nasie aan dogters en moeders van ons land wat so hard swoeg en slaaf om ons te red van gebrek en armblankedom.
> (....rebukes, insults, and false accusations are hurled at us by men of our own nation, at daughters and mothers of our country who labour and slave to save ourselves from deprivation and poor whiteism.)[78]

Mrs Viljoen, an informant, recently also recalled the precariousness of the social standing of the garment workers during the thirties,

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[76] GWU, Bad 1. Minutes Special General Meeting GWU, 1.7.1937.

[77] Ibid.

[78] *KW/GW*, Anna Jacobs, 'Vyande van die Werkendeklas', February 1940, p.3.

> Ek onthou ook dat op een stadium die kerkgemeenskap die fabrieksvrouens so probeer onderdeur sleep het om voor te gee ons is straatvrouens. Dit het ook in ons lewe gebeur.
> (I also remember that at one stage the church community tried to undermine the factory women by implying that we are street women. This also happened in our lives.)[79]

On one occasion a meeting of residents in Belgravia was called to protest against the erection of a hostel for young working girls in the area, which would allegedly lower the value and prestige of the area. Tempers ran high and garment workers in the audience defended their respectability. One cried, "Allright lady, behave yourself, we are just as decent as you are", while another proclaimed that "ons is nie skaam om in die fabriek eerlik ons geld te verdien nie" (we are not shy to earn our money honestly in the factory).[80] Johanna Cornelius took up their defence,

> Tussen ons fabrieksmeisies is daar baie ordentlike en edele dogters en ons staan nie agteruit vir julle nie. Ons is gewillig om ons werk te doen, maar ons eis om met respek behandel te word.
> (Amongst us factory girls are many decent and noble daughters and we do not stand back for you. We are willing to do our work, but we demand to be treated with respect.)[81]

Not only did the GWU defend the respectability of its members, but also aggressively strove to instil a sense of worth and dignity in them. During and after the 1938 Voortrekker centenary celebrations, the union utilised the Afrikaner Voortrekker heritage and image of the Voortrekker woman to accentuate the worth of the garment workers. They claimed as their heritage the fierce pioneering spirit of the Voortrekkers. Like the Voortrekker women who were willing to cross the Drakensberg bare foot, the garment workers would also open up new frontiers. Johanna Cornelius cautioned all to remember, "...die honderde vrouens, die Voortrekkermoeders wat hulle lewens gegee het vir julle wat vandag diep in die goud sit...." (...the hundreds of women, the Voortrekker mothers

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79 Interview 31.

80 *KW/GW*, Ons eie Korrespondent, 'Rykes van Belgravia weier om in die omgewing van fabrieksmeisies te woon', June 1939, p.9.

81 Ibid.

who gave their lives for you who today sit deep in the gold....)[82] Anna Jacobs added,

> ...ons, as werkers van ons staat en vir al die vrouens van ons land sal die voortou neem en weer die Drakensberge bestyg. Die wat lafaards is, kan agterbly...
> (..as workers of our state and for all the women in our country, (we) will take the lead and cross the Drakensberg again. Those who are cowards can remain behind....)[83]

This invocation of the strength of their forebears reappears in an unnamed play in six acts, presumably the text of the play 'Slavin van Suid-Afrika', written by Hester and Johanna Cornelius.[84] It portrays the lives of six sets of women in South Africa; factory and farm workers, mothers, old women and pregnant women who all unite to struggle for better conditions for women. An older woman proclaims,

> Die Drakensberg was nie te hoog en te gevaarlik vir die Voortrekkervrou om oor te gaan nie, en hierdie moeilikhede, wat ons vandag mee te kampe het, is ook nie te veel vir vandag se vrou om te veg nie, (The Drakensberg were not too high and too dangerous for the Voortrekker woman to cross, and these troubles that we experience today are not too much for today's woman to combat).[85]

A young factory worker adds,

> Kom ons volg in die voetstappe van die Voortrekkervrou wat gesê het,'Al moet ons blootsvoets oor die Drakensberge loop sal ons nie teruggaan na die land van verdrukking nie.' (Let us follow in the footsteps of the Voortrekker woman who said, 'Even if we have to cross the Drakensberg bare foot, we will not return to the country of oppression').[86]

Tant Sannie Potgieter, the mother of Jan and Lettie, in the play *Die Offerande*, links the garment workers' problems to the struggles of the Boers during the Anglo- Boer War. Although her husband had been deported as a prisoner of war, she maintains,

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[82] *KW/GW*, J. Cornelius,'Wolf in Skaapsklere', September 1938.

[83] Ibid., A. Jacobs, 'Vyande', p.3.

[84] GWU, Bcd 1.2. cf. *KW/GW*, 'Werkers van Germiston', March/April 1941, p.12.

[85] GWU, Bcd 1.2. Unnamed Play, Act 5.

[86] Ibid.

> Ek het die swaarste gehad. Ons het geen konsentrasiekamp gevrees nie. As ons vrouens nie so dapper was nie, sou die oorlog vroeg-vroeg beslis gewees het. .....ons het besluit dat ons sal aanhou veg, al stuur hulle ons mans oor see, al moes ons van honger omkom en ons kinders se lykies in seepkissies laat begrawe het. (I suffered the most. We feared no concentration camp. If we women had not been so courageous, the war would have ended soon .... we decided that we would continue fighting, even if they sent our husbands over the sea, even if we had to die of hunger and allow the corpses of our children to be buried in soap boxes.)[87]

Anna Scheepers also linked the Voortrekker heritage and trade unionism as organising principles in the lives of garment workers,

> .....soos in elke land in die wêreld en soos die Voortrekkervrou in hierdie land, dra vrouewerksters haar deel by tot die vooruitgang van die vakuniebeweging en van die volk as 'n geheel. (...like in any country in the world and like the Voortrekker woman in this country, women workers contribute their share towards the progress of the trade union movement and the nation as a whole.)[88]

Furthermore, the garment workers were no longer willing to be factory girls or factory 'meide', but strove to be seen as Afrikaner 'dogters', a respected and respectable image within Afrikaner society. Hester de Wet explained how the garment workers lost this place,

> In 1928 when we had a strike in a few factories people looked on us in disgust. We were not recognised then as 'Afrikaner dogters' who were struggling for an existence. We were looked on as *common factory girls*; people who had no right to strike for better wages and conditions (my emphasis).[89]

Nevertheless, during the thirties when Afrikaner nationalists under the guidance of Dr Albert Hertzog and the Nasionale Raad van Trustees (National Council of Trustees) strove to gain control of the GWU, this attitude changed. The garment workers were then deemed to be worthy of salvation, for they were referred to as Afrikaner daughters, "meestal

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[87] *GW/KW*, H. Cornelius, 'Die Offerande', a working-class play, September/October and November/December 1941. It was performed before audiences of about 400 people in Johannesburg and Germiston on November 10 and 17, 1941, respectively.

