

MAKING AUSTRIAN:  
CULTURAL MEMORY, NATIONALISM, AND PERFORMING IDENTITY  
POLITICS IN LATE IMPERIAL VIENNA

A Thesis  
Presented to  
The Faculty of the Department  
of the School of Theatre and Dance  
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

By  
Weston Twardowski  
May, 2016

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## *Abstract*

Since Carl Schorske's seminal *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, an explosion of scholarship has focused on the capital city's years leading to the Austro-Hungarian Empire's collapse.

While the veritable Petrie dish of nationalism in the city has been commonly addressed in scholarship, the interplay between performances of cultural memory, indeed often a fabrication of shared memory, and the theatrical contributions to nationalist aims, has been largely overlooked. This thesis aims to examine the evolution of two interrelated performances: First, the development of anti-Semitism as key to shared cultural memory in the rhetoric and political rallies of opposing but predominant political leaders Karl Lueger and Georg Schönerer, and second, how this development gave rise to an increased awareness and discussion of nationalism and Zionism. It examines these veiled themes in Viennese theatrical writings and stage productions leading to the conclusion of the First World War, with special attention to the works of the two leading, and largely divergent, authors, Karl Kraus and Arthur Schnitzler.

## *Acknowledgements*

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## *Contents*

Introduction	1
Chapter One: “I Decide Who is a Jew!”	8
Chapter Two: Growing Pains Within “The New Ghetto”	25
Chapter Three: From Old to New, Changing Theatricalities	33
Chapter Four: Redefining Schnitzler	51
Conclusion	70
Works Cited	73
Bibliography	79

## *Introduction*

In Austria contradictions danced an ornate quadrille... How long could such anachronistic confusion last?<sup>1</sup>

Strolling through the streets of Vienna, it is easy to envision oneself a time traveler. In lieu of guitarists and bucket drums, the street musicians are a small chamber orchestra: a cello, two violins, a viola, and of course, a baby grand Steinberg piano. The city offers more formal balls than there are days in a year, and, naturally, all the patrons, clad in proper white tie attire, partake in the grand waltzes. The city center is not merely meticulously designed, but serves as a kind of exposition for the city itself, the buildings specifically constructed to serve as a visual timeline of the Habsburg monarchy's architectural past. But entering Vienna and discovering oneself in the past is nothing new. Indeed, the city's denizens felt they were living in an anachronism as early as the late 1890s. But at the dawning of the twentieth century, concerted efforts to break through this latency emerged across the city forged out of overlapping, yet separate, aims and reactions within the political and artistic world of Vienna.

Over the last few decades, the story of Vienna in the Fin-de-Siècle has been assiduously scrutinized by historiographers intrigued by the wealth of intellectual and cultural innovation seemingly cascading from the capital city. This is understandable, for the story has boundless opportunities. Its themes would whet any author's appetite: love, oppression, discovery, resistance, and above all, sex. A cursory glance at the cast of characters offers an irresistible list of figures, all of whom were aware of each other and, if they

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<sup>1</sup> Frederic Morton. *A Nervous Splendor: Vienna 1888-1889* (New York: Penguin Group, 1979), 15-16.

were not immediate social counterparts, they certainly ran in similar circles. Scholars initially painted these years of ingenuity as a revolt from the retrograde administration and culture of the Empire.<sup>2</sup> Certainly this is a logical starting place, as it is crucial to understanding the Austrian mindset of the Fin-de-Siècle.

The Austrian state in the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century was, if not in disarray, certainly disheveled. This disorder had begun in 1866 with the Austro-Prussian War. The short conflict served not only as one of the seminal wars of German Unification, but also the dispensing of Austrian pretensions towards hegemony. In turn, the long-held dream of German speaking peoples across Europe for a unified German state commanding lands as far north as Denmark, and as far south as the Italian peninsula, had collapsed. This idea of *Mitteleuropa*, a unified German central Europe, was not built upon a centralized nationalism. The Holy Roman Empire had seen a confederation of hundreds of separate states, duchies, and free cities, and Napoleon's unification had only managed to reduce this to some 39. Thus, rather than any nationalistic ideology, the dream of *Mitteleuropa* was born out of a desire to see unity between all those who spoke German and felt tied to German *Kultur*.

The idea of *Kultur* in German political and philosophical writings is unique and merits examination as the diversity of meaning speaks to the very idea of what is "German." Martine Prange offers a useful definition of the German *Kultur* wherein she breaks down the idea into three separate elements: first, she advances that *Kultur* represents a certain, "unity of style," within Germanic culture; secondly, it is tied inexorably to the

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<sup>2</sup> This argument was first pointed to by Schorske. See, Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).



idea of civilization, where this means, “the artistic and moral refinement for man to surmount his barbarism and gain control over his animalistic, violent and instructive nature;” and finally, *Kultur* is the “whole body of artistic, epistemological, moral, religious symbols, productions, systems and practices, by which individuals or a united people attempt to give expression to their thoughts on humanity and its place in the world.”<sup>3</sup>

When the Austro-Prussian War came to a startling conclusion at the Battle of Königgrätz, the traditional understandings of political and military power in Europe were entirely upended. Whereas prior to 1866 Austria had been viewed as the preeminent German power, and among the foremost military powers on the continent, the Habsburg Empire’s shocking defeat simultaneously propelled Prussia into a far greater limelight and deflated all Austrian ambitions for serving as the uniting force for continental Germans.<sup>4</sup>

Aside from redefining the national role of the Empire, the loss also triggered enormous internal instability. It is difficult to over-stress the seemingly impossible disparities within the Habsburg lands. First, there was the reality of the vastness of the geography. Franz Joseph’s official title was as follows:

His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty,  
Franz Joseph I, by the Grace of God Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary, Bohemia, King of Lombardy and Venice, of Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Galicia, Lodomeria and Illyria; King of Jerusalem etc., Archduke of Austria, Grand Duke of Tuscany and Cracow, Duke of Lorraine, of Salzburg, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and of the Bukovina; Grand Prince of Transylvania, Margrave of Moravia; Duke of Upper and Lower Silesia, of Modena, Parma, Piacenza and Guastealla, of Auschwitz, Zator and Teschen, Friuli, Ragusa and Zara; Princely Count of Habsburg and Tyrol, of Kyburg, Gorizia and Gradisca; Prince of Trent and Brixen; Margrave of Upper and Lower Lusatia and in Istria; Count of Hhenems, Feldkirch, Bregenz, Sonnenberg, etc.; Lord of Trieste, of Cattaro, and over the

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<sup>3</sup> Martine Prange. *Nietzsche, Wagner, Europe*. (Berlin: Walter de Grueter, 2013), 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> John Breuilly, *Austria, Prussia and Germany 1806-1871* (London: Pearson Education Group, 2002), 79-81.

Windic march, etc.<sup>5</sup>

This delineation is significant. The Austrian Empire represented scores of separate languages, religious traditions, and cultural and historical groupings. Franz Joseph was well known to speak six languages fluently and another three to a lesser degree.<sup>6</sup> Even more significantly though, there were tremendous inequities in the Empire's economy regionally. While Vienna, Salzburg, and other Austrian lands were generally economically successful, vast swaths of territory were experiencing economic backwardness. In addition to high levels of agrarian poverty, Hungarian lands suffered a chronic lack of industry, infrastructure, and even access to material goods such as iron which would allow for the construction of a modern infrastructure.<sup>7</sup> Hungary had made a real try for independence following the 1848 revolutions which had gripped Europe, however Russia had come to the Austrians' aid and together they had subdued the uprising. By now though the long established alliance between Russia and Austria had been broken after Austria failed to enter the Crimean War on Russia's behalf. Sensing the weakness of the Empire's military and recognizing no ally would come to Austria's side should Hungary attempt another revolution, Magyar nationalists began preparing themselves for another bid for independence<sup>8</sup>. Franz Joseph, realizing the Austro-Prussian War had left his military and economy crippled, reached out to the political and intellectual leaders of Hungary and

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<sup>5</sup> A. Beck, *Hof- und Staats-Handbuch des Kaiserthumes Österreich*, (Vienna: Verlag Der G.J. Manz'schen Buchhandlung, 1868), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Morton, 23.

<sup>7</sup> Katus, L., *Hungary in the Dual Monarchy 1867-1914* (New York, 2008)

<sup>8</sup> Robin Okey. *The Hapsburg Monarchy* (London: MacMillan Press LTD, 2001), 185-190.

sought a compromise. What was reached was the 1867 *Ausgleich*, which created the dual-state of Austria-Hungary.

While the most obvious changes following the *Ausgleich* were the new developments within Hungarian politics (namely the creation of a parliament and the new powers of the Hungarian leadership), Austrian politics too were jarred. The new freedoms gained by Hungary sparked desires across the realm for improved rights and representation in various minority groups' territories. As years of liberal prominence began to waver throughout the 1860s due to shifts in the economic climate, young nationalists grew in volume during the same decade.<sup>9</sup> Especially after seeing the various freedoms Hungary had earned, nationalist leaders took on far more active roles in politics throughout the empire, and the government grew increasingly unpredictable. Prime Minister Eduard Taaffe managed to unite the conservative forces by bringing together both the clerical elements and the Czechs, allowing for an upending of regional politics by the 1870s.

So what exactly were these nationalists fighting for within the Austrian government? While the 1848 revolutions had emancipated most of the male population of the Habsburg Empire there were numerous other strictures put on minority populations.<sup>10</sup> Catholicism was the state religion, German was mandated to be taught in all schools, government officials had to speak German, and all official government documentation and legal proceedings were conducted in German. Culturally, German holidays were rec-

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<sup>9</sup> John W. Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 280-281.

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted though that Jews would fail to receive emancipation until the 1867 *Ausgleich*, and universal manhood suffrage would only arrive after the turn of the century.

ognized and celebrated, often at the expense of minority traditions. In all these ways, the Austrian German held greater power and prominence within society across the Empire than minorities, even in the multitudinous places where Germans were the minority of the population, such as Transylvania, Bohemia, Moravia, and the Italian provinces.

Adding to this mix of language and culture was the Jewish population. Anti-Semitism was long etched into the mindset of many Austrians, but this only grew in volume and intensity in the latter half of the nineteenth century. 1857 saw the lifting of land residency laws which allowed for greater mobility of populations throughout the Empire. This, coupled with the improved railways and infrastructure being built throughout Austrian lands during the 1860s and 1870s, allowed for Jewish populations to reposition themselves in better economic climates, as well as closer to families and friends. Thus Vienna saw a boom in her Jewish population from 1857-1880. The fewer than 16,000 Jewish inhabitants in the city in 1854 represented a little less than three-percent of the city's population.<sup>11</sup> This number would swell to nearly 100,000 by 1890, or some twelve-percent of the population.<sup>12</sup>

While the increasing number and visibility of a Jewish community in Vienna was a key factor in the rise of rampant anti-Semitism in the city, there are other major contributing factors to this. First off were the newly formed Jewish ghettos which had the dual effects of lowering the desirability of nearby areas as well as driving up residential costs as properties were occupied by the growing Jewish population. The other major fac-

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<sup>11</sup> Boyer, *Political Radicalism* 79.

<sup>12</sup> Anton G. Rabinbach, "The Migration of Galician Jews to Vienna, 1857-1880," *Austrian History Yearbook* 11 (1975): 45.

tor was the decline of the artisan workers. Since the 1850s, the infrastructure and industrial output of Vienna, and the Empire as a whole, had been undergoing major improvements. This led to a decreased need for tradesmen and artisans, who found themselves continually replaced by industrial goods and factories. As these factions' economic prospects waned, the Jewish population conversely grew more prominent both in the economy and social visibility. The Jews who arrived in the 1850s were largely tradesmen and small craft workers, but by the 1870s a flourishing economy had formed around Jewish industrialists who had found great success in furniture and clothing retail shops. These middle class workers made sure to prioritize the education of their children, leading to greater success for those Jews emerging into society by the 1880s and 1890s. Meanwhile, the artisans, who were watching as their own industry was rapidly dying, found in the Viennese Jewry an easy scapegoat for their economic woes and pointedly derided Jews.<sup>13</sup> These initial disputes only grew as time went on. The Jews remained a popular scapegoat, and traditional anti-Semitic sentiments, especially regarding Jews as greedy or cheats, continued to grow in public mindset as these early Jewish success stories became prominent, wealthy members of society. By 1900 anti-Semitism had grown into a reality of life for Vienna, where the anti-Semitic press was an industry all unto its own, systematic legal abuses of Jews were common, and, above all, political parties utilized anti-Semitic fervor as a major vehicle to power.

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<sup>13</sup> Boyer, 80-81.

## *Chapter I: "I Decide Who is a Jew!"*

I must... make clear what I mean by Judaism; I mean neither a race nor a people nor a recognised 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. Antisemitism itself will confirm my point of view.<sup>14</sup>

Karl Lueger is an outré figure in Viennese history. First there is the virulent anti-Semite, leading rallies with racially charged rhetoric, decrying the Jewish population within the state, and inspiring a young man who went on to become the arguably the single most reviled figure in world history: Adolf Hitler. On the other hand, though, there is a different Lueger. A Lueger who was viewed by his friends and enemies alike as slavishly devoted to his duties as mayor, a Lueger who helped build up both the prestige of Vienna and her Emperor, a Lueger who remains a central figure atop statues, monuments, and countless plaques visible throughout present Vienna. History has tried, and failed, to reconcile the vastly different opinions on Vienna's most famous Mayor. In that process debates have sprung forth regarding the actual degree of his anti-Semitism. Did Lueger truly believe his rhetoric, or was it merely to gain votes? Was he personally anti-Semitic or merely publicly so? Regardless of these questions, what is undeniable is Lueger, more than any Austrian political leader before him, managed to unite his public and draw tremendous support from his remarkable oratory, based largely around anti-Semitic bombast. But what allowed Lueger to achieve this success was not merely his oratorical prowess, but what his speaking offered to his audience: a feeling of unity and common-

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<sup>14</sup> Otto Weinigen, *Sex and Character* 303.

ness of background. What he was effectively doing was creating a systemic idea of who was Austrian. And in doing so, he birthed a movement of supporters and, simultaneously, numerous other factions who were excluded.