[88] Ibid., Anna Scheepers, 'Vroue in Vakunies', October/November 1940, p.10.

[89] GWU, Bca 3. Commission of Inquiry, Statement to be submitted by H. De Wet, 1948.

nog mooi sterk en skoon dogters" (on average still pretty strong and clean daughters).[90] These Afrikaner daughters , employed in factories and led by a so-called Communist Jew, Solly Sachs,[91] while already partly beyond redemption, apparently still had some redeeming features which made the effort of saving them worthwhile. This approach would have it that these Afrikaner daughters did not belong in the factory. In 1936, Miss Van den Berg echoed this assumption, while talking about the living conditions of female factory workers, to the Saint Boniface Church Women's Society in Germiston,

> Many factory girls from the farming community had been forced into factory life, but did not consider their position the right one. Socially they were higher. Aid should be given to keep their standards up.[92]

In a recent interview Mrs B. also maintained that she never felt at home while employed in the factory.[93]

Confronted with such prejudice, the union made concerted efforts to instil an ideal of a working-class calling and working-class nobility in rank and file garment workers. The CWU often used Soviet Russian social developments, working conditions and especially Russian heroism during the Second World War to generate a working-class pride in the garment workers. The union accentuated Soviet Russia as a country where the worker and the farmer were in control and no longer exploited by capitalist rulers.[94] In 1938 Sachs maintained, in addition, that the very

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90 CAD, VWN 465. Report, Harmonie Hostel Committee to Annual Congress of the SAVF, April 1935.

91 See pronouncements e.g., "Die kommunistiese opruier, mnr. Sachs." CAD, ARB 1417. *Transvaler,* 'S. Sachs: Wie en wat hy is', 22.3.1944 and S. Sachs, *Garment workers,* p.23.

92 *Germiston Advocate,* 'Germiston Factory Girls', 6.3.1936.

93 Interview 27.

94 See, for example, numerous articles in the *KW/GW* during the war years, which depict Soviet Russia as a country where the workers govern. cf. *KW/GW*, 'Die Offerande', 1941.

actions for which garment workers stood condemned, were indeed the source of their strength,

> Those daughters of poor starving people on the land, those whose fathers toil in the mines, on the roads, etc, those who are contemptuously referred to by the parasites as 'the factory girls' and are even despised by the stodgy trade unionists; they with their sincerity, determination, and loyalty, made our achievements possible.[95]

Johanna Pretorius later echoed these sentiments,

> Ons het stakings gehad en onsself baie moes verlaag het.....ons het geloop en sing in die strate en baie mense kyk daardeur met 'n verlaagde oog op die klerewerkers. Wat ons vandag kry verdien ons na al die ontberings wat ons in die verlede moes verduur.
> (We had strikes and we had to lower ourselves a lot.....we walked and sang in the streets and because of that many people regarded the garment workers with 'a lowered eye'(held them in lower esteem). What we get today we deserve after all the sufferings we had to endure in the past.)[96]

Garment workers were then reminded of their worth and dignity. Sophie Meyer adamantly maintained,

> In die fabrieke is net soveel ordentlike meisies en vrouens as in enige ander plek en die man wat 'n fabriekwerkster kry vir 'n vrou kan trots wees daarop, want dan het hy 'n maat gekry wat verstaan wat dit is om skouer aan die wiel te sit en deur dik en dun saam met hom in die lewe deur te gaan.
> (In the factories there are just as many decent girls and women as in any other place and the man who takes a factory worker as his wife can be proud, because then he has found a friend who can understand what it is to put the shoulder to the wheel and to go with him through thick and thin in life.)[97]

She also advised another garment worker not to react to insults levelled at her by a young man who regarded them with a "lae oog (aansien) omdat ons in die fabrieke werk" (hold us in low esteem because we work in the factories).[98]

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[95] *KW/GW*, S. Sachs, 'Ten Years in Service of the Garment Workers', November 1938, p.3.

[96] GWU, Bca 4. Commission of Inquiry, Evidence, J. Pretorius, 1948, p.1935. Note the unusual use of the phrase "met 'n lae oog aansien" (literal translation - regard with a low eye).

[97] *KW/GW*, S. Meyer, 'Ope Brief aan MP van die New York Klerefabriek', October 1939, p.9.

[98] Ibid.

Furthermore, members who married were reminded of their links with fellow workers and were urged not to break these bonds,

> Onthou dat die tydperk van jou lewe in die klerefabriek het 'n band van kameraadskap gebind tussen jou en jou medewerkers wat nooit verbreek sal word nie.
> (Remember that the period of your life in the clothing factory forged a bond of comradeship between you and your fellow workers which will never be broken.)[99]

Accordingly, a young woman, Anna Coetzee, about to marry Willie Ballot, was reminded not to forget her duty as "'n persoon van die werkendeklas".[100] These young women were urged to raise their children as good members of the working class,

> Ons weet dat jy jou dogtertjie sal oplei tot eer en voorbeeld van die werkendeklas in die toekoms, dat sy haar moeder se voetstappe sal volg en 'n ware leier sal wees vir haar medewerkers.
> (We know you will bring up your little daughter to the honour of and as an example for the working class in the future, that she will follow in the footsteps of her mother and be a true leader of her fellow workers.)[101]

The GWU, therefore, used a number of devices to reinforce the dignity and worth of fellow rank and file members. They defended the respectability of women working in factories, they claimed the heritage of Voortrekker women as their own and re-appropriated the image of Afrikaner 'dogter'. Furthermore, they instilled an ideal of a working-class calling and working-class nobility amongst garment workers and, finally, reinforced these issues by the establishment of a code of social conduct to govern relationships in the factory.

A Code of Conduct

The garment workers did not stop at proclaiming their respectability and decency. Within their industrial sphere of work they established a code

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[99] Ibid. 'Huweliksklokkies', August 1939, p.13.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid. 'Klerewerkersunie brei uit', May/June 1944, p.8.

of conduct which would govern their relationship with their employers and overseers as well as with one another and so underline and reinforce their decency and respectability. The establishment of norms for a common code of conduct necessitated the censure of behaviour which ran contrary to it, and, at times, the use of force to return deviants to the code of conduct.