To generalize, it could be said that the history of the Austrian Empire is a history of languages. The multi-national state included ethnic Germans, Magyars, Czechs, Slovenians, Romanians, Ukrainians, Italians, Poles, Serbs, Roma, Slovaks, Croats, and Jews, amongst others. Following the Revolutions of 1848, the dominant political issue of the empire became the rising nationalist tide within. Austria had long used German *Kultur* and language as the primary tools of maintaining authority in the empire. By mandating that German be taught in schools, and ensuring it was the official language of record, legal policy had codified the supremacy of ethnic Germans for scores of years.

The term “ethnic German” is problematic though. Austrian Germans share a bond to their northern neighbors, both linguistically and culturally. And indeed, as Germany itself had only unified in 1871, it offered a poor example as to a definition of Germanic at this date. For a knowledge of the language and culture is insufficient to be considered German; to choose a prominent example, Franz Kafka was born to a German mother and Czech father, grew up speaking exclusively German despite living in Prague, and only learned Czech in the middle of his life. Kafka wrote entirely in German, yet was never considered, even by himself, truly German. It was common for Ethnic Jews to speak German exclusively and herald it as their mother tongue. While Jews had no ties to a state outside of Austria, as can be argued by other prominent nationalist figures who claim dual cultural identity, there remains a clear division between German and Jewish. Our

example of Kafka is further complicated by being all three—a fact which bears heavy influence on his writings.<sup>15</sup>

Thus is formed the dilemma of how to define nationality. The most prominent identifier is language, followed by religion, and finally regional cultural traditions and rituals. To assign self-determination to individuals at this time would be erroneous. Karl Kraus was a famously self-hating Jew who raged against Judaism throughout his life and converted to Catholicism at a young age by choice. None of those actions, though, ever helped divorce him from his Jewish heritage in the eyes of the public, and, often, an imposter. On the entirely opposite end of the spectrum, Theodor Herzl, the father of Zionism, could never shed his Hungarian nationality, nor his need for communicating and writing in German, however hard he may have wished to have fashioned a public image of himself as solely Jewish.<sup>16</sup>

Clearly the nature of identity was a confusing area within the Habsburg realm. It spoke to a larger issue within Central Europe regarding how to not only determine one's primary cultural and identity markers, but then further where one stood politically in society in response to these very real overlapping and separate identities. It is therefore unsurprising that we find the great thinkers and cultural leaders of the day attempting to reconcile or remedy these divisions, Nietzsche's *Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* being a prime example. Acting on Richard Wagner's theories of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or a total work of art, Nietzsche saw in Wagner a means of unifying a central German

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<sup>15</sup> Walter Herbert, Sokel. "Kafka as a Jew." *New Literary History*, no. 30 (1990): 840.

<sup>16</sup> William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972) 206, 308.



identity. The construct of pulling the disparate elements together to form a collective narrative was extremely important in this quest. Nietzsche's focus on the Greeks, and his calls for German artists to echo Greek tragedy, is directly tied to the Greek station in the Western mindset as founders of both great myths and modern government. Nietzsche's new envisioning of tragedy as the opportunity to unite the German people and establish a new German identity was quickly adopted by Vienna's youth. It also creates an interesting framework for examining the political movements which developed in the Fin-de-Siècle.

The growing nationalist fervor which came into existence following the 1867 creation of the dual-state led to a new attention to defining German identity within the monarchy. Georg Schönerer, the leader of the pan-Germanic movement and political party, would come to be perhaps the most recognizable face in this maelstrom. Schönerer may not have enjoyed Lueger's fierce political popularity, however he still had an enormous impact on Austrian thinking. By forging a manifesto with Victor Adler, Heinrich Friedjung, and Engelbert Pernerstorfer (all of whom besides Schönerer would eventually distance themselves from the agenda as anti-Semitism became paramount to his political philosophy) which became known as the Linz Program of 1882, Schönerer launched the first movement for the Germanization of Austria; this was more than backlash from the compromises of 1867, though. Schönerer's true aim was for pan-German nationalism and to unite all German *Volk* through language and *Kultur*—concepts that became canon law to the Pan-Germanists.<sup>17</sup> While Lueger was no Pan-Germanist, he did borrow heavily from

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<sup>17</sup> William J. McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974) 120-128.

Schönerer's ideas to help establish a national identity for Germans.

Schönerer's greatest contribution to the political mindset of Austria was a single political ideology. The concept of unity for all Germans, harkening back to earlier dreams of *Mittleuropa*, ensured his party's popularity. He collected votes from enormously diverse groups, ranging from liberals, conservatives, marxists, socialists, democrats, clerics, working men, and the wealthy. Schönerer enhanced his strength by uniting the population against those viewed as outsiders. He stressed the importance of true Germans over other ethnicities, purporting the damage other nationalities did within the state, targeting Czechs, Slavs, and above all, Jews. Indeed, much of the early success and base support of Schönerer came from his anti-Semitic rhetoric. While the diversity of the pan-Germanist movement obviously presented some strengths, it also served as the faction's greatest weakness. With so many varied interests, gaining any meaningful role in office was difficult, and then placating the party's political base became nearly impossible.<sup>18</sup> It was for this reason that Schönerer never gained the tremendous popularity or influence of Lueger, and his party never held the same degree of power as of Lueger's Christian-Socialists. Despite this, Lueger recognized the influence of the pan-Germanic fervor, and latched onto the power of anti-Semitism as a policy point to boost his own popularity. Within Vienna, Jews represented the largest and most visible minority within the city, which explains why Lueger utilized not the whole of Schönerer's agenda, but merely the most recognizable and palpable racism which would reach the residents of Vienna.

Lueger, on the other hand, was able to use these tactics to far better political ad-

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<sup>18</sup> Andrew G. Whiteside, *The Socialism of Fools* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975) 301.

vantage by conjoining his racist rhetoric with traditional conservative values and policies allowing him to appeal to a large base and guarantee his office. However, his anti-Semitic rhetoric did make him one other extremely important political opponent: Emperor Franz Josef. The Emperor had long supported the rights of the Jewish people within the state, and was known to have regular contact and friendships with rabbis throughout the empire. He had an extremely low tolerance for anti-Semitism and is largely credited with helping to keep the growing force's political strength at bay for several decades.<sup>19</sup>

Lueger had entered Vienna's political arena at a young age as a member of the liberal party but quickly left this group for the party, of which he would ultimately become the arch-head: the Christian Socialists. Over the 1870s and 1880s, Lueger achieved command over the party, successfully unifying the middle class, urban workers, the Christian right, and anti-immigrant communities. By running on a platform of Christian values and antisemitism, Lueger had created the most powerful political party in Viennese history. By the time he started running for mayor in the 1880s, he was elected four successive times—only to be rejected for the position at the behest of Emperor Franz Josef.<sup>20</sup> Finally, in 1897 Franz Josef acquiesced and allowed Lueger to take the office.

Lueger's early period in office was concurrent with, and affected by, one of the major political crises facing the empire. In April of 1897, Count Kasimir Felix Badeni, the current Prime-Minister, sought to gain the support of the Czechs in parliament. To do so, he reached out with an ordinance the Czech's had long demanded: the right to Czech

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<sup>19</sup> Steven Beller, "Kraus's Firework" in *Staging the Past*, ed. Marcia Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001), 62.

<sup>20</sup> Boyer, 56.

language in Bohemia. With the passing of the ordinance, it became official policy that all civil servants in the Czech lands must speak Czech in addition to German. Obviously, this represented a major symbolic victory for the Czech's but also a very real political victory. While most educated Czechs spoke German, few Germans had acquired Czech. The ordinance not only made life easier for the Czech population who had to have regular dealings with Government administrators, and allowed for greater power and representation in the government, but most significantly it forced German civil servants to either learn Czech or yield their offices.<sup>21</sup>

This agreement with the Czech nationalists triggered an immediate panic. Schönerer lambasted the action as a capitulation and an insult to Germanic pride and superiority.<sup>22</sup> The pan-Germanists banded together and began rallying supporters from across the country. The Austrian parliament was thrown into chaos. Days of parliamentary procedural maneuvers and tactical stalls were launched, with Schönerer delivering near constant speeches and filibusters calling for the immediate revoking of the language reforms. As the months went on the debates continued, with Schönerer pulling support broadly from Germans across the nation and from other political groups in parliament (such as the Volkpartei and Social Democrats). By late May, parliament was unable to function. Badeni sought to wade through the summer, expecting the gridlock to lift by the fall. However, by June the people of the Monarchy were in a furor. A demonstration in Eger on July 11<sup>th</sup> quickly turned riotous, and numerous police had to be called forth from

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<sup>21</sup> Okey, 306-307.

<sup>22</sup> Philip Pajakowski, "The Polish Club, Badeni, and the Austrian Parliamentary Crisis of 1897," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 35 (1993): 115-117.

neighboring cities to help assist in keeping order. When Badeni sought to meet with opposition leaders in mid-July, he was flatly refused. As the parliamentary disorder continued, fuel was added to the fire: a continuation of the *Ausgleich* agreement had to be reached before the year's conclusion. Parliament remained in gridlock through November, only now the sessions turned violent as brawls took hold, and Schönerer famously repeatedly stole the Prime Minister's brass bell and threw it across the hall multiple times. The chaos in government was soon emulated in the streets. Minor riots took place across the country. Finally, at the end of November, Franz Joseph removed Badeni from his role as Prime Minister and negotiated with the parliamentary leadership. The pan-Germanists left with a new law requiring German to be recognized as the official language throughout the nation, a victory for the party.<sup>23</sup>

The Badeni crisis of 1897 not only saw a rise in the national prominence of Schönerer but also helped pave the way to Karl Lueger's popularity in office. Franz Joseph, in the midst of Badeni's launching of the language reforms, coupled with the general lack of parliamentary cooperation, realized the continued affronting of the Viennese voters was unacceptable. Given the political realities swirling around the city, as a means of appeasement Franz Joseph had Lueger sworn in on 8 April, 1897, just two days after the initial outcry over Badeni's agreement with the Czechs. From this point on, though, Lueger would actively, and successfully, court the Emperor's good will. Lueger's success lay in large measure to his deft creation of a shared cultural memory between himself and the idea of the Emperor. The mayor knew to truly take the Christian Socials

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<sup>23</sup> Whiteside, 185-187.

to supremacy in Viennese politics he had to accomplish two goals: first, he needed to force the Emperor into at least begrudgingly accepting his party, and second, he had to make Christian Socialism synonymous with a national Austrian image. By far, the easiest way of accomplishing this goal was through Imperial pageantry. Once in power, Lueger did many things to make himself an icon of Vienna—so much so that to this day one may wander throughout the streets and regularly encounter Lueger in plaques in the Wien Staatsoper and the Burgtheater and in the numerous commemorative monuments. Despite the fact his anti-Semitic politics have long made him controversial in the city, he still holds numerous supporters a century after his death. But while Lueger was trying to gain his following in the 1880s and 1890s, out of office he did not have the option of sponsoring great monuments, parks, buildings, or showing off his yet unformed image of the tireless servant of the people. Instead, he worked to celebrate and glorify the image of Franz Josef and to stand as close as possible to him for the proverbial photo-op.<sup>24</sup>

In 1880 Lueger had easily garnered the support of the city council, which he was already a member of, for a *Volksfest* in celebration of Franz Josef's birthday. The festival was a major success and helped align the Christian Socialist party with the Imperial government exactly as Lueger had intended, regardless of Franz Josef's lukewarm approval of the event.<sup>25</sup> Lueger continued in this tradition in 1897, in the midst of the Badeni Crisis, by leaping at an opportunity to support the Emperor: a major Corpus Christi festival.

It is essential to recognize the nervousness of the royal family during 1897. Riot-

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<sup>24</sup> Daniel L. Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2005) 145-148.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 148.

ing throughout the Empire, and particularly in Vienna, had severely called into question the stability of the Monarchy, and indeed, the authority of Franz Joseph. Lueger, only just in office, recognized an opportunity to build the Emperor's image, serving to calm the roiling instability in the city and simultaneously helping solidify his position with Franz Joseph. The solution was to stage a large Corpus Christi festival. The event was a traditional annual festival, but Lueger enlarged the celebration and added enormous pomp and circumstance. The festival was designed, rather than to merely look back on its religious roots for inspiration, to reveal the role of Franz Joseph within the church. Going back to Rudolf I, the first Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor, the Habsburgs monarchs had enjoyed a visible and powerful status within the Catholic Church. The Corpus Christi festival of 1897 sought to combine the religious event with political posturing, resurrecting Franz Joseph in the now non-existent position of Holy Roman Emperor, ruler of all the Habsburg lands and leader to its many disparate nationalities. The year's procession included all the local religious leaders, ranging from the Archbishop down to priests and deacons. They were headed by Franz Joseph, accompanied by banners and flags displaying familial crests and mottos declaring the unity Franz Joseph's reign had achieved and the long peacetime his leadership had ensured.<sup>26</sup>

The procession followed Franz as he rode from the Hofburg Palace to St. Stephan's Cathedral to attend high mass. Lueger was included in the procession, first in line behind the Imperial family and lieutenants and the religious high order. Behind him were numerous governors, administrators, city counselors, knights, other dignitaries, and

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<sup>26</sup> James Shedel. "Emperor, Church, and People: Religion and Dynastic Loyalty during the Golden Jubilee of Franz Joseph," *The Catholic Historical Review* 76 (1990): 76-78.

finally, the heir to the throne, Franz Ferdinand. The procession returned after mass, to a gun salute and military examination led by Franz Joseph. Lueger and his office ensured the city was bedecked with Imperial regalia. They also ensured security forces were prominently displayed throughout the city, both for security as well as for their imagery and presence lending to the power display. The event was regarded as a remarkable success, with tremendous crowds in attendance as well as noticeable safety and peace throughout the city, despite occurring on June 9th, a high point in tension during the crisis.<sup>27</sup>

A year later, Lueger followed the success of the Corpus Christi celebrations with his largest event dedicated to the Emperor: Vienna's celebration of the Imperial Golden Jubilee.<sup>28</sup> The 1898 golden anniversary of Franz Josef's reign as emperor coincided with the second year of Lueger's time as mayor. To make sure his hand was firmly running the operation, he stacked the committee running the jubilee with a majority of his political cronies and supporters. This committee was tasked with the following orders:

1. To produce an official city council address. The address, to be executed in an artistic fashion, would be delivered by a delegation led by the mayor and was to reaffirm the loyalty and gratefulness of the city to the emperor.
2. To reserve one million gulden to fund the construction of a city Franz Joseph Jubilee Charity Hospital.
3. To provide 500,000 in city funds to create the City of Vienna Emperor Franz Joseph Jubilee Insurance Institution.
4. To provide (limited) financial and moral support for the building of a Jubilee Church.
5. To produce a jubilee commemorative medallion.
6. To participate in the jubilee exhibition.
7. To sponsor as yet undefined jubilee celebrations, including an undefined homage of the schoolchildren.
8. To support the Kaiser Jubilee and Fifth Austrian United Shooting Festival.
9. To organize a general illumination of Vienna on 1 December.
10. To distribute commemorative publications to all of Vienna's schoolchildren on 2 De-

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 78-80.

<sup>28</sup> Unowsky, 150.



ember.<sup>29</sup>

Certainly the most lasting of these events were those which entered the archive: the physical constructions as well as the publications and coinage that lived on past the actual events. The church was, of course, immediately controversial, as it was a clear antagonism designed as a political statement by the Christian Socialists. Indeed, the construction of the Church was part of a larger movement within the Jubilee to display Franz Joseph as a kind of Christ figure, eternally suffering for his people, yet working tirelessly for their good and benefit. Great measures were taken during the Jubilee to reinforce this image, including various church and city publications which reported to be biographies of the Emperor, but were ultimately religious and political propaganda. Further, the iconography of the event was deliberately tied to traditional depictions of saints and Christ and were designed to cultivate an appearance of Holiness for the Emperor. These depictions and narratives were especially useful for the higher ranking members of the church, and for Lueger's Christian Socialist party, but were a major source of outcry for the pan-Germanists who viewed the Empire as too deeply entrenched in the power of Rome and sought German independence from any rival power.<sup>30</sup>

The issue which brought the most media attention, both positive and negative, was by far the homage to children. What this became was a carefully choreographed pageant of some 70,000 Viennese children representing nearly every school in the city. The children were dressed in fine white linens, their best clothing and escorted by parents

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<sup>29</sup> Unowsky, 152-153.

<sup>30</sup> Shedel, 90-92.

and teachers as they walked in synchronized lines by grade, school, and district over the Ringstraße. The boys carried flags, the girls were lined with sashes in the state and city's colors. The celebration marched past the Emperor and was accompanied by music and speeches, as well as patriotic accoutrements which bedecked the town (banners, flags, etc.). This use of children for patriotic display was unique in Austrian history. The full procession took one hour and was alternately viewed as the celebration of the nation's youth and a fine showing of imperial pride as Lueger's supporters and party did, or as a blatant attempt at manipulating children for political gain, as was suggested by liberal and anti-Lueger publications.<sup>31</sup>

It did not take long for Georg Schönerer to rally his own Pan-Germanists against Lueger. they labeled the rally as the "Path of Misery of the Viennese Children." Despite this, the walk was an enormous success. At the end of the procession, the imperial family rode to Lueger and his officials where they had observed the event in full regalia. There all the dignitaries listened while a choir of 1,000 children sang to the politicians. As the story goes, Franz Josef, famous for always responding to public events and festivities with a simple, "How lovely, I am so pleased," broke from his traditional phrasing at the end of the children's parade, to say, "It was something extraordinary. It is a comfort to me

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<sup>31</sup> Unowsky, 160.

in this year of many difficulties.”<sup>32</sup>

Events continued after this spectacle. A *Volksfest*, days of hunting and finally a day of citywide illumination, concluded several weeks of celebration. By the end, Vienna had overwhelmingly thrown the largest and most internationally respected jubilee event in the empire. Papers from Paris and London covered the days of events. Franz Josef slowed his policies of preventing Lueger and the Christian Socialists from gaining too much traction, and, most significantly, Lueger had declared his position as a leader of patriots.<sup>33</sup>

The year began with pomp and celebration. The year ended with tragedy, as the empire mourned the loss of the assassinated Empress Elisabeth (who is still beloved and celebrated throughout Austria today). The death had another effect as well, though: all imperial celebrations were cancelled in lieu of mourning. Thus the Viennese celebrations became the most celebrated and remembered of all the golden jubilee commemorative events. Ten years later, Lueger again used Franz Josef’s anniversary for political gain by launching a follow-up jubilee celebration that, while not of the same level of glamour as the 1898, was still enough to remind the city of his long history of imperial support and his constructed image of the patriotic father the Vienna. Lueger had more than accom-

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. There is a story which gives added significance to Franz Joseph’s comment. In 1869 the new Vienna Opera House on the Ringstraße was completed. It was a critical and popular failure. The papers dubbed the structure the, “Konniggratz of Architecture,” a reference to the disastrous battle of Konniggratz where Austria definitively lost the Austro-Prussian War. The Emperor in particular was critical of the new building and disappointed with the outcome. Following this tremendous failure, one of two chief architects, Eduard van der Null was found hanging from a rope in his apartment. Franz Joseph was horrified and held himself responsible for the architect’s suicide. Following this event the Emperor made it his standard practice to merely give the same line, or a minor variant, regardless of what event, function, or thing he might be asked to critique: “It is lovely. I am so pleased.”

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 165.

plished his goals at the Golden Jubilee. He had managed to tap into what Hobsbawm refers to as “invented tradition.”<sup>34</sup> At both the Corpus Christi and the Golden Jubilee, Lueger helped further the national image for the Emperor in service of maintaining Imperial power and national order. By tapping into recognizable existing traditions (such as the religious themes of both events) and adding on new elements (the presence of military patronage mixed with religion, as well as the new texts and press materials released by the city and state) these helped to craft new ideas of both nationalism and unity. By establishing these principles through repeatable practices and events, they allowed for the continuation of these structures as a means of control in the future as well. Iconography in particular became crucial, as Lueger would continue to utilize his own name and image on structures throughout the city, with startling similarity to the Franz Joseph reliefs. Lueger’s latching on to the larger example of Franz Joseph shows how these new traditions could be utilized on lower levels as well as the national.<sup>35</sup>

There is another way we might view the actions of Lueger and Schönerer, though. If we return to Nietzsche’s conceptions of Apollonian and Dionysian, an interesting framework emerges. As Boyer points out, much of the divide between Lueger and Schönerer came from their framing of politics:

“The gap between Christian Social and Social Democratic loyalists had widened to form a chasm in Viennese society, encompassing religion, education, law, and dynastic privilege. In their celebration of organized, machine-like power and in their contempt for sectarian political minorities, however, the two parties did have powerful shared attributes. To the extent that both tried to subordinate “national” rhetoric and emotions to the strategic needs of the social policy prerogatives and aspirations of their constituents, they

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<sup>34</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 1.

<sup>35</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger eds. *The Invention of Tradition*(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 263-265.

sought to define the past in terms of the future rather than, as Schönerer and the rabid nationalists did, to enchain the future in the mythology of the past. Both preferred spectacle to myth.”<sup>36</sup>

William McGrath takes Nietzsche’s examination of art and applies it to Austrian politics. McGrath correctly links the artistic movements of the Fin-de-Siècle to the political stirrings within the state. What is more interesting though, are the linkages of Nietzsche’s Greek frame to the manner in which the political unfolding were organized. Clearly the events of Schönerer and Lueger were intended to unleash a Dionysian spirit of wild political fervor and support amongst the attendees. Lueger’s language makes this especially clear, as in his public speech in 1891, where he not only targeted Austrian Jews as a source of wickedness in the state, but then goes further to lay out his plan for the farmer, tradesmen, officials, and widows and orphans, claiming each has been slighted by the liberals and Jews within the city. He closes by calling upon each group (and presumably the whole audience) with “cries for vengeance,” wherein we may infer he led a cry, which was in turn echoed by the crowd he was inciting.<sup>37</sup>

This search for Dionysian spirit was mitigated though by the legacies Schönerer and Lueger were attempting to simultaneously craft and hold onto. Schönerer’s determination of Germany as the successor of Rome and the Holy Roman Empire was very much a platform by which he campaigned for the superiority and righteousness of Germans across the state. Lueger’s utilization of Imperial history and glory to solidify his own position and power, demonstrated so well at events like the Jubilee, show how he attempted

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<sup>36</sup> McGrath, 28-34.

<sup>37</sup> Richard S. Geehr, *I Decide Who Is a Jew! The Papers of Dr. Karl Lueger*. (Lanham: University Press of America, 1982).

to the connect to the past to establish his own political sanctity. Lueger, by extending the mythology of the past and the Apollonian elements of Imperial regalia and doric imagery to bolster his own position, allowed him to develop his tremendous political power and popularity popularity—leading to his ultimate triumph over Schönerer and the pan-Germanists. What Lueger did over the course of his career was beyond clever, it was transformative. He united disparate groups within Vienna to align to a common cause and then utilized every public event to underline how anti-Semitism helped further the nation. By utilizing anti-Semitic rhetoric and performance under a veil of patriotism he was able to accomplish multiple goals of reinforcing his political agenda and appearance, while simultaneously gaining the reputation of a national loyalist. By tapping into the Austrian love of artifice and ostentation, he aligned himself with both an intangible image, as well as the very real structures which dominated the cityscape.

It is no small coincidence Hitler would look to him as a model years later in his own quest to solidify Nazi power. Indeed, one may see, to a far more horrific extent, how the groundwork Lueger laid would ultimately give birth to the architectural propaganda envisioned by Albert Speer with his temple of lights in Nürnberg and his plans for a new reich capital. Leni Riefenstahl's use of these images on film were perhaps the greatest modern culmination of this early Germanized political mythos. These seeds were all planted by Lueger. Vienna's most famous mayor utilized the patriotism to reinforce national identity, as hazy as that notion was, and in the process, forged a moment in national memory wherein cultural consciousness was elaborated via unity against the Jewish nation.



## Chapter II: Growing Pains within “The New Ghetto”

Kleine Kinder, die schon ernste, alte Gesichter haben, und es war mir, als blickten sie in einer Angst nach dem schwarzen Loch, das auch sie einmal verschlingen wird.

Little children, who already have serious, old faces, and it seemed to me they gazed in fear towards a black hole which will, one day, devour them as well.<sup>38</sup>

The impressive growth of the Jewish population in Austria, and especially the rapid rise of Jews into the middle class, did not merely spur on the rapid development of anti-Semitism. The growth also forced cultural readdressing within the Jewish communities. It is not surprising that, against a backdrop of a radically changing social and economic positions, coupled with vehement hatred from the numerous presses and political groups, Jewish identity in the late imperial period was in flux. Thus there were two major viewpoints which came to dominate the late nineteenth century mindset of Jewish life: first, those with a willingness to be assimilated into Austrian *Kultur*; second, those who favored Jewish nationalism within the state.

This dichotomy is played out in a variety of ways. First and foremost, we see the assimilation of Jews into Austrian society, and often Christian society. Many Jews converted that they might marry into Christian families, Gustav Mahler perhaps being the most famous example for his marriage to Alma Schindler (known better as Alma Mahler throughout her many marriages).<sup>39</sup> Others, frequently referred to as “self-hating Jews,”

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<sup>38</sup> German text, Theodor Herzl, *Das Neue Ghetto*, (Wien: R. Löwit Verlag, 1920), 87. Translation my own.

<sup>39</sup> Wistrich, Robert S. *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 68.



sought to remove themselves from Jewish identity and culture, the most famous examples being Karl Kraus and Otto Weininger. Kraus famously railed against the Jewish press, especially *Die Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna's premier newspaper at which Kraus had famously turned down a position to start his rival publication *Die Fackel*. Otto Weininger holds a less prominent position in modern memory, but he earned fame for his mammoth tome *Geschlecht und Charakter (Sex and Character)*. The work is a fairly scathing examination which berates women, homosexuals, and Jews all as inferior beings. Weininger's work only caught public attention after his suicide at age 23, but it did leave an indelible impression on the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who famously used the text in classes for years. Wittgenstein disagreed with Weininger's entire thesis and beliefs, but viewed the work as significant in the construction of its argumentation.<sup>40</sup>

What was becoming ever more apparent though, was within the empire anti-Semitism had moved from the realm of religious intolerance to racial hatred. Those who converted still recognized they were outsiders and faced unique challenges in the public eye (something which plagued Mahler throughout his career). It can then come as no surprise that early assimilationist Jews like Victor Adler, who had attended premier schools in Vienna and then entered politics successfully, eventually grew conflicted with their position. Adler had started alongside Schönerer, but left his circle when the German nationalists' rhetoric left the realm of unity and began distancing German identity from outsider groups in favor of a stricter policy of German racial identity.<sup>41</sup> This most notably targeted

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 532.