Several factors contributed to unacceptable behaviour and occasional violence amongst the garment workers. Dulcie Hartwell attempted to explain this conflict in the context of private frustrations being aired in the unsatisfactory, frustrating work environment.[102] Mundane tensions and the precarious quality of their lives sporadically resulted in conflicts, confrontations and verbal abuse amongst the garment workers. At times these tensions were translated into physical violence in the clothing factories and garment workers would attack one other by physically hitting, scratching and pulling one another's hair. This usually would happen when one group or person in the factory thought that another party had overstepped the bounds of decorum and accepted behaviour.[103]

The main recorded causes of conflict were the use of abusive and insulting language, conflict about the role and function of the union, accusations of theft and, in one instance, censure for the use of alcohol in public. The conflict and fighting between Anna Buys and Miss M. de Beer started when the latter was accused by the former of having spoken against the union. Anna threatened,

> I donnered a girl at school and she was laid up for 3 days and that is going to happen now.[104]

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[102] Interview 34.

[103] GWU, Bca 4. Commission of Inquiry, Evidence, S. Van Wyk, 1948, p.2450. She recalled seeing hair-pulling at a meeting, 16.3.1944.

[104] GWU, Bbc 1.111. Affidavit, A. Buys, 23.11.1931 and Letter, S. Sachs to A. Buys, 3.12.1931.

The two came to blows but Anna, contrary to her threat, fell and fainted. Miss De Beer was reprimanded, fined and threatened with expulsion if she failed to apologise. At the same time similar violence broke out between Elizabeth Mathews and Miss Van der Merwe, both employed at the Modern Clothing Factory. From the start they quarrelled continuously, the latter calling the former names such as 'polecat', and 'casting aspersions about my expensiveness of dress'.[105] In this regard, Pollak found in her investigation that dress and meagre lunches were very important factors in differentiating between the more affluent and the poorer garment workers.[106] The quarrel was eventually mediated by the union.

One evening at a trade union meeting Miss Van der Merwe and her friends accused Elizabeth and her friends of being drunken fools, yelling "(g)ij dronklapper" and running away, for they had seen the latter party of twelve sharing a bottle of wine the previous day at lunch time.[107] The following day at the factory, the conflict escalated into violence when Edith de Villiers gave Miss Griesel, a friend of Elizabeth, a blow on the head with her shoe. Miss Griesel, who also swore at Mrs Hester, received a slap for her pains. Although no more evidence exists in this regard, it would seem that the public consumption of wine by the women and young girls employed in the factory went against social mores and taboos, causing one group to censure another.

The union made considerable efforts to educate the women not to fight physically, especially in public. A short story in the *Garment Worker/Klerewerker* demonstrated that although a character 'wou Mev.

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[105] Ibid.

[106] H. Pollak, *Women*, pp.171-73.

[107] GWU, Bbc 1.23. Affidavits, E. Mathews, Mrs Hester and Mrs E. De Villiers, 1931. Note the interesting use of High Dutch.

Bekker krap soos'n katwyfie' (wanted to scratch Mrs Bekker like a tabby cat), she refrained from doing so because,

> Ongelukkig het ons Unie ons geleer om nie op straat te baklei soos barbaarse swarthemde nie, anders sou ons haar gewys het.
> (Unfortunately our union taught us not to fight on the street like savage blackshirts, otherwise we would have shown her.)[108]

The concern of the union in this regard is evident from Sophie Venter's reports and investigations in Germiston when she saw two girls fighting on more than one occasion in front of the East Rand and New York Clothing Factories. In one case the conflict was settled when one of the girls was dismissed and in another the fighting was so severe that one of the girls had to remain in bed.[109]

During the forties feelings for and against Afrikaner nationalism also led to conflict. Katy Lake and Joey Terblanche nearly came to blows about their differing opinions on what constituted a real Afrikaner. Joey maintained that she was a real Afrikaner, to which Katy's father replied, "nie van die regte soort nie, van die mal soort," implying that the emerging Afrikaner nationalism was no normal development.[110] At the Commission of Inquiry in 1948 Mrs Moolman described the attack by a woman called Louise, which she suffered at a Afrikaner nationalist meeting. After having been hit over the head, she said of her attacker Louise, "ek glo nie 'n mansmens kon slaan soos sy nie" (I don't believe a man could hit like her.) At the time Mrs Moolman was acting as an organiser for Mr Van der Walt, an opponent placed in the GWU by Afrikaner nationalists who wanted to oust Sachs from his position as general secretary.[111]

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[108] *GW/KW*, ''n Staaltjie wat gebeur het in 'n Klerefabriek', May 1939.

[109] GWU, Bbc 9.2.1. Germiston Branch GWU, Adjourned meeting 20.7.1939 and 21st meeting, 31.7.1939

[110] GWU, Bbc 7.1. Letter, K. Lake to Mrs Malan, chairman Fordsburg Branch, GWU, 1942?

[111] GWU, Bca 4. Commission of Inquiry, Evidence Mrs Moolman, 1948, p.681.

The union repeatedly tried to curb the use of abusive language amongst its members. In 1938 Johanna Cornelius warned Mrs Ballinger not to use indecent language against other union members and in 1939 the Germiston Branch no. 1 Executive discussed methods with which to make the women more 'careful' in the language they used.[112] Mrs Kruger of Dugsons, Mrs Elsie Grobler and Jean Matthysen of Paris Shirt factory all received letters of reprimand in this regard from the union.[113] Defamation of character seems to have caused the conflict between K. Basson and H. Gouws, both employed at the President Clothing Factory after the former had received a flower from a worker (presumably male). She was accused of having 'no character' and a smear campaign seems to have resulted,

> K. Basson het toe vir H. Gouws gesê dat sy haar bek van haar af moet hou. Toe het sy vir K. Basson gesê dat sy haar padda oë van H. Gouws moet afhou.
> (K. Basson then told H. Gouws that she should keep her mouth off her. Then she told K. Basson that she should keep her frog's eyes off H. Gouws.)[114]

Finally, accusations of theft of misplaced or lost objects often resulted in violence or threats of violence. In 1943 the Germiston Branch heard the case between M. Pienaar and M. Meyer concerning a missing coffee cup.[115] In 1944 the union also successfully cleared up the misunderstanding between Mrs Buitendag and S. Booysens concerning a missing pair of trousers, which had resulted in name-calling.[116] In 1945, in the case of an allegedly stolen handbag concerning Edith Leech and Miss Lee, the

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[112] GWU, Cca 2.2. Letter, J. Cornelius to Mrs Ballinger, 30.8.1938 and, GWU, Bbc 9.2.1. 2nd meeting Germiston Branch, 6.3.1939.