<sup>41</sup> William J. McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974) 120-128.

the Jews, but also other racial minorities and even rival power bodies, such as the Catholic Church who the Nationalists viewed as having interests subversive to the German people despite the popularity and prevalence of the Church in the Habsburg lands.

It is important to remember that many of the most prominent supporters of assimilation maintained this position well into the twentieth century (Kraus perhaps most prominently, although we will later examine where his writing belies his public façade). However, by the early 1900s attitudes within the Jewish community were shifting. The Dreyfus Affair in France had caused serious concerns with European Jewry across nations. While Theodor Herzl would later claim this as a major influence in his writing of *The Jewish State* and effectual launch of modern political Zionism, there is sufficient evidence to doubt the event was as seminal as Herzl later claimed.<sup>42</sup> That said, the 1895 public degradation of Dreyfus did conveniently coalesce with Herzl's own early Jewish nationalist awakenings. The previous year he had penned *Das neue Ghetto* (*The New Ghetto*). It would be years before the production reached a stage in Vienna, partially because of the general weakness of Herzl's earlier drama and partially because he insisted the work premier anonymously as he didn't want the work to face scrutiny from being associated with him prior to its performance (he eventually relented on this point, which allowed for the 1898 production). Out of all Herzl's dramatic works, *Ghetto* is typically the only one given much scholastic examination today.<sup>43</sup> This is not only due to the commer-

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<sup>42</sup> Jacques Kornberg. *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1994), 48.

<sup>43</sup> Bernhard Greiner. "‘What Will People Say’ Herzl as Author of Comedies," in Mark H. Gelbner ed. *Theodor Herzl: From Europe to Zion* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2007) 150.

cial and critical failure of his other plays, generally all of which are fairly trivial and predictable comedies, but also the more domineering reality that *Ghetto* is his only theatrical piece to investigate the state of Jewish culture or position in society.

*Das neue Ghetto* shows us a young lawyer, Samuel, who marries into an elite and wealthy Jewish banking family. Over the course of the play, Samuel grows further and further disenchanted with Jewish life, comes to openly resent the materialism of his new family, and is ultimately conspired against by his in-laws and some notable anti-Semites. Samuel's enemies arrange for one of his former rivals, whom many years ago Samuel had declined to duel, to resubmit his challenge. Samuel is pressured now by his new world of elites into fulfilling the challenge and, given his precarious position as a Jewish man in Viennese society, is forced to undergo the combat. He is mortally wounded in the duel and, as his son stands over him praying, the play ends with Samuel's declaration, "Ich will – hinaus!... Hinaus – aus – dem Ghetto!"<sup>44</sup>

*Das neue Ghetto* was not well received. The anti-Semitic press in Vienna assaulted it as a ridiculous attempt by the Jewish population to stir anti-Christian support in the country. Jewish publications felt the piece portrayed Jews poorly and did far too little in decrying anti-Semitism in the empire. Even the more neutral presses who approached the work purely on its artistic merits were unkind to what they viewed as a weakly constructed and overly dramatic nature of the piece. Herzl would later record the experience as a miserable one, writing in his diary of the Vienna premiere in 1898, "[the Neue Freie Presse] raged at my *Ghetto* before the performance and caused me nervous cardiac

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<sup>44</sup> "I want—out!... Out—of—the ghetto!"

pains...” the Berlin reception was even colder than Vienna’s mediocre one. Herzl’s entire entry dedicated to the event was a mere sentence, “The Berlin critics demolished my *New Ghetto*.”<sup>45</sup>

*Ghetto* presents Herzl scholars with a surprising side to the Zionist leader. The core of the work is hardly Zionist; in fact, it not only fails to indict anti-Semites but attacks the Jews of Vienna. In Herzl’s mind, Viennese Jewry was overly obsessed with wealth and status, ignorant to their own needs as a people, and arrogant in their refusal to leave the ghetto (and, in turn, their Jewishness) behind them. This young Herzl was not embracing his own heritage, but rather coming dangerously close to calling for assimilation. Further, while he recognized the evils of anti-Semitism, he did not feel that the hatred demonstrated to the Jewish population had caused their lower positions in society, but rather the refusal by Jews to stand up for themselves and leave behind antiquated ideas of corrupt communities and self-imposed cultural segregation were the roots of the outcast state of the Jewish people.

Yet within the piece too we see the origins of the figure Herzl would become. There is a keen awareness of the wretchedness felt by the Jewish people written into the work. And while Herzl openly points blame on the Jewish cultural and religious elite, he turns a far more compassionate tone towards the future Jewish peoples. The quote which opens this chapter, speaking of children who will fall into the dark trap laid in front of them by the older Jewish elites, demonstrates Herzl’s passion for those who he feels will suffer the most unless the Jewish population is able to remedy their position within the

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<sup>45</sup> Theodor Herzl, *Diaries*, trans. Marvin Lowenthal (New York: Dial Press, 1956), 610-612.

Habsburg state. It is from this position we may keenly recognize how Herzl will evolve over the next few years. 1895 saw the publication of his *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*), commonly viewed as the modern birth of political Zionism. Scholars have regularly pointed to the fact that the work, which certainly feels invective in its tone, is ultimately divided in its message. Jörg Thunecke warns of oversimplifying the play when he says, “Consequently, statements to the effect that Herzl’s play was ‘ein zionistisches Stück’ and ‘vital for his philosophy of Zionism and for his blueprint of the reborn nation in the future Jewish State’ are misleading, for Herzl, at this juncture, was not proposing any practical solutions, and it can be seen as a Zionist play only in retrospect.”<sup>46</sup> Indeed, Herzl had to spend many years arguing to his colleagues and friends that his play was not an attack on the Jewish people.

Yet as time went on, Herzl’s position on the best course of action for the Jewish people became clear. As he took up the mantle of Zionism, his motivations and aims became far clearer. His annual meetings of the Zionist council were hallmarks of Jewish thought, as well as political machination. His leadership of Jews into politics helped to lay the groundwork for a liberal revival in political power, and ultimately the beginnings of Jewish power in elected office, by the 1910s (several years after his early death in 1904). But most significantly, Herzl’s spurring of the Zionist movement allowed for an outgrowth of Jewish thought and culture. Karl Schorske’s legendary work, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, helps point not only to the vast intellectual and artistic richness to be found in

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<sup>46</sup> Jörg Thunecke, “‘Dynamite’ or ‘Affront’? The Jewish Question in Herzl’s Play *Das Neue Ghetto*,” in Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms (eds.) *Theodor Herzl and the Origins of Zionism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 62.

Late Imperial Vienna, but it also highlights the very significant and surprisingly ubiquitous Jewish contributions to this flourishing scene.

This success is two-fold. First, there is the outpouring of a Jewish culture in response to the threat presented to Jewish identity. Just as Zionism flourished most successfully and rapidly as a response to anti-Semitism, so too did Jewish leaders who did not affiliate with Zionist thought but sought to enhance the level of cultural and intellectual presence of Jews within Austria. Martin Buber, Herzl's longtime friend and confidant, was regarded as one of the foremost young Jewish intellectuals at the time, serving as editor for Herzl's Zionist magazine *Die Welt*. However, his own brand of Zionism was markedly distinct from Herzl. Rather than seeing a need for a home state, or even active Jewish growth in the way of political parties, Buber envisioned a Zionism as a Jewish cultural renaissance.<sup>47</sup> This notion fit well with figures such as Freud and Schnitzler, who embraced the role of their Jewish heritage (Schnitzler notably converting and taking up a genuine faith in his later life) but who stood apart from Zionist ideas. Buber's notions of a Jewish renaissance were also more palatable to other leading Jewish figures in Vienna, including the city's Chief Rabbi Moritz Guedemann.

Guedemann felt that the growth of Zionism not only endangered the position of Jews within the city, as it could predictably lead to further anti-Semitism, but also saw the aims of the movement as directly in opposition to the Jewish religion. In a letter to Kamilla Theimer on 19 December, 1907, Guedemann wrote: "And if all the Jews of the

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<sup>47</sup> Christina Ujma. "Political versus Cultural Zionism, Reflections on Herzl and Buber," in Robertson, Ritchie and Edward Timms (eds.) *Theodor Herzl and the Origins of Zionism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 96-97.

world were united in a free community in Palestine, this would mean no more to Judaism as a religion than would the gathering of all friends of truth and enlightenment on a desert island.”<sup>48</sup> His dispassionate tone here is much cooler than it had been in previous years. While Güdemann had met and befriended Herzl in the early 1890s, by the turn of the century the two had become staunch rivals. Güdemann viewed Herzl’s plans as utopian, unwieldy, and averse to the very core of the Jewish religion’s teachings regarding the Messiah and Zionism. Güdemann viewed the fleeing of the Jews from Vienna—their home—as the greatest sign of cowardice and weakness. In a 1897 letter to Herzl, Güdemann wrote:

You are not a Jew at all. In the Talmud it is written: Vengeance is great, for it appears between two names of God: ‘A God of vengeance is God.’ You do not seem to be aware of this at all. I should go away from here, where the name of Jew and all those who bear it are constantly abused and cursed—I should clear the way for our enemies in order to grow vegetables in Palestine? No not even ten thousand horses could drag me away from here, until I experience my revenge and satisfaction at the downfall of the anti-Semites.<sup>49</sup>

Güdemann’s concerns were undoubtedly tied to maintaining his own role as leader of his community. There is also real reason to believe that Güdemann viewed the aims of Zionism as anathema to Jewish religious teachings. However, what should also be appreciated is Güdemann recognized that Zionism was a fundamentally political theory divorced from religion. He feared the growing rift of ethnic Jews from religious Jews, as he, and other religious leaders, observed the fear that Zionism would create the cessation of Jewish religious practice. Güdemann viewed the Jewish religion as “anti-national”

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<sup>48</sup> Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 532

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 477.

and the calling for a unified home state to be against the will of God.<sup>50</sup>

Thus, Buber's more modest suggestion of cultural Zionism began to take favor within the Jewish elites by 1900. It is from these arguments we may witness the third most prominent notion of how the Jews should proceed within Austrian society. By the 1900s, assimilationist thought was gaining fewer and fewer acolytes. While Zionism was popular, where most young and middle aged Jews seemed to be most comfortable was with an embracing of Jewish nationalism. This is not the Zionist belief of an established homeland, but rather, akin to the demands of other nationalities within the empire, a call for political representation, language protections, cultural and religious equality, as well as a serious effort to combat the rising anti-Semitism.

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<sup>50</sup> Josef Fraenkel. "The Chief Rabbi and the Visionary," in Josef Fraenkel (ed.) *The Jews of Austria* (London: Vallentine, Mitchell & Co., 1967), 127.



### *Chapter III: From Old to New, Changing Theatricalities*

For the Imperial Theatre, the Burgtheater, was for the Viennese and for the Austrian more than a stage upon which actors enacted parts; it was the microcosm that mirrored the macrocosm, the brightly colored reflection in which the city saw itself... And whatever happened in the theatre indirectly touched everyone, even those who had no direct connection to it.<sup>51</sup>

There is an ethereal quality to an afternoon at the Café Landtmann. It is undoubtedly why *Wiener Kaffeehauskultur* is listed on the UNESCO intangible heritage registry. Yet beyond the unique beauty and opportunity for intellectual exchange represented by the most glamorous Cafés on the Ringstraße, there is another sensation which gnaws on one's mind while sipping on an Einspänner: the recognition that you are both living in and sharing a space with history simultaneously.<sup>52</sup> Landtmann, Freud's favorite café, is a block north of the Burgtheater, affectionately referred to by locals as the Burg. Whilst Landtmann shares an ornate mahogany interior common to many of the finer cafés, the best experience is achieved by sitting outdoors on the expansive patio area surrounding the bright, open windows of the Café's interior. From here, one has a clear view to Parliament, the *Rathaus* and *Rathausplatz*, Vienna University, and, of course, the Burg.

The Burgtheater has a long history. Founded originally within the Hofburg Palace in 1741 by Maria Theresa, it was established by Emperor Joseph II as the official National Theatre in 1776. The theatre was moved to a new home on the Michaelplatz in 1794, and took on the name *K.K. Hoftheater nächst der Burg*. However, it wouldn't be until

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<sup>51</sup> Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*, trans. Harry Zohn (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), 14-16.

<sup>52</sup> While the Einspänner is the perpetual favorite drink of the Viennese, one really would be remiss not to try the Coffee Landtmann if at the café. The beverage is best at its namesake café, and is truly heavenly.