[113] GWU, Bbc 7.2.1. 22nd meeting Fordsburg Branch, 1.12.1943 and meeting 19.7.1944.

[114] GWU, Bbc 9.2.1. 20th meeting Germiston Branch, GWU, 9.11.1943. Letters were sent to both parties to resolve the conflict.

[115] GWU, Bbc 9.2.1. Germiston Branch GWU, Special meeting 10.11.1943 and 21st meeting 23.11.1943.

[116] GWU, 7.2.1. 39th meeting Fordsburg Branch GWU, 2.8.1944.

union also made both parties apologise when the missing handbag was found again.[117]

It is evident that the union made considerable efforts to instil a code of conduct amongst women working in the clothing factories. It tried to curb physical violence and abusive language and regularly stepped in as mediator when conflicts arose amongst the rank and file garment workers. These measures were implemented to counteract the social marginality of the women who were not regarded as respectable, decent or virtuous by virtue of their employment in the clothing factories.

Conclusion

The garment workers found themselves in a precarious and marginal position in society. Once they had moved from their parents' sphere of control, their respectability and virtue were called into question. The state, church and welfare organisations shared the concern of parents for their offspring and in response envisioned the erection of hostels for low-paid young girls, not only as a practical solution to the problem of labour control and housing, but also as an exercise in moral reform. However, the suspicion surrounding the virtue and respectability of young female factory workers, found expression in the verbal and physical abuse and sexual harassment they experienced at the hands of male employers and overseers. This treatment reinforced the negative attitude with which the garment workers were regarded by society. Hence, as single working-class girls they did not have a position or place in society and were labelled factory girls and factory 'meide'. These labels were affixed to them to a greater or lesser extent according to the degree of disruption caused by their trade union and strike actions.

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[117] GWU, Bcd 1.2. Minutes Complaints Committee GWU, 26.7.1943.

It is clear that in response to these actions, the garment workers and especially those women who had risen to executive positions in the GWU, strove to reinforce the respectability, decency and virtue of union members. They defended garment workers against public attack, claimed the Voortrekker cultural heritage and the image of the Voortrekker Woman for themselves and reappropriated the image of the Afrikaner 'dogter' in terms of working women. The union tried to generate an ideal of a working-class calling and working-class nobility and established a code of conduct which would govern the behaviour of the women employed in the factories. In short, the dignity and worth of the garment workers were accentuated and, as women workers taking pride in their working lives, the garment workers united in a trade union remarkable for its solidarity and militancy.

EPILOGUE

The outbreak of the Second World War and the ensuing war years, heralded a new phase in the lives of the Afrikaner women of the GWU. Many of their husbands, male relatives and friends joined to fight in the war. Hence, a number of women of their own volition exchanged the clothing for the war industry to contribute their share to the war effort.[1] In contrast to the union which at first had elected to take an official stance against the war, scores of garment workers who remained in the clothing industry were in favour of the war. However, with the entry of Russia into the war, the GWU changed its strategy and in accord with many of its members, supported the war effort as well.

Several aspects of this new phase can be indentified. First, internally considerable changes in the nature of the demands of rank and file members on the union were taking place. Second, the *Garment Worker/Klerewerker,* mouthpiece of the GWU, bore increasing evidence of literary efforts of garment workers who were attempting to give meaning and substance to their lives in a wave of Afrikaans literature. Third, the union itself became much more militant. It founded the Union Guard and successfully withstood Afrikaner nationalist onslaughts on the union. In 1943 Sachs tried to translate the strength of the union into political power. However, he misread the nature and composition of the solidarity of the union, and during the 1943 general election failed to make an impression with his Independent Labour Party. Finally, during the war years, the racial composition of the union began to change rapidly as scores of coloured women entered the industry and contributed to heightened racial tension in the factories.

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[1] Interview 31. Mrs Viljoen, whose husband joined the army, spent the duration in a local munitions factory.

The forties heralded considerable changes in the nature of the demands of members of the union. During this period, amidst greatly improved working conditions, the union gradually became aware of the possibility that the union's system of grants and personal welfare could be exploited and rumours circulated that some garment workers had received grants from the union under false pretences.[2] It would seem that what initially was probably a gesture of compassion eventually came to be seen as a right which should be granted by the union. In 1943 Hester Cornelius maintained that the executive should be stricter with the allocation of grants because "die werkers is baie ondankbaar" (the workers are very ungrateful).[3]

The refusal of grants especially during the forties also reveals the extent in which the garment workers had come to depend on the union. Women such as Ethel Joseph, Hester Renney, E. Jardine and D.J. Jacobs, were eventually refused grants after being helped on several occasions, Mrs P. van Heerden, who had not been a member for long, received no grant.[4] Some women appealed for grants from the union on behalf of relatives but were refused. For example two deaf and dumb sisters, L. Rossouw and F. Roodt, as well as S. Constable and C.F. Dippenaar's who reqeusted aid on behalf of their families, but were refused.[5] In addition contrary to complaints in the past, Mr W.J. Coetzee after 12 years in the industry had to take leave because he had trouble with his nerves, whilst Miss J. Lombard after 18 months in the industry applied for money

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2 GWU, Bbc 9.2.1. 6th meeting Germiston Branch GWU, 26.6.1939, re Miss E. Du Toit, Mrs Legrange, New York Clothing Factory. These accusations were used in the battle between the union and Afrikaner nationalists attempting to overthrow the union.

3 GWU, Bbc 9.2.1. 12th meeting Germiton Branch GWU, 11.8.1943.

4 GWU, Bab 1.1. Minutes Financial Committee GWU, November/December 1945. GWU, Baa 1. 10th, 14th and 44th meetings CEC GWU, 15.11.1939, 13.12.1939 and 7.8.1940.

5 GWU, Bab 1.1. Minutes Financial Committee GWU, 12.11.1945 and 30.7.1945.

to go home, for unless she went, she felt she would have a nervous breakdown. Both received aid from the union.[6]

During the war years garment workers produced a considerable wave of Afrikaans literature consisting of Afrikaans plays, poetry and prose.[7] The two most prolific writers were Hester and Johanna Cornelius, but other garment workers such as Maggie Meyer, Corrie Gatzke (Mrs Lategan), Winnie Meyer, Nellie Raubenheimer and C.W.B. Venter also published in the magazine. Several distinct themes which differ considerably from those explored by the mainstream Afrikaans literature of the time, such as D.J. Opperman, N.P. van Wyk Louw and Elizabeth Eybers, are evident in this literature.