1810 the theatre truly took up the mantle of preeminent force in Austrian theatre. At this point, there was significant investment in establishing the Burg as a major force to compete with the commercial theatres in the city. This was largely due to increased investment by the financial minister Count Johann Philipp Stadion, who believed the theatre was not only in need of building improvements but that the city itself needed a strong national theatre to maintain its position in the great imperial capitals of the world.<sup>53</sup> Over the next few decades, the main role of the theatre would be producing great works from around the world in German translation, alongside German language masterpieces. Productions of Shakespeare, Moliere, Calderón, and Goethe were the most frequent and successful performances in the early decades of the nineteenth century. While some original works were written by the theatre's managers (who served as dramaturgs for the company as well), these proved more successful for the various Viennese *Volkstheater* than at the Burg, where the audience demanded fare they viewed as being of higher substantive quality.<sup>54</sup>

Indeed, there were numerous commercial theatres in competition with the Burg throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth Centuries. These venues would occasionally run a tragedy, but they were largely devoted to popular comedy. Viennese popular theatre was subject to strict censorship laws until 1848. Censorship in the Empire has a mercurial history. Following the 1848 Revolutions, the censorship of the theatre was unfavorably looked upon by the newly empowered liberals. Thus on 14 November 1850, a new ordi-

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<sup>53</sup> W.E. Yates, *Theatre in Vienna: A Critical History 1776-1995* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 49-52.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

nance was passed regarding theatrical performances which placed the onus on theatre managers: while formal censorship procedures ceased to exist, the state had the right to shut down any production that was deemed a threat to “religion, morality, honor... [and the preservation of] peace and order.”<sup>55</sup> Thus, the theatre was self-censoring for the next half-century for fear of the devastating possibility of having a production shut down which ran amiss of the authorities. This would remain the case until the outbreak of the First World War when the censors returned in stronger force than had been seen in decades. The ordinances regarding wartime censorship split the censor board between two separate authorities: the military, who would censor any materials viewed as anti-patriotic or harmful to the war effort, and the civil courts, where literary and theatrical writers had to have their texts approved. The result of the panels was a literal blacking out of Austrian writing as the censor boards took any material for publication and struck out offending items line by line.<sup>56</sup>

But let us return to the nineteenth century. Ultimately, the Viennese theatre was split. Prior to the 1848 loosening of censorship laws, the easiest way for the popular theatres to establish subversive messages, or even propagate a populist answer to the elitist Burgtheater, was through parody. Thus, the Viennese comedy took on a specifically parodic quality, mocking high society and the twisted plots and betrayals common to the largely French influenced works presented at the Burg and State Opera. It is notable that, while both the Wiener Staatsoper and the Burgtheater are situated prominently within the

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<sup>55</sup> Wilhelm Kosch, *Deutsches Literatur Lexicon* (München: Bern, 1968), 236.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

Ringstraße, the Volksoper and commercial theatres were banished outside of the inner city, far further within the residential districts than the imposing state art centers.<sup>57</sup> But this tension between the two entities was, in some ways, mutually beneficial. The Burg, always catering to the aristocracy and wealthy bourgeoisie, established itself as the premier location for serious drama and tragedy, as well as foreign comedy. The popular theatres mocked the Burg's position with commonplace, low comedies which appealed to the lower middle class and lower classes.

This cohesion is significant. Because the Burg invested more resources into grand productions, management ran a tighter, shorter season. The commercial theatres, however, without the benefit of wealthy patrons, were much more tied to ticket sales. Based on the sheer economics of running the (generally very large) houses, Viennese commercial theatres required a tremendous number of scripts. It is therefore unsurprising that the first part of the nineteenth century saw a large number of vaudeville acts and magical spectacle shows as they were easy to keep in rotation. This helps explain why the leading Viennese dramatists of the mid-nineteenth century were impressively prolific (often writing scores and even hundreds of scripts in their lives). The playwright who would eventually

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<sup>57</sup> It is also interesting to note the differing material in terms of national origin between the two venues. While the Staatsoper is auspiciously the home for great foreign works, there is a clear ranking of foreign nations. The Staatsoper will happily mount classic French, Italian, and German language pieces, yet regularly denies English language operas and operettas. Indeed the Volksoper lays claim to having far more widely produced and initiated an appreciation for Lehar in Vienna than the Staatsoper. Equally, *Porgy and Bess*, first graced the Volksoper in 1965. It would only be in 1971 the Staatsoper deigned to mount a production of the American opera. See, Ellen Noonan, *The Strange Career of Porgy and Bess* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 281.

help to propel Viennese popular drama into a new form was Johann Nestroy.<sup>58</sup> Nestroy was a popular director and actor at various popular theatres throughout Vienna, but was above all a prodigious playwright. While his earliest works, such as *Der Böse Geist Lumpazivagabundus*, were typical popular fare, by the late 1840s he was experimenting with far more cohesive artistic productions, such as *Der Talisman*.<sup>59</sup> *Der Talisman*, an 1840 comedy, is based on a French farce by Duperty and F. de Courcy.<sup>60</sup> The source material shows: the characters retain French names, such as Salome, Flora, Poponseed, Monsieur Marquies, etc. And while the comedy follows a fairly French farcical model, it deviates in the additions of popular folk songs, and frequent low humor. Take for instance the fourth scene, where we are first introduced to Flora, Lady Cypressa's gardner, and Poponseed, Flora's helper:

Flora (*angrily*): Shame on the stagecoach. The city is within spitting distance, and yet the trip takes an hour and a half/  
 Poponseed (*slow moving, carrying a large basket*): Oh! So that's why it's called a coach. It needs to be coached to run.  
 Flora: Shut up and come on! You're so slow you'd make a pretty good stagecoach yourself.  
 Poponseed: Oh, no, not me. I don't want to be a stagecoach—everybody's riding me enough as it is.  
 Flora: I see this is one of your usual witty days, when you're even more unbearable than usual.  
 Poponseed: Nag! Nag! Nag! You're the most naggative woman I know. Well, I'm glad it'll soon be over for me.  
 Flora: Are you going to quit on me?  
 Poponseed: No such luck, lady. But pretty soon you'll catch yourself a husband again... and then you'll have a new victim to pick on.  
 Flora: I'll never marry again! I'm going to remain faithful to my late husband.  
 Poponseed: Perhaps he believes that now. He never did when he was alive.  
 Flora (*coquettish*): And what if I did marry again?

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<sup>58</sup> While Nestroy is immensely popular in Vienna today, he has rarely captured the same devotion in English and American audiences. Perhaps the reason he is best known to Americans is for inspiring a young Thornton Wilder, who cites him as a major influence. Indeed, Nestroy's *Einen Jux will er sich Machen*, served as the inspiration for Wilder's *The Matchmaker*, which in turn became *Hello, Dolly!*

<sup>59</sup> W.E. Yates, *Nestroy: Satire and Parody in Viennese Popular Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 62-65.

<sup>60</sup> Johann Nestroy, *Three Comedies*, trans. Max Knight and Joesph Fabry (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1967), ix.

Poponseed: I wish you would! I'd even dance at your wedding. I've never found anything distasteful in seeing someone else getting married.  
Flora: Men aren't perfect but they're the best opposite sex we've got.  
Poponseed: Marriage is a gamble. Like custard pie—you never know whether it'll end up in your stomach or in your face.  
Flora: Blothead! I don't know how I can stand you—slow and clumsy and full of foolosophy. But I've already spoken to Lady Cypressa about hiring an assistant. A strong, capable assistant, that's what I need. (*Exits through the garden gate, right.*)  
Poponseed (*alone*): I know what's eating her. (*Winking to the audience*) It isn't the garden that needs the capable assistant!<sup>61</sup>

This scene is followed by the immediate introduction of Titus, who enters singing. So reliant is the text on his voice that a built-in encore is in the script, the role clearly a piece meant to showcase a popular singing performer for the venue. It is followed by a philosophical speech from the character, tying into the song's mockery of the notion of superstitions.

This kind of low, bright comedy was the mainstay of Nestroy's work and the reason for his popularity. It is also significant to note that his earlier works frequently ran into difficulty with the censors. These plays often more heavily leveled attacks at the government (under Metternich at this point) and would come under fierce scrutiny from the authorities. However, with the coming of the liberal government in the 1850s, alongside the author's own improvements in navigating censorship practice, his later drama is less politically active than his earlier works.<sup>62</sup> Despite their popularity though, his works largely disappeared from the stage for nearly three decades following his death in 1862. The major reason for this was the fact that, to audiences, the idea of Nestroy's style of comedy was wholly inconceivable without the auteur himself.<sup>63</sup> Nestroy not only served

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 101-102. While this translation takes noticeable liberties, it does, in my opinion, do an excellent job of capturing the lithe spirit of Nestroy's comic style.

<sup>62</sup> Yates, *Nestroy*, 150-153.

<sup>63</sup> Laurence V. Harding, *The Dramatic Art of Ferdinand Raimund and Johann Nestroy*, (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 199.

as a major inspiration for Viennese comic style as an author but also his dynamism as a performer. The other significant point though was Nestroy's combination of music and comedy had helped paved the way for the increasingly popular form of Operetta. In the years following Nestroy's departure from the stage, the Viennese operetta grew concurrently with the popular pieces coming out of France and England, but with a strong connection to the lighter comic faire Nestroy had perfected. The form remains intensely popular to the present, with Vienna being world-renowned for the number and quality of operettas presented annually.

This is important to remember as, simultaneous to Nestroy's activities synthesizing Viennese popular comedy, the Burg was perfecting its role as the tragic house. A string of talented artistic directors helped to continually gather wealthy aristocrats and patrons to fund the theatre, and with this increased revenue, these leaders successfully established a talented company of regular performers who came to represent the ideal of nineteenth century dramatic performers, until 1888. In 1887, Adolf Wilbrandt retired from his role as Artistic Director to resume his writing career. Adolf von Sonnenthal stepped in as his provisional replacement and was given the arduous task of overseeing the Burgtheater's move from its ancestral home to its present location on the Ringstraße.<sup>64</sup> This move would ultimately divide the history of the Burg in two: *das Alte Burgtheater und das Neue Burgtheater* (the old Burgtheater and the New Burgtheater).

The New Burgtheater began amidst a series of difficulties. In addition to the new building being panned by critics for poor acoustic design and sightlines, the Burg had de-

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<sup>64</sup> Yates, *Theatre in Vienna*, 84.

veloped a slew of rival theatres it would now need to answer to. Between 1870 and the early 1900s four major companies opened with the aim of providing serious dramatic offerings for the middle class. First was the Wiener Stadttheater (1872-1884), which struggled financially in its later years, only to burn down in 1884 and never be rebuilt.<sup>65</sup> The Raimundtheater was established in 1893 under the direction of Adam Müller-Guttenbrunn. The theatre board would replace Müller-Guttenbrunn by 1896 over charges of deliberate anti-Semitism demonstrated in not only his behavior, but the hiring of performers, technicians and staff, and in his season selections.<sup>66</sup> Following his dismissal, the theatre began moving more and more into the presentation of light operettas, which it would solely present, with rare exception, by the early 1900s.<sup>67</sup> The Kaiserjubiläums-Stadttheater was founded by German Nationalists in 1898 and immediately brought on Müller-Guttenbrunn to helm its operations. It served a noticeable pan-Germanist, anti-Semitic message in its offerings. However, this venture failed to attract sufficient crowds for its operation, closing due to bankruptcy in 1903, and ultimately becoming the modern Vienna Volksoper.<sup>68</sup>

The only true competition to the Burg was the Deutsches Volkstheater, which opened in 1889.<sup>69</sup> The Deutsches Volkstheater was able to cultivate a popular following with the middle class, something the new director of the Burg, Max Burckhard, envied.

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 159-168.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 172.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 173.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 176-177.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 169.



Burckhard changed the entire tenor of the Burgtheater, maintaining the connection to Shakespeare and great foreign dramatists, but adding a modern edge. He brought in new performers for the ensemble, encouraged productions of Ibsen, and mounted the first Viennese dialect production at the Burg, Schnitzler's *Liebelei* (*Flirtations*), in 1895.<sup>70</sup> Finally, he oversaw an unpopular remodeling of the auditorium in 1897—which modestly improved the space although not to the degree the public demanded—that led to his dismissal in that year.<sup>71</sup> However, his successor Paul Schlenther, would only further his push for a more modernist repertoire. The first year, under Schlenther would see a real interest in commissioning and developing works by members of the Jung Wien, with over twelve new plays by Viennese authors appearing in the first month (for single evening engagements). He let many of the older actors go whom Burckhard had allowed to stay on and pushed the most overtly modernist agenda at the theatre yet. Oftentimes, the Burg was somewhat behind the Deutsches Volkstheater: in 1909 the Deutsches Volkstheater offered a “year of Schnitzler,” the Burg would do so in 1912.<sup>72</sup> Likewise Ibsen premiered at the Deutsches Volkstheater two years prior to his first production at the Burg. However, the competition fostered between the two proved highly beneficial to the Burg. In general, the Burgtheater still had access to a higher class audience, and while it broadened its ap-

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. While Burckhard was able to fix some of the acoustical issues of the space, and generally rework the auditorium to remedy the egregious sight-line problems, the space still lacked any of the intimacy of the original space. This inability to attain the same level of closeness left the audience feeling as though little had changed, and the shutting down of the Burg as a nuisance which failed to address the issues it was intended to correct.

<sup>72</sup> Renate Wagner and Brigitte Vacha, *Wiener Schnitzler-Aufführungen 1891-1970* (München: Prestel-Verlag, 1971), 33.

peal to the middle classes, along with its appeal, it maintained the role of preeminent theatre for Shakespeare, Moliere, and Greek dramas—along with other great world classics—alongside its new interest in developing modern theatrical offerings. However this new position did not satisfy opinions unilaterally. While the leading voice for theatrical modernism in Vienna, Hermann Bahr, commended the Burg's new efforts, they would be lambasted by the city's greatest satirist and caustic wit: Karl Kraus.

Kraus, the renowned Viennese journalist, satirist, and orator, was without question a leader among the great intellectual figures of the coffeehouse culture of the Fin-de-Siècle. His highly-regarded, satiric magazine, *Die Fackel* (*The Torch*), and his immensely popular lectures and dramatic readings across the city made him one of the city's most controversial, yet eminent, public figures. Kraus the man remains something of an enigma: while he is unilaterally regarded as among the most brilliant satirists of all time, his positions can be mercurial. It is impossible to write of Kraus without including the phrase “self-hating Jew.” Indeed, he was born Jewish, converted to Catholicism in an attempt to assimilate, but always remained an outsider, and to some degree, always remained culturally faithful to his Jewish upbringing.<sup>73</sup> It is for this reason he is called both Jewish and anti-Semitic, often in the same breath. Yet Kraus, who would become the greatest critic of the Viennese press, government, and society in the last years of the nineteenth century through *Die Fackel*, also helped to shape the Viennese theatre and remains a theatrical figure of no small importance to Austria.