It would seem that the development of this Afrikaans working class literature during the thirties is comparable to a similar development of female working class literature was taking place in the United States amongst members of the Independent Ladies Garment Union (hereafter ILG) as well. Kessler-Harris maintains that this literature developed during a time when the unionism of the ILG was apparently secure, membership expanding rapidly and women were gaining insight into issues peculiar to them within the confines of the union.[8]

Likewise, at the time of the publication of this garment worker literature, the GWU was one of the strongest and most militant unions on the

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[6] GWU, Bbc 9.2.1. 17th and 35th meeting Germiston Branch GWU, 19.9.1943 and 21.6.1944. During these years several garment workers received money for operations as well. E.g. Miss. E. Ferreira, I. Muller, L. du Preez, Mrs E. Thompson. The former two women had been in the industry only 5 years. Ibid. 3rd and 18th meetings Germiston Branch GWU, 17.3.1943 and 19.10.1943.

[7] See for example GWU, Bcd 1.2. The literature referred to was published mainly in the *GW/KW*, but a number of unpublished plays were found in the records of the union as well. For a more detailed account see E. Brink, 'Plays'.

[8] A. Kessler-Harris, 'Organising the Unorganisable. Three Jewish Women and their Trade Union', in D. Leab, *Labour History Reader* p. 286.

Witwatersrand. It had a large membership and the women involved in the union displayed a particular interest in gender-related problems confronting the rank and file membership. This literature of the garment workers is not of a very high quality. It is a working class literature, written by working women about themselves and for themselves. It gives a novel insight from below into their working lives and experiences in an urban, industrial environment and reveals an awareness amongst the garment workers of their denigrated position as working women in society. One is struck by a powerful nostalgia for a recently abandoned rural past, a vivid portrayal of life in the city and the drudgery of industrial employment. A main theme which is evident is an admiration for the social structure developed in Soviet Russia with an accent on child care, worker recreation, health care and industrial working conditions. Nevertheless, parallel to it one finds a powerful current of Afrikaner nationalist writings inspired by the 1938 Voortrekker centenary celebrations. Here the efforts of Voortrekker women on the Great Trek are compared to those of Afrikaner women employed in urban industrial labour, a link that is not established in the mainstream literature on this topic. In contrast to the established Afrikaans literature, the Second World War and its effects on human relations feature prominently in the writings of the garment workers.

On political level, during the war, the GWU also established a uniformed Union Guard consisting of a corps of uniformed young girls employed in the clothing factories. It was founded in response to the Afrikaner nationalist assault on the union and the establishment of uniformed brigades of for example the Ossewabrandwag and the Handhawersbond. The Guard was organised along semi-military lines with a commander general and veld cornets and was used to maintain order at meetings and in general see to the safety of the union. The members of the Guard were clad in a distinctive white and blue uniform and once even marched at the funeral

of Charlie Harris, the assassinated general secretary of the Mine Workers Union.[9]

Finally, with the entry of coloured women into the clothing industry, the composition of the labour force in the clothing factories began to change. Fewer white women entered the factories and those women who remained grew old while employed at first as machinists and later as supervisors over the new generation of coloured and black workers. This development in turn gave rise to racial tensions in the factories, a phenomenon which the union did its best to combat.[10]

However, the conditions encountered by Afrikaner women in urban, industrial employment when denuded of their cultural accoutrements, are illustrative of the plight of working women entrusted with the survival of their families in other countries, societies and circumstances. Moreover, the response of these Afrikaner women to industrialisation and urbanisation on the Witwatersrand and their efforts to bring worth to a socially denigrated category of employment and to underscore their own respectability, dignity and virtue, deserve to be recorded. Said Anna Scheepers in 1940,

> die vername role wat die vrou speel in die vername stryd, sal seker voortkom in die geskiedenis boek van Suid-Afrika om die nageslag te inspireer om die stryd voort te sit.
> (the important role played by the woman in the important struggle, will hopefully appear in the history book of South Africa to inspire generations which follow to continue the struggle.)[11]

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[9] For more detailed information see GWU, Bch 9.

[10] See Table 8.

[11] *KW/GW*, A. Scheepers, 'Vroue in die Vakunies', October/November 1940, p.10.

APPENDIX

Examples of the Use of the Notion **Volksmoeder** and **Mother of the Nation** as catalogued by the compilers of the *Afrikaanse Woordeboek*, Stellenbosch.

1. Kleinjan het met hierdie verhaal ('Bittereinders') 'n kultuurdaad van betekenis verrig. Laat ons jongmense veral dit lees, want hulle het maar 'n gebrekkige kennis van die heroiese lyding van ons volksmoeders. (P.C. Schonees, *Prosa*, 1939, p.256)
Kleinjan achieved a cultural deed of significance with this story ('Bittereinders'). Let especially our youth read it, because they have a limited knowledge of the heroic suffering of our *volksmoeders*.

2. In sy oorlogsloopbaan het Naudé baie dinge beleef, wat 'n diepe indruk op hom gemaak het, maar daar is nie een, wat helderder in sy geheue gegrif staan nie as die oomblik, toe die ou volksmoeder (mev Joubert) sy hand vat en sê: "Ou seun, jy waag baie...." (G.D. Scholtz, *In Doodsgevaar*, 1940, p.136)
During his war service, Naudé experienced many things which made a deep impression on him, but there is not one which is (as) clearly engraved on his memory as that moment, when the old *volksmoeder* (Mrs Joubert took his hand and said: "Young man, you risk much....."

3. Die eerste (hulpdiens van die Kerk) is die van vertroude volksmoeders en weduwees wie se huislike omstandighede dit vir hulle moontlik gemaak het om deur die Kerk in 'n besondere

hoedanigheid gebruik te word. (J.R. Albertyn, et al., *Kerk en Stad*, 1947, p.279)
The first (welfare service of the church) is that of the trusted *volksmoeders* and widows whose domestic circumstances made it possible for them to be used in a unique capacity by the church.

4. Aan RACHEL ISABELLA STEYN Hooggewaardeerde eggenote van wyle President M.T. Steyn Hooggeagte en geëerde Volksmoeder. (N. Kruger, *Rachel Isabella Steyn, Presidentsvrou,* 1949, p.92)
To RACHEL ISABELLA STEYN, highly esteemed wife of the late President M.T. Steyn, highly considered and honoured *volksmoeder.*

5. Aan hul kinders en familiebetrekkinge wat met die afsterwe van mev. Steyn 'n nuwe wond toegedien is, kan ek net sê dat die feit dat haar lang en vrugbare lewe een was wat gewy is aan die vervulling van plig, die beste troos is wat ek hulle kan gee. "Ons dank God vir 'n volksmoeder soos wat sy was". (*Die Transvaler*, 5 Januarie, 1955).
To their children and relatives who were inflicted with a new wound with the passing away of Mrs Steyn, I can but say that the fact that her long and fruitful life was one that was dedicated to the fulfilment of duty is the best condolence that I can offer them. "We thank God for a *volksmoeder* such as she was."

6. Speel-speel en lag-lag sê die jong gasheer vir haar dat hy niks verder wil hoor van wat sy sê nie. "Daar is my predikant, hy moet vir my leer, nie u nie! U is nou nie meer 'n onderwyseres nie, u is nou 'n predikant se vrou en 'n predikant se vrou moet 'n 'silent partner' wees. 'n Vrou is 'n volksmoeder en haar plek is in die kombuis, haar plek is nie om slim te wees nie. Ek gaan nou na niks meer luister wat u sê nie." (*Die Burger*, 3 Desember 1963, p.12).
Playfully and laughingly the young host says to her that he does not wish to hear anything further of what she says. "There is my

'predikant' (pastor), he must teach me, not you! You are no longer a teacher, you are a 'predikant's' wife and a 'predikant's' wife should be a 'silent partner'. A woman is a *volksmoeder* and her place is in the kitchen, her place is not to be intelligent. I am going to listen to nothing more that you say now."

7.

Volksmoeders van V.V.V.-vergaderings,
onwrikbaar by die werk - kompeteer
by die pastorie(s)pens en basaar - vol, voller, volste -
hand op die heup - gemeentlike pilare -
(M.M Walters: *Apocrypha*, 1969, p.56).
volksmoeders of V.V.V. meetings (women's organisations)
undaunted at their (pl[illegible] of) work - compete
at parish(es) pantry, stomach and bazaar - full, fuller, fullest

hand on the hip - pillars of society -

8. ...maar toe ek ... sê, "En hy kan dalk weer publiseer..," was dit of ek van 'n deftige volksmoeder gesuggereer het dat sy dalk nog weer 'n werklike moeder kon word. Ek het gevoel asof ek onbedags iets obseens gesê het. (N.P. Van Wyk Louw, *Rondom Die Werk*, 1970, p.18).

when I ...said: "And he could possibly publish again....", it was as though I intimated that a stately *volksmoeder* could possibly become a real mother once more. I felt as if I had unthinkingly said something unholy.[12]

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[12] Letter, D.C. Hauptfleisch, Editor *Die Afrikaanse Woordeboek* , Stellenbosch to E. Brink, 22.4.1986.

Table 1A

Information on the Women Interviewed for this Study

no.	Interview location	Interview date	Born	place
1	Malvern	21.1.85.	13.4.09	D.Heidelberg
2	Germiston	22.1.85	16.5.14	Rhodes
3	Randfontein	23.1.85	21.8.05	____
4	Brixton	25.11.83	1908	Calitzdorp
5	Malvern	6.2.85	5.[illegible].11.	Johannesburg
6	Mayfair	26.9.84	1.3.12	Standerton
7	Lindbergpark	12.2.85	21.7.15	Boekenhoutpoort
8	Melville	2.2.85	18.8.06	Zeerust
9	Brixton	19.9.84	13.9.09	Pretoria Dist.
10	Mayfair	26.9.84	18.11.06	Potchefstroom
11	Rosettenville	1.2.85	16.10.05	Klerksdorp
12	Vrededorp	16.1.85	16.12.23	Randfontein
13	Brixton	17.1.85	5.11.05	Bethlehem Dist.
14	Brixton	12.2.85	1917	Elliot
15	Malvern	21.1.85	19.7.14	Rustenburg
16	Brixton	19.9.84	17.4.04	Johannesburg
17	Krugersdorp	23.1.85	21.11.15	Bethlehem
18	Brixton	11.9.84	27.11.05	Johannesburg
19	Brixton	30.1.85	21.1.09	Potchefstroom
20	Malvern	28.1.85	6.6.15	Roodepoort
21	Brixton	19.1.85	29.9.05	Potchefstroom dist
22	Germiston	22.1.85	28.5.10	Lindley
23	Brixton	19.9.84	31.8.12	Randfontein
24	Westdene	30.1.85	28.9.11	Harrismith Dist.
25	Westdene	30.1.85	26.6.-	Aliwal North
26	Germsiton	14.9.85	4.2.16	Heilbron
29	See no. 26			
27	Paarl	27.4.85	26.8.17	Ladybrand
28	Germistor	21.5.85	3.7.03	Aliwal North
30	Germiston	14.9.85	19.11.11	Barkley West
31	Benoni	10.3.84	22.4.22	Coalbrook
32	Benoni	10.3.84	25.8.05	Pietersburg
33	Bez Valley	29.1.85	9.12.15	Bloemfontein Dist.
34	Cape Town	25.4.85	18.10.15	Johannesburg
35	A.Scheepers	Johannesburg	10.2.84	24.9.84.

Note: A number of informants preferred to remain anonymous. Therefore, for the sake of uniformity, the names of the informants have been excluded from this spread sheet. However, the women who have voiced no objection are referred to by name in the text.