It is natural to begin Kraus's role in the theatre by telling the story of his famously

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<sup>73</sup> John Theobald, *The Paper Ghetto: Karl Kraus and Anti-Semitism* (Peter Lang: Frankfurt am Main, 1996), 18.

horrific debut as an actor in 1893; as is often recounted, the young Kraus emerged to great laughter: his costume was far too large for his small frame, and his general performance in this production of Schiller's *Die Räuber* (*The Robbers*) was little better.<sup>74</sup> However, it may be more apt to go further back still. As a child Kraus and his family moved from a smaller provincial town into Vienna. In the early years of his adolescence, he regularly attended performances at the old Burgtheater. He would recall these, perhaps somewhat exaggeratedly, for the remainder of his life.<sup>75</sup> It is significant to begin here, though, as these older performances undoubtedly influenced his entire idea of theatre and performance.

While his career in theatre began inauspiciously, it was hardly cause to prevent Kraus from spreading his views on the art. Kraus began working as a critic and writer in the Vienna coffeehouse scene, largely under the leadership of Hermann Bahr. Within a few years, Kraus had split from the group. Formerly cordial relationships fell apart, and his attacks in local papers on Bahr and Schnitzler were particularly sharp.<sup>76</sup> For instance, while Kraus had formerly praised Schnitzler's *Anatol* (amongst his earliest works) as being, "with people who are convincingly sketched in short, terse strokes and who speak like real people: decadence, presented with healthy, fresh realism..." just two years later

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<sup>74</sup> Jens Malte Fischer, *Karl Kraus: Studien zum „Theater der Dichtung“ und Kulturkonservatismus* (Scrip-tor-Verlag: Kronberg, 1973), 1.

<sup>75</sup> Carr gives an outstanding evaluation of how much Kraus may actually remember, versus how much he romanticizes the past of the Burgtheater. See, Gilbert J. Carr, "The 'young' Kraus and the 'old' Burgtheater. Sources and interpretations," in *Karl Kraus und Die Fackel: Aufsätze zur Rezeptionsgeschichte*, ed. Edward Timms et. al. (München: Iudicium, 2001), 17.

<sup>76</sup> Kari Grimstad, *Masks of the Prophet: The Theatrical World of Karl Kraus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 16-17.

he would refer to Schnitzler as: “Too good natured to be able to really tackle a problem, he has rigged up for himself once and for all a little world of bon vivants and *grisettes* in order only occasionally to climb out of these depths to false tragedy. When something like death then does occur—please don’t be frightened, the pistols are loaded with spiritlessness: to DIE is nothing, but to live and not to see!”<sup>77</sup>

In the time between 1890 and 1910 Kraus neither penned any dramatic works of his own, nor did he appear in or direct any. Yet he regularly attended productions. He saw most of the new work in town, the classics at the Burgtheater, and even made trips to see productions at the Yiddish company, however much he may have renounced his Judaism.<sup>78</sup> Yet, as he had regularly written for the papers in the city and founded his own legendary publication, *Die Fackel*, his opinions were still well known and heard throughout Vienna’s artistic community. His ideas were so well recognized and reputable in the community that the literary luminary Peter Altenberg once reflected that Kraus perhaps should have been a director rather than an author.

Yet by the early 1910s, Kraus’s fame as a performer was legend in Vienna, after he had begun his series of public readings.<sup>79</sup> While Kraus’s imitations of celebrities, politicians, and professors had been well known since his time at university, it was when he began his lecture series, where he read aloud from the great works of Shakespeare, Goethe, Hauptmann, and his and his friends’ own writing, that he became a fixture on the

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>78</sup> Edward Timms, *Karl Kraus: Apocalyptic Satirist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 179.

<sup>79</sup> Fischer, 7.

Viennese performance circuit. While these readings were simply Kraus seated at a desk, or standing behind a podium, they were captivating.<sup>80</sup> Those who saw them would, for years, recall and recount the fervor of Kraus's tone, his skillful posturing and demonstrating, as he read the texts aloud. While Kraus claimed these were not performative events, they were very much his channeling of what he viewed as the Old Burgtheatre style of acting.<sup>81</sup> In total, Kraus gave more than 700 such readings over his life from 1910 until his death in 1938.

These lectures were where Kraus developed his own style of theatre, which he would call the *Theater der Dichtung* (*Theatre of Poetry*). He envisioned a theatre based on grand, lyrical poetry, interested in the text and not performative acting or stylized sets, lights, or music. His interest was wholly in the words, in the meanings and insights offered by the great writers. Indeed, his viewpoint at times feels almost deliberately anti-Aristotelian. In addition to the rejection of spectacle, Kraus found plot and character unimportant, preferring drama to focus on, "the importance of the thought or idea of a play (as well as the language which revealed the thought)."<sup>82</sup>

While Kraus was far more famous for his readings and criticism, he did write a few plays, the most significant of which is *Die Letzten Tage der Menschheit* (*The Last Days of Mankind*). Kraus began working on the play after a brief hiatus wherein he was too repulsed by the outbreak of the First World War to write anything. After returning to

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<sup>80</sup> Harry Zohn, *Karl Kraus* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1971), 109-110

<sup>81</sup> Timms, 176-179

<sup>82</sup> 211

writing with his 1915 *In dieser großen Zeit* (*In These Great Times*), an invective against the war that immediately brought him national attention, Kraus feared he would invoke the wrath of the censor.<sup>83</sup> He investigated publishing houses in Germany, where the laws were less stringent, in an effort to circumvent the Viennese authorities. Ultimately though, he found he was able to get his manuscripts through the Austrian leadership. By 1915, he was publishing *Die Fackel* once more, and his earliest segments of *Die letzten Tage* started appearing in print. Kraus successfully evaded early censorship through a variety of means: first, his notoriety; second, his knowledge of the censorship laws and loopholes; and third, most significantly, his crafting of the text from already existing sources.<sup>84</sup> However, *Die Fackel* itself was soon fully censored, causing Kraus to cease publication of any kind from late 1915 until the war's conclusion, when the full text of *Die letzten Tage* would appear, occupying the magazine's first four return issues.

Perhaps the most striking feature of *Die Letzten Tage* is that well over half the text was pulled directly from political cartoons, posters, propaganda speeches, newspaper columns and articles, and direct quotations from coffeehouse personalities.<sup>85</sup> By collecting these cuttings and arranging them into pointed episodes, Kraus did two things: attempt to guarantee that the censor would not deny publication as the play was merely quotations from previously accepted texts, and pen the earliest example of German language documentary theatre. This is a radical departure for a critic who had long harkened

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<sup>83</sup> Fischer, 18.

<sup>84</sup> Karl Kraus, *The Last Days of Mankind*, (trans.) Frederick Ungar (New York: F. Ungar Publishing Co., 1974), ix.

<sup>85</sup> Karl Kraus, *The Last Days of Mankind*, (trans.) Fred Bridgham et. al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), xvi.

for a return to the works of Nestroy, however it does show some awareness of the modernist movements (such as Dada and the stream of consciousness montage writings which were becoming popular in other literary avant-garde groups). The earlier scenes are largely a lambasting of the press, and by using their own words, the style that evolves becomes only more powerful and biting. For instance, this can be clearly seen in the dialogue in Act I, Scene I:

First Reporter: That was no flash in the pan, no sudden drunken rapture, no feverish roar of mass hysteria. Vienna has accepted with manly fortitude, the decision that will determine its manifold destiny. Know how I'll summarize the atmosphere? The atmosphere can be summarized in the phrase: far from being high-handed or fainthearted. Far from being high-handed or fainthearted, that's the slogan we've coined for the prevailing atmosphere in Vienna, and it cannot be said often enough. Far from being high-handed or fainthearted! What do you say?

Second Reporter: What can I say? Brilliant!

First Reporter: Far from being high-handed or fainthearted. Thousands, nay, tens of thousands surged through the streets today, arm in arm, rich and poor, young and old, high and low. The bearing of each and everyone showed he is fully aware of the gravity of the situation, but also proud to feel throbbing in his own veins the pulse of this dawning age of grandeur.

...

Second Reporter: I know! We mustn't forget to mention the crowd massing in their hundreds, nay, in their thousands in Fichtegasse, in front of the offices of the *Neue Freie Presse*.

First Reporter: Clever boy! Yes, that's what the boss likes. But why hundreds and thousands? Figure it out. Why not thousands, nay, tens of thousands, what does it matter since they're already massing?

Second Reporter: All right, as long as it's not taken to be some hostile demonstration. Remember last Sunday—after all, the age of grandeur was already dawning—the paper still had all those ads for masseuses.

Second Reporter: In this age of grandeur such a petty thought is out of the question. Leave that to Kraus in the *Fackel*. They were all cheering our paper and shouting: Read it out to us! Read it out!<sup>86</sup>

Clearly large tracts of this speech, especially the repetitious parts, were pulled from actual articles and repurposed to Kraus's aim. His attack on the sensationalism of the press, and especially the reference to the *Neue Freie Presse*, the liberal press that had long supported the government nearly unfailingly, are clear indications of Kraus's feelings of how the media behaved around Vienna: willing to sacrifice honesty and judgment for a good story. In Scene 10 of the Prologue, we are given elite members of society, re-

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 47

vealing how Kraus utilized publicly available speeches and newspaper columns to construct yet another interaction:

Nepalleck: It's the most terrible thing, Prince Montenuovo is quite disconsolate that his indisposition prevents him from personally attending this illustrious memorial ceremony. Count Orsini-Rosenberg is also confined to his bed. What a catastrophe has befallen us! Here on the right, the most resplendent wreath with chrysanthemums on the coffin of Her Most Serene Highness, the late archduchess, is from the Prince.

Angelo Eisner v. Eisenhof: He was my friend. I was close to him. For instance, at the opening of the Adriatic Exhibition. But what is my grief compared to ours, my dear Hofrat! What you must have gone through these past months.

Nepalleck: I am spared nothing.<sup>87</sup>

We see here where bits of dialogue are pulled from public sources, from the newspaper coverage and speeches given at Franz Ferdinand's funeral. These lines were common knowledge, yet repurposed to Kraus's aim. This success would later influence Erwin Piscator, who had long admired Kraus's work and even failed to obtain the production rights to *Die letzten Tage* in 1928. Piscator's 1925 work *Trotz Allem (In Spite of Everything)*, another episodically structured examination of laymen and their interactions with the media is a clear descendant of *Die Letzen Tage*.<sup>88</sup> Bertolt Brecht also read Kraus avidly, and early dramas such as *Trommeln in der Nacht (Drums in the Night)*, and *Der Untergang des Egoisten Johann Fatzer (The Downfall of the Egotist Johann Fatzer)* display his admiration for Kraus's techniques. Both works play between Expressionism and realism in ways that mirror the earlier portions of *Die letzten Tage*, and incorporate a similar linguistic lyricism mixed with naturalist conversation pulled from reality, a la Kraus.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 41-42.

<sup>88</sup> John Willet, *The Theatre of Erwin Piscator: Half a Century of Politics in the Theatre* (London: Methuen, 1978), 44.

<sup>89</sup> Karl Kraus, *The Last Days of Mankind*, (trans.) Frederick Ungar, xiii.



This is reinforced as the work broadens. *Die letzten Tage* grows more experimental in tone as it progresses across the long First World War. The work's conclusion, which Kraus titled *Die letzte Nacht* (*The Last Night*) was written for performance, following the conclusion of the war, as Kraus's summation of the play, and is openly expressionist. For instance, characters are now nameless and merely appear as "Male Gas Mask" and "Female Gas Mask," the Kaiser is depicted as "The Voice of God," and multiple times the ensemble breaks into groups such as "These" and "Those," hurling short choral sentiments at each other. Kraus had previously depicted his longtime rival Moritz Benedikt, the editor of his least favorite publication the *Neue Freie Presse*, through Benedikt's own words, as well as other writers and public figures' comments on him. *Die letzte Nacht* shows Benedikt in an entirely new fashion. He emerges as the Lord of the Hyenas, described as "Dark, grey-mottled, [with] fuzzy sideburns and goatee beard. The beard surrounds his face like fur, merging into the similar hair on his head; a forceful, curved nose; big, bulging eyes with large whites and small piercing pupils... He wears a three-piece suit, with piqué waistcoat." Nowhere in the tome is Kraus's indictment of the press as culpable in the war more clear than in this final segment. In one scene, two War Correspondents emerge over the bodies of dying soldiers. The soldiers cry out for aid to them: "This agony - never ends. My wife - ah- no more - take me with you - friends - a hospital - I implore!"<sup>90</sup>

The correspondent's response is biting: "Oh, that's a real beauty - Us intercede! You're doing your duty, just lie there and bleed.... Before you drop dead look me straight

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<sup>90</sup> Karl Kraus, *The Last Night*. Michael Russell trans. (Lexington: Forgotten Cities Press, 2014), 37-38.

in the lens.”<sup>91</sup> Why this radical shift in stylization though? Certainly Kraus was looking for a means of expressing the horrors of the war, and this new form carries palpable force in its depiction of the violence. However, this is not sufficient explanation. By *Die Letzte Nacht*, Kraus is creating a drama that is no longer simply ridiculing the government and press but openly demonizing them. His use of imagery and language would never have been permissible on stage nor in print. For instance, in one scene following a conversation between two gas masks, the following monologue is given:

General (*Sprechgesang, between speech and song*):

Torn earth and destruction,  
Dead men and barbed wire,  
And at every obstruction  
We come under fire.

There’s no road back,  
Bad’s turned to worse,  
Our frontal attack  
Has gone in reverse.

It’s no joke, at our age -  
One prays one survives –  
There’s a risk in this carnage  
Of losing our lives.

Not an inch in retreat!  
Our men’s proud battle cry.  
Drive over the dead meat,  
It’s the suckers who die.

What’s up with this one,  
Head off a the throat,  
And that one, both legs gone,  
And a button off his coat!

Corporal you’re a mess!  
Enough is enough!  
Such a state of undress!  
Really pisses me off!

A scandalous affair!  
And what I abhor  
Is you’re lying down there  
While we’re still at war!

Are you deaf now? Attention!

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 35.

You skiving cunt,  
I'll brook no dissension,  
Get back to the front!<sup>92</sup>

Kraus was undoubtedly changed by the First World War. *Die Letzten Tage* gives us a clear evolution of Kraus's dramatic work and theory. Yet he had always been political. References to anti-Semitism, as well as occasional lines almost seeming sympathetic to Jews occur sporadically throughout the text. We see clearly how the war effects Kraus's drama, growing the latent ideas which had always been present. He experimented a handful of other times in the 1920s and 1930s with writing plays, but largely redoubled his attention to the theatre of poetry. Yet, *Die Letzten Tage*, which Kraus set out to write "for a theatre on Mars" and never intended for production, is both an exception to his view of theatre and the culmination of it.<sup>93</sup> Plot and character are unimportant, as is a theatrical venue. The words are the most significant idea, along with the play's argument. Kraus has effectively written his ideal drama—one which escapes the theatre.

This pushback does not come out of a void though. For Kraus's loyalty to old-guard theatre, both at the Burgtheater and with his passion for Nestroy, he is celebrating a nostalgia. By claiming these as his artistic forerunners and heroes, he capitalizes on a long artistic legacy. He rebels against Bahr, Schnitzler, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal by turning away from their decadence and modernism. Instead he seeks to move forward, but with an attachment to the past—to create a new Viennese theatre built on the one which came before. It is in this way we may view Kraus as rejecting the contemporary revolution of other Viennese Jews, and see his actions as assimilationist. Despite his fiery

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>93</sup> Karl Kraus, *The Last Days of Mankind*, (trans.) Frederick Ungar, 1.

rhetoric for the leaders of Vienna's society and government, he held no higher contempt than his loathing of the Jewish press. It is an unconventional means of assimilating, but Kraus's revolutionary theatre, was in his own existential way, a means of carving out a new space for him to fit in.

## Chapter IV: Redefining Schnitzler

Spoke with Arthur Schnitzler and briefly explained the matter to him. When I said: it is a renaissance as a finishing touch to this classical century of inventions in communications—he was enthusiastic. I promised him that he would become the director of our theatre.<sup>94</sup>

On 2 June 1908, Franz Freiherr von Spiegelheld, *Statthalter* of Tyrol, ordered the immediate closing of the University of Innsbruck due to fear of imminent threat of a student uprising.<sup>95</sup> This was well warranted: some 30,000 students and nationalists had written a list of demands and taken up arms to see their aims fulfilled. With the university closed, they instead marched on Vienna and effectively shut down the ministry of education. The occupation continued for over two weeks—despite attempts at mollification by diplomats, senators, and educational administrators—until finally, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, Professor Ludwig Wahrmund emerged to thank the students for advocating on his behalf, assuage them that their goals had been met, and request they immediately cease the strike.<sup>96</sup> Thus ended the whirlwind political controversy of Austria-Hungary's Wahrmund Affair in the public's mind. However, the episode had proved seminal for playwright Arthur Schnitzler, who would, over the next four years, set out to write the work he would later regard as his masterpiece: *Professor Bernhardi*. That *Bernhardi* stood high in Schnitzler's estimation is not surprising. Among his plays, it is certainly among his most

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<sup>94</sup> Herzl, *Diaries*.

<sup>95</sup> The position of *Statthalter* is roughly equivalent to that of a US Governor. Von Spiegelheld normally would not have been the one to give this order, however the minister of education for the state couldn't be reached and von Spiegelheld took action.

<sup>96</sup> Persifor Frazer, "A Recent Chapter in the Modernist Controversy," *The American Journal of Theology* 13, No. 2 (Apr., 1909), pp. 241-242.

well-constructed, biting, and clever. But what makes the work remarkable to the modern observer is the piece's ability to mix a deft comic tone while directly attacking the swelling anti-Semitism, which was rapidly becoming the backbone of Austrian politics in the late fin-de-siècle.

Schnitzler was, without question, the preeminent playwright of his day. Indeed, he remains a major influence in German language theatre to the present and is arguably the most famous and successful Austrian dramatist ever. Couple this with his accomplished career as an author of short stories and novels, and it comes as no surprise he occupied a place as one of Vienna's literary elite. Naturally, Schnitzler has been a subject of great interest for scholars over the last century. While study has expanded from the earliest views, which relegated Schnitzler to a limited role of moralist and social critic, scholarship is still disjointed in the analysis it awards.<sup>97</sup>

Going as far back as the 1910s, Schnitzler critics largely held the playwright's dramas to be of significance only to the audience of his own time. This goes back to Hermann Bahr, the tremendously influential theatre critic, director, and playwright, who, very early in Schnitzler's career, wrote of the limited scope of his friend's dramatic works. This view dominated criticism going forward certainly throughout the 1920s and '30s and would make up the bulk of what was written on Schnitzler until the early 1960s, when Schnitzler's centennial caused a resurgence of interest, including the first complete

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<sup>97</sup> G.J. Weinberger, "Introduction," in G.J. Weinberger (ed.) *Arthur Schnitzler's Late Plays* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 1-2.

publications of his works.<sup>98</sup> While the period preceding the centennial certainly had scholars who took a more favorable view of Schnitzler's legacy—none more so than the eminent Jewish and German historian Harry Zohn—there was little attention to a full re-examination of his oeuvre, and little deep inquiry regarding new interpretations of the works. Since the 1970s, however, we do see a marked growth regarding Schnitzler scholarship. Most of this research sought to move from the role of social critic, to noting the relationship between his writings, and especially his drama, in conjunction with Freud.

While Schnitzler and Freud had no real personal relationship, it is nearly impossible to miss the connection between the works of the two men.<sup>99</sup> Schnitzler's drama is supremely interested in psychology, as well as sex. As these were common topics of the day it can hardly be surprising. However, the dreamlike quality of many of Schnitzler's shorter works (such as his most famous drama: *Reigen*, or *Round Dance*) and the stream of consciousness narrative of his novella *Lt. Gustl* have led to an outpouring of discussion among scholars regarding the Freud/Schnitzler similitude.<sup>100</sup>

While a few scholars, most notably Zohn, had made passing mention of political

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<sup>98</sup> Schnitzler's death led to a symposium and a fair amount of reflection on his career. For an example, see Sol Liptzin, "Arthur Schnitzler," *Books Abroad* 6, no. 1 (Jan., 1932): 16-17.

<sup>99</sup> The oft-told story is that, if Freud were walking down the street and should encounter Schnitzler, he would immediately turn around, cross the street, and walk on the opposite side of the boulevard to avoid the latter. This was done as Freud felt Schnitzler, based on his writings, to be his *doppelgänger*: expressing the very ideas and scientific theories Freud was proffering, only Schnitzler expressed them through the mediums of literature and drama. It should also be noted the two did rarely correspond, although they never met in person. See, Ciar Byrne. "Arthur Schnitzler: Papers shed light on playwright who inspired Freud and Kubrick." *The Independent*, March 20, 2008. and, Olga Schnitzler. "Schnitzler Freud's *Doppelgänger*." *Der Spiegel*, July 25, 1962. Accessed March 30, 2016.

<sup>100</sup> For more on this relationship, see the second chapter, "Ein *Doppelgänger* Freuds," in Jacques Le Rider, *Arthur Schnitzler oder Die Wiener Belle Époque* (Wien: Passagen Verlag, 2007), 43-60. Additionally, "Schnitzler and Freud: Uncanny Similarities," in Andrew C. Wisely, *Arthur Schnitzler and Twentieth Century Criticism* (Rochester: Camden House, 2004), 122-144.

commentary tucked within the works of Schnitzler, the first serious examination of politics in Schnitzler's writing came in 1989 with Adrian Clive Roberts' *Arthur Schnitzler and Politics*. The study focused on both the literary and dramatic works of Schnitzler, and while it succeeded in opening new avenues of exploration regarding Schnitzler's works, the boldest claims regarding Schnitzler's political views and pronouncements were monopolized by the literary works.<sup>101</sup> The most significant element Roberts brings forward in the dramatic works is Schnitzler's anti-dueling views, a point which has become the focus of continual study in the field.<sup>102</sup> G. J. Weinberger, in his efforts to revive interest in the oft-neglected later plays of Schnitzler (those penned following *Bernhardi*) regularly touches on the notion of politics in these works, but focuses the lion's share of his attention to calling attention to Schnitzler's role as social critic.<sup>103</sup> Thus while many scholars have pointed to political elements within Schnitzler's drama there has been little effort to examine the dramatic pieces with an investigative eye turned towards the politics within the plays.

Let us return then to *Professor Bernhardi*. To understand the backdrop to the play,

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<sup>101</sup> Roberts' biggest claim regarding the literature of Schnitzler is ultimately that his works carry an unmistakable tone of pacifism. This anti-military, anti-war bent is without question present in the literature, but is a more minor theme in the drama, one of the main reasons Roberts focuses less on the plays. See Adrian Clive Roberts, *Arthur Schnitzler and Politics* (Riverside: Ariadne Press, 1989).

<sup>102</sup> Andrew C. Wisely's wrote an entire book on the significance of dueling within Schnitzler's works which gives an excellent treatment to his views on the practice, as well as the ramifications of antiquated social traditions built on maintaining the power of the aristocracy. See, Andrew C. Wisely, *Arthur Schnitzler and the Discourse of Honor and Dueling* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996).

<sup>103</sup> The work serves best as a detailed analysis of the changing nature of the playwright's works across the First World War—a confusing, and evolutionary time for Schnitzler, not to the same degree as Kraus with *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit*, but still one of exploration. Weinberger is, in fact, rather vehement in his references to Roberts, whose work he refers to as, “seriously flawed.” Admittedly though, Roberts reads Schnitzler as more directly political than Weinberger, who prefers to acknowledge that Schnitzler has political undertones in his writing, but ultimately is more interested in societal flaws than governmental or civic ones. G.J. Weinberger, *Arthur Schnitzler's Late Plays* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 51.



we must revisit July 1907. Pope Pius X had recently put forward a list of “errors of ‘modern’ thought.” The most significant items on the list attacked science and research as they were thought to be an attack on Catholicism.<sup>104</sup> The Church’s new position set off a wave of discussion amongst academics, which culminated in a resolution by Austrian professors in Salzburg to maintain “the independence of the universities.”<sup>105</sup> The following month Lueger attended the Sixth General Catholic Congress in Vienna, and responded to the professor’s action by calling for: “The conquest of the universities. The universities must not continue to be a soil for subversive ideas, a soil for revolution, a soil for the rejection of the fatherland and religion.”<sup>106</sup> Thus on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1908, when Ludwig Wahrmund, a professor of Ecclesiastical Law at Innsbruck, gave an address at the school entitled “Catholic View of the Universe and Free Science (Katholische Weltanschauung und Freie Wissenschaft)—A Popular Science Lecture with Consideration of the Syllabus of Pius X and of the Encyclical ‘Pascendi Dominici Gregis,’” which was subsequently turned into a widely distributed pamphlet; it did not go unnoticed.<sup>107</sup>

Shortly after this, the papal ambassador pushed for the immediate dismissal of Dr. Wahrmund. He was suspended shortly thereafter, but as this became public knowledge it emerged as a highly embarrassing episode for the Austrian government as a foreign dignitary had so clearly interfered in the administration of Austrian education. It was subse-

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<sup>104</sup> Deborah R. Coen, *Vienna in the Age of Uncertainty: Science, Liberalism, and Private Life*. (Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 2007), 239.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Frazer, 243.

quently announced that Wahrmond had merely been suspended. However, when it was announced he would not be offering his regular summer courses (following his spring suspension) students on campus launched their revolt in a furor over the government's seeming capitulation to Rome.<sup>108</sup> Ultimately, it came to light the professor had accepted a position in Prague and accepted a lump sum from Innsbruck to leave the university permanently. By the end of 1908 the entire episode had played out and was leaving the public's mind. Schnitzler though saw the affair as not merely an interesting dramatic framework, but also a means of addressing the larger worrying blend of religion and politics within Austria: anti-Semitism.

Schnitzler's popularity had long attracted criticism from the anti-Semitic press, as well as fierce examination by the Austrian government.<sup>109</sup> His controversial depictions of sex and psyche were the hallmarks of his works, clearly demonstrated in *Reigen* (*Round Dance*), *Komtesse Mizzi* (*Countess Mizzi*), and *Liebelei* (*Flirtations*), among others. But these two aspects became the dominant features of his drama in history. Many scholars view *Bernhardi* as a random outlier against the otherwise even trajectory of these sexual plays (culminating in *Reigen*). This seems to run contrary to the playwright's own understanding of his drama, though: it is well noted he viewed *Bernhardi* as his masterpiece.<sup>110</sup> What if then, rather than merely assuming *Bernhardi* stands as a singular exemption to

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<sup>108</sup> Richard S. Geehr, *Karl Lueger Mayor of Fin de Siècle Vienna* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 190.

<sup>109</sup> See the controversies surrounding *Der grüne Kakadu*, *Beatrice* and *Freiwild* in Wagner and Vacha, 31-37, 93-94.

<sup>110</sup> W.E. Yates, *Schnitzler, Hoffmannsthal and the Austrian Theatre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 87.