Table 18

Information on the Women Interviewed for this Study

no	occup.father	educ	sibl	occup.husband	mar.age	child	yrs.ind	total
1	farmer	6/16	8	SAS&H	21	-	1942-80	38
2	miner	6/14	3	builder	19	1	1930-78	48
3	farmer	8	1	farmer	22	2	1946-65	19
4	municipal	6	12	butcher	18	2	1926-30	4
5	bywoner		12	SAS&H	19	3	1937-65	29
6			10	SAS&H	21	3		
7	farmer	6/15	9	furn.maker	21	10	1934-34	23
							1956	78
8	butcher	8	6	carpenter	22	1	1928-52	24
9	SAS&H		10	mechanic	22	4	1925-27	22
							1941	60
10	farmer	6	11	miner	26	2	1928-	
11	bywoner		10	farmer	17	3	1952-82	30
12	miner	4/15	8	furn.maker	29	1	1943-81	38
13	farmer	6/18	12	SAS&H	30	1	1939-72	33
14	SAS&H	15	10	miner	24	2	1935-61	26
15	bywoner	8/15	5	caretaker	19	3	1944-64	20
16	miner	6	4	SAS&H	19	4	1928-34	6
17	SAS&h	6/13	7	miner	19	2	1934-42	8
18	Miner	9/15	9	butcher	20	3	1921-60	39
19	butcher	6	10	SAS&H	20	3		
20	miner	7	8				1937-74	37
21	farmer	6/15	10	teleprinter	18	3	1919-23	4
22		7	10	builder	16	1	1931-59	28
23	farmer		5	SAS&H	23	3	1935-	
24	bywoner	6/15	5	P.office	19	3	1936-70	34
25	farmer		4	hairdresser			1945-60	15
26	farmer	6	12	SAS&H	20	7	1930-65	25
27	farmer	10	4	teacher	31	1	1933-39	6
28	farmer	7	15				1933	39/6
29	see no. 26							
30	miner	6	6	builder	21	2	1925	25
31	farmer	10	5	transport	27	3	1937-67	30
32	farmer	6	6	builder	18	3	1929-83	54
33	bywoner		7	tailor	20	3		
34	toolmaker		2	tailor	20	2	1934-	
35	A. Scheepers							

Key

sibl = siblings: brothers and sisters
educ = education: standard / school leaving age
mar.age = marital age
yrs.ind = years employed in the clothing industry
total = total number of years employed in the clothing industry

Table 2
The Population of Johannesburg and Suburbs and the Witwatersrand 1921, 1926, 1931, 1936

Population	1921	1926	1931	1936
European				
Witwatersrand				
Males	118 949	128 266	152 607	205 773
Females	111 708	126 096	150 260	196 450
Total	230 657	254 362	302 867	402 223
Johannesburg				
Males	78 103	85 666	101 280	129 891
Females	74 553	85 960	102 018	127 780
Total	152 656	171 626	203 298	257 671

	1921		1936	
Non-European	WWR	JHB	WWR	JHB
Males	248 078	104 811	463 440	163 180
Females	28 735	13 753	107 286	60 992
Total	276 813	118 384	570 726	229 122
Asian				
Males	6 167	4 450	8 822	6 393
Females	2 610	1 779	5 361	3 716
Total	8 777	6 229	14 183	10 109
Coloured				
Males	7 740	5 563	14 787	10 765
Females	8 247	5 156	15 271	11 717
Total	15 987	11 719	30 058	22 482
Total Black Population	30 1577	136 322	614 967	261 713

All Races	WWR	JHB	WWR	JHB
Males	390 934	192 927	390 934	315 179
Females	151 300	96 061	324 368	204 205
Total	532 234	288 988	1017 190	519 384

Source: Union of South Africa, *Population Statistics*, 1931 and 1936. UG 11-1933, UG 21-1938.

Table 3
Total and Economically Active Population of Germiston.

Year	1918	1921	1926	1930	1933	1934
Population						
European	22 025	22 018	23 543	24 436	28 973	29 015
"Native"	38 000	31 269	---	32 295	---	33,695
no.factories	---	---	15	18		
Working pop.						
White						
Mines	---	2 708	---	2 515	2 738	3 175
SAS & H	---	1 020	--	2 500	1 895	2 000
male fact.worker	---	---	627	860		
female fact.work	---	---	429	843		
Black						
SAS & H	---	---	615	500	259	400
Miners	---	23 422	---	21 587	24 683	26 818
male fact.worker	---	---	1 215	1 450		

Source Standard Bank Archives, (SBA) INSP 2/1/217, 1/1/292, 1/1/338, 1/1/347 1/1/302, 1/1/353, 1/1/379. 1918-1939.

Table 4

Occupations of Men related to Garment Workers in Certain Provincial Electoral Divisions, Johannesburg and Germiston, 1931.

Occupation	Germiston	Fordsburg	Langlaagte	Jeppes	Vrededorp	Total
None	3	1	0	0	5	9
Retired	4	0	1	3	6	14
Miner	6	0	3	4	7	20
SAR employees	11	10	1	1	6	29
Skilled labourer	6	12	18	12	21	69
Unskilled	6	8	4	6	16	40
Tradesmen	6	0	2	1	0	9
SA Policeman	0	1	1	1	1	4
Clerks	2	2	6	2	4	16
Self employed	1	1	0	0	0	2
Miscellaneous	1	0	1	0	5	7

Skilled labourers: Include blacksmith, carpenter, plumber, wagon-repairer
Miscellaneous: Include jockey, musician, minister, estate agent, traveller
Unskilled labourers: Include gate watchman, checker, dumpsman.
Tradesmen: Include store assistant, dealer, chemist, grocer, manufacturer.
Clerks: Include civil servant, bookkeeper, salesman, draughtsman.
Self Employed: Transport rider, trolley owner.

Source: Union of South Africa, Provincial Voters Rolls, Johannesburg and Germiston, 1931, Transvaal Provincial Administration, 1933.

Table 5

Analysis of the Husbands and the Fathers of the Women who were Interviewed for this Study.

Occupation	Husbands	Fathers
SAS&H	9	2
Farmers & byvoners	2	17
SAP	-	2
Building and related trades	4	-
Furniture/Carpentry	3	-
Butchers	2	2
Miners	5	9
Transport	3	-
Unskilled labourers	2	1
Miscellaneous: teacher, hairdresser, Stock Exchange & post office worker	4	-

Table 6
Johannesburg: Analysis of Immigrant cases for 1939
All cases applied for social services assistance re food, rent, employment and clothing, 1 May 1939 - 27 December 1939.

no.cases	province	no.towns &village	adults	children	total
151	Transvaal	66	233	282	515
120	Cape	26	177	128	305
64	Natal	9	94	75	169
26	OFS	11	41	32	73
5	SWA	4	9	9	2
2	Swazil.	1	2	-	2
9	Rhodesia	2	16	12	28
1	Bechuanal	1	2	1	3
17	Overseas &other countries	4	20	2	22
Total	---	124	594	541	1,135

Source: CAD, VWN 594. Social Service Association of South Africa, Johannesburg, to Department of Social Welfare, Pretoria, 9.1.1940.

Table 7
Average Annual Wages in the Manufacturing Industry on the Witwatersrand, 1920-1938.

Industry	'19/20	'24/25	'29/30	'34/35	'37/38
agric.produce	265	309	300	210	196
stone,clay,etc	279	301	310	266	267
wood work	274	282	311	314	321
metal engineering	357	304	322	317	311
food & drink	273	256	236	209	182
clothing	161	145	132	112	117
books & printing	244	279	313	295	299
vehicles & parts	249	206	223	227	246
furniture	235	183	209	222	251
chemical & drugs	284	281	267	275	216
surgical,scient.	216	234	216	247	306
heat,light,power	285	363	387	371	311
leather	161	127	129	117	142
building,contract	309	292	311	289	310
other	406	235	237	257	246
mining	485	375	375	385	407*

Source: Industrial Census 1920-45 for average annual wages of the manufacturing industry. Mining: Official Yearbook of the Union of South Africa, no 24, 1948.
* for the year 1938/39.

Table 8

The Economic Development of the Clothing Industry in the Witwatersrand, 1915/16 - 1938/39

Year	X 1915/16	1916/17	1917/18	1918/19	1919/20	1920/21	1921/22	1922/23	1923/24	1924/25	1925/26	1926/27
tot.no.establishments @	124	162	183	214	218	191	219	219	226	227	205	216
number of m&d factories	30	38	30	44	55	47	44	40	44	43	43	42
number of t&c factories	70	90	112	128	125	112	112	112	110	117	124	136
tot.ofm&d, t&cl.fact.	100	128	142	172	180	159	156	156	154	160	167	178
tot.no.white employees	-	1 184	1 434	1 671	1 901	1 587	1 525	1 675	1 829	2 059	2 297	2 546
tot.no.white female "	525	537	708	871	1 068	955	873	1 093	1 113	1 257	1 553	1 731
tot.no.white male "	446	434	525	596	833	632	652	636	716	802	744	815
tot.no.wh.fem.emp.Tvl.	1 147	1 077	1 367	1 672	2 232	2 059	1 912	2 059	2 371	2 521	3 026	3 406
Asian fem.empl.Tvl.		5	-							6	12	13
Coloured " " "		5	9	52+	83+	32+	95+	148+	149+	60	56	72
'Native' " " "		27	56							53	34	34
total annual wage	113 848	138 529	172 998	217 439	276 402	273 311	263 240	263 338	331 679	233 856	255 616	274 326
average annual wage	82	130	135	143	161	192	194	173	154	145	139	136
cost:light,fuel,power	2 531	3 180	4 281	5 225	7 149	9 514	19 370	20 119	17 835			
tot.HP,engines,motors	116	127	249	182	240	221	909	1 064				
fixed capital: pounds val.land,bigs,machines, plant,tools.	-	240	272	319	387	349	499	524				

Year	1927/28	1928/29	1929/30	1930/32	1932/33	1933/34	1934/35	1935/36	1936/37	1937/38	1938/39
tot.no.establishments @	227	222	n.a.	n.a.	301	373	402	449	439	433	
number of m&d factories	49	50	"	"	60	91	103	112			
number of t&c factories	134	129	"	"	190	232*	240*	270*	380*	372*	
tot.ofm&d, t&cl.fact.	183	179	"	"	256						
tot.no.white employees	3 018	3 463	3 647	"	5 773						
tot.no.white female "	2 154	2 571	2 703	"	4 437	6 005	6 635	7 182	7 488	7 237	
tot.no.white male "	864	892	944	"	1 336	1 663	1 664	1 760	1 708	1 678	
tot.no.wh.fem.emp.Tvl.	4 020	4 639	4 837	"	6 685	8 902	9 900	10 913	11 525	11 522	11 870
Asian fem.emp.Tvl.	10	6	9	"	4	15	17	33	47	46	
Coloured " " "	126	147	173	"	210	216	239	280	334	283	
'Native' " " "	75	73	60	"	55	72	74	92	113	116	
total annual wage	313 765	349 507	387 172	"	79 930	677 643	777 068	872 551	914 517	931 133	
average annual wage	128	126	132	"	102	108	112	119	122	117	

@ The difference in the number of establishments is made up by related industries, e.g. tents & tarpaulins, employing +/-200 people (Special Report No.60.)
X 1915/16 statistics include the entire Transvaal. It was included to complete the general picture from 1915/16 until 1932/33.
From 1916/17 - 1918/19 the division of male/female employees does not correlate with the total, probably because the industrial Census (lower figure did not include males still registered as employed but in actual fact away at war).
* wholesale and retail establishments.
m&d millinery and dressmaking factories.
t&c tailoring and clothing factories.
\+ total black work force.

Source:

Union of South Africa, Office of Census and Statistics,
Special Report no.26 for 1916/17 - 1922/23, and
Office of Census and Statistics,
Census of Industries, 1923/24-1938/39.

Year	1927/28	1928/29	1929/30	1930/32	1932/33	1933/34	1934/35	1935/36	1936/37	1937/38	1938/39
tot.no.establishments @	227	222	n.a.	n.a.	301	373	402	449	439	433	
number of m&d factories	49	50	"	"	66	91	103	112			
number of t&c factories	134	129	"	"	190	232*	240*	270*	380*	372*	
tot.ofm&d, t&cl.fact.	183	179	"	"	256						
tot.no.white employees	3 018	3 463	3 647	"	5 773						
tot.no.white female "	2 154	2 571	2 703	"	4 437	6 005	6 635	7 182	7 488	7 237	
tot.no.white male "	864	892	944	"	1 336	1 669	1 664	1 760	1 708	1 678	
tot.no.wh.fem.emp.Tvl.	4 020	4 639	4 837	"	6 685	8 902	9 900	10 913	11 525	11 522	11 870
Asian fem.emp.Tvl.	10	6	9	"	4	15	17	33	47	46	
Coloured " " "	126	147	173	"	210	216	239	280	334	283	
'Native' " " "	75	73	60	"	55	72	74	92	113	116	
total annual wage	313 765	349 507	387 172	"	79 930	677 643	777 068	872 551	914 517	931 133	
average annual wage	128	126	132	"	102	108	112	119	122	117	

@ The difference in the number of establishments is made up by related industries, e.g. tents & tarpaulins, employing +/-200 people (Special Report No.60.)
X 1915/16 statistics include the entire Transvaal. It was included to complete the general picture from 1915/16 until 1932/33.
From 1916/17 - 1918/19 the division of male/female employees does not correlate with the total, probably because the industrial Census (lower figure did not include males still registered as employed but in actual fact away at war).
* wholesale and retail establishments.
m&d millinery and dressmaking factories.
t&c tailoring and clothing factories.
+ total black work force.

Source:

Union of South Africa, Office of Census and Statistics,
Special Report no.26 for 1916/17 - 1922/23, and
Office of Census and Statistics,
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Author Brink Elsab├⌐
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