Schnitzler's normal interests, we recognize an alternative path in the development of his drama. Rather than seeing the works progressing along the lines of increased sexual and moral criticism by the author, I offer we give greater weight to the threads of ideology running thorough his dramatic works and recognize *Bernhardi* as the natural culmination of these ideas. In this light, not only does a more consistent commitment to calling for political action emerge across his drama, but we also gain new insight into the interpretation of those plays typically diminished to being solely interested in sexuality.

Schnitzler pulled from the experience of the Wahrmond affair, and reimagined the real Professor Wahrmond as a fictional doctor, Professor Bernhardi.<sup>111</sup> However, instead of a Catholic openly criticizing the church's position on a controversial issue, *Bernhardi* presents us with the titular character as a Jewish man who serves as the renowned director at the Elisabethinum hospital in Vienna.<sup>112</sup> A young girl has been in the hospital slowly dying over the last two days as a result of a poorly performed, and illegal, abortion. She has been drugged, is in a state of euphoria, and is unaware she is dying. A nurse calls a priest to administer last rites to the woman, but Bernhardi refuses to allow him to enter, as it would serve only to cause anguish for the happily passing woman. The nurse informs the girl against Bernhardi's wishes, and the young woman goes into a panic before expiring. The press subsequently discovers the incident, and Bernhardi's job is put into jeopardy. Soon thereafter, he is charged by the government with insulting the church and resigns from the institution he helped create. He is convicted and stripped of his medical

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<sup>111</sup> Dr. Bernhardi teaches as well at the university, conferring the title of Professor on him.

<sup>112</sup> The Elisabethinum is a clear reference here to the Rudolfinerhaus, the real hospital which acquired its name under the patronage of the Crown Prince Rudolf.

license, and additionally serves a sentence of two months jail time, making him a martyr to the liberal and Jewish communities. Upon his release, it comes to light that numerous false testimonies were given at the trial, there is a public outcry on his behalf, and his medical license is reinstated. However, Bernhardt does not desire to make himself into a political figure or to lead a charge, and he declines pursuing remuneration or legal action to overturn his wrongful sentence.

Schnitzler is meticulous in his crafting of *Bernhardt*. He pays meticulous attention to his characters, creating well rounded people who are not merely voice pieces for a single point of view. Indeed, a number of the characters are based on colleagues from his youth spent studying medicine. Bernhardt's son Oscar even parallel's Schnitzler's own upbringing as the son of a prominent physician in Vienna.<sup>113</sup> Despite this attention to fairness, there is no point at which anti-Semitism is not clear and present in the minds of the characters. Many times this is demonstrated in small, rude allusions to Jews. For instance, in the following exchange, a rival of Bernhardt's, Dr. Ebenwald is attempting to uncover damaging information regarding Dr. Wenger, a young Jewish doctor at the Elisabethium who is up for promotion to department head. Ebenwald has his own selection for the post, who Bernhardt feels is unqualified, and in this exchange Ebenwald pulls another doctor, Hochroitzpointner, aside to both search out useful information and denigrate Wenger:

Ebenwald: Well then, how does he lecture?

Hochroitzpointner (cautiously): Quite well, actually.

Ebenwald: I see.

Hochroitzpointner: He's perhaps a little too—too learned. But his delivery is lively. Admittedly—but perhaps I shouldn't be commenting on a future head of department—

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<sup>113</sup> Yates, *Schnitzler, Hoffmannsthal and the Austrian Theatre*, 88.

Ebenwald: How do you mean, head of department? That has by no means been decided yet. There are other candidates around. And besides, this is a private conversation... So, tell me more. What have you against Doctor Wenger? The voice of the people is the voice of God.

Hochroitzpointner: Well, it's not so much his lecturing as his whole manner. You see, Professor, he is by nature a little overbearing.

Ebenwald: Aha. What you are referring to, my dear colleague, is probably what my cousin in parliament recently so aptly termed Yiddish of the soul.

Hochroitzpointner: Ah, I like that. Yiddish of the soul. (*Emboldened*) But he is insufferable sometimes.

Ebenwald: Well, that can't be helped. We're already living in an empire riddled with dialects.<sup>114</sup>

This exchange brings a number of issues to the forefront. First, we see Ebenwald's quiet, but transparent, anti-Semitism. Further, we see firsthand how this anti-Semitism is coercive, brought to others by Ebenwald quietly and in friendly conversation. It is very much as though he must convert others to his view. This depiction feels authentic, as do his motivations, from what we know of how early anti-Semitism in Vienna grew. Lastly, the final line, "an empire riddled with dialects," demonstrates the growing racial superiority felt by Ethnic Germans as a response to the climate brought about by the German Nationalists and Christian Socialists. This is directly referenced later on when Dr. Adler, a lecturer at the hospital, and Dr. Kurt Pflugelder, one of Bernhardi's assistants, have a conversation regarding the impending crisis which will befall Bernhardi after his exchange with the Priest.

Adler: Who is blaming him? Not me, certainly.

Kurt: Not you, I know Doctor. But some people do.

Adler: Well, everyone has his detractors.

Kurt: And enviers.

Adler: Of course. Anyone in fact who works hard and achieves something. The more honour, the more enmity. Bernhardi can't complain. A practice in the highest circles and influence in others which fortunately carry rather more weight—Professor, Director of the Elisabethinum—

Kurt: Well, who else deserved it if not him? He certainly fought tooth and nail for the Elisabethinum.

Adler: Of course, of course. I am the last person to want to belittle his achievements. Especially since he has attained such eminence in the current social climate. —I have some right to speak about that, since I've never made any secret of my Jewish origins, even though on my mother's side I come from an old-established, middle-class Viennese family. I even had occasion to bleed for my gentile side during my student years.

Kurt: That's well known, Doctor.

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<sup>114</sup> Arthur Schnitzler, *Round Dance and Other Plays*, trans. Davies, J.M.Q (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 295-296.

Adler: But I'm pleased that even you are prepared to do our Director the justice he deserves.

Kurt: Why should that please you particularly, Doctor?

Adler: You were a member of a German nationalist fraternity, weren't you?

Kurt: And an anti-Semite. Certainly, Doctor. Indeed I still am, generally speaking. Except that I have since become anti-Aryan as well. To me, human beings are altogether a fairly inadequate lot, and one takes comfort in the few exceptions one encounters now and then.<sup>115</sup>

Here is a direct referencing to the political backdrop of the world. It also serves as a good example of the play's frank examination of anti-Semitism. It was possible to be anti-Semitic in Vienna and maintain cordial relationships, friendships even, with Jews. Here rank, class, overt custom, as well as legitimate faith were all varying factors. Well assimilated or converted Jews represented entirely acceptable members of society to some anti-Semites. To others, this was unacceptable. Adler's remarks also give us a good portrait of an assimilated Jew, one who does not lie or deny his heritage, but is quick to escape its label—undoubtedly straddling the line depending on who his audience is.

Both this deliberate political discussion and his complex anti-Semitism return in a later exchange. Feuermann, a country doctor who recently had a mother die in childbirth while he was delivering the child, has been indicted on criminal charges for his failure, and he has gone to Bernhardt to beg assistance. He wants to win over Dr. Filitz, the head of gynecology. Filitz reveals his own personal deep Catholicism, and in turn, anti-Semitism, rapidly.

Feuermann: But if it had been a professor, he would not have been indicted, and—and it would have been considered God's inscrutable decree.

Filitz: You think so, do you. I see. (*Moves in front of him and looks him in the eye*) No doubt you are another of those young men who believe they owe it to their scientific dignity to play the atheist?—

Feuermann: Oh, Professor, to me it's really—

Filitz: Just as you please, Doctor. But I assure you, faith and science are perfectly compatible. I would even venture to say that science without faith will always be a fairly precarious affair, because it lacks the moral basis, the ethical dimension.

Feuermann: I'm sure you're right, Professor. But getting back to what I was saying, could I ask—

Filitz: There is no shortage of examples to show where nihilistic arrogance leads. And I hope it is not your ambition, Doctor Feuerstein—

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 303.

Feuermann: (shyly) Feuermann—

Filitz: —to dismay the contemporary world by providing yet another instance.<sup>116</sup>

Here we see the natural acceptance of Filitz's own religious views as entirely acceptable, and further, as even essential to his medical opinion. However, the other significant item we should note is Filitz's jab at Feuermann's name. His calling him "Feuerstein," which he will do repeatedly, serves as a clear jab at the man by implicating him of not only being Jewish but of hiding his Judaism. Filitz's anti-Semitism in this way goes beyond the characters we have witnessed thus far, extending past Ebenwald's hatred for personal gain or Kurt's distaste for the non-assimilated and seems to creep further into the idea of racial anti-Semite. He will refute this shortly, although it is a fairly unconvincing argument:

Filitz: There you go again with your *idée fixe*. Now I am anti-Semitic too, I suppose? I who always have at least one Jewish assistant? There is no anti-Semitism against decent Jews.

Löwenstein: Come now, what I am claiming is—

Filitz: If a Christian had behaved as Bernhardi did, it would have created just as much of a scandal. You know that full well, my dear Löwenstein.

Löwenstein: All right. Possibly. But then thousands would have been prepared to rally behind a Christian, who as it is won't take a stand and may even side against him.

Filitz: Who?

Löwenstein: The German Nationalists, and of course the Jews—I mean the sort who never pass up an opportunity to ingratiate themselves with the prevailing powers.

Filitz: Forgive my saying so, Löwenstein, but all that borders on the paranoiac. And I might add that it's precisely people like you, Löwenstein, absurdly suspecting anti-Semitism everywhere, who bear the main responsibility for the regrettable way differences are being emphasized. It would be infinitely preferable—<sup>117</sup>

Here Filitz's comments seem almost eerily modern. If one were to change the conversation from anti-Semitism to American racism, the conversation would feel unnervingly similar to discussions held following the election of President Barack Obama, regarding the national discourse of having overcome racism by electing an African-American Head of State. Equally too, the supposition of a lack of racism due to "having

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 312.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 316.

Black friends” makes for the same kind of weak argument Filitz puts forth with his claim against being anti-Semitic due to his regular employment of Jews. Further, his inability to recognize the fact that the very real issue of anti-Semitism in the country is absolutely present in the case borders on callow.

Throughout, *Bernhardi* rarely lets more than a few moments pass before reminding us of the importance and power of religion within this world. A major plot point occurs when Ebenwald offers to utilize his political connections to erase the charges against Bernhardi, all in exchange for not hiring Wenger. The entire subplot here allows for regular discussion of the importance of gentile blood and clearly displays the consequences of coming from Jewish ancestry.

Bernhardi: So now let me put it to you, Professor, that the only reason you’re canvassing for Hell at all is because—he’s not a Jew.

Ebenwald: (*very quietly*) I could with equal justice reply, Director, that your position in support of Wenger—

Bernhard: You forget that three years ago it was you I voted for, Professor Ebenwald.

Ebenwald: But only by overcoming your scruples, isn’t that so? And that’s exactly how I feel about Wenger, Director. And that’s why I won’t vote for him. One always lives to regret a thing like that. And even if I had a higher opinion of Wenger, Director in a corporate enterprise it’s not just an individual’s talent that counts—

Bernhardi: But his character.<sup>118</sup>

By now it should be apparent that a large number of characters are present, and indeed the play has some twenty-two different persons. This is clearly a tack used by Schnitzler to offer a range of diverse ideas. Where Ebenwald might seem an easy villain, he is not painted blackly or with absolute hatred. Indeed, he is clearly a bigot, but also one with a mind towards doing the most good for the hospital and with a seemingly genuine interest in caring for the sick and poor. Bernhardi is an imperfect hero, certainly taking on the right moral actions but failing to truly come out from the affair any wiser or

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 326.



with any desire to mantle the responsibility of fighting the injustice which has been thrown onto him. The Priest seeks to do good by a young dying girl but cannot find it in him assist Bernhardt, despite later acknowledging the doctor made the right choice and indeed was innocent of the crime accused of him. Anti-Semitism, while acknowledged and recognized, is distasteful when spoken aloud, but here we see the true malice of the hatred—in those unaware of their own racism.

This is perhaps the greatest claim *Professor Bernhardt* makes, that it is not the open racism and hatred which is most damaging to the Jews of Austria, but the quieter, unconscious aggressions which good people of society take against the Jewish population which must truly be acknowledged and overcome. For instance, the education minister, Flint, who is an old friend of Bernhardt, fails to recognize the extraordinary nature of his advice to the doctor when he advises him to end the controversy. He tells Bernhardt that he must: first, publicly apologize; second, appoint Hell over Wenger; and third, personally apologize to the priest, perhaps by allowing the priest to convert him. It is this kind of tacit, unaware bigotry where the play is often at its strongest. Those who fail to realize how demeaning they are being, how hurtful their actions are, as viewed through the veil of mass anti-Semitism, their ideas and opinions, to these characters, seem rational, tame, even benign.

*Professor Bernhardt* premiered in Berlin in 1912 to a great deal of controversy. Liberal publications were upset that Schnitzler did not openly accost anti-Semitism, whereas anti-Semitic presses found the work affronting. The play would be banned in Vienna by censors (despite a general relaxing of their power prior to the First World War)

due to its depictions of corruption within the Viennese government.<sup>119</sup> When it finally premiered in 1918, it would set off another round of contention for the same reasons as its Berlin debut. Yet it should be noted that Schnitzler not only was able to get the work produced in Berlin and Vienna, but at major theatres in both cities. No previous work dealing so directly with Jewish themes and issues had ever achieved a production at the Burgtheater. Further, while press reaction was mixed, the work drew crowds and brought discussion of the major problems with the rampant anti-Semitism in Vienna to the forefront of the city's public conversation. These are no small accomplishments. When we consider the role of *Professor Bernhardi*, we must be careful not to look back with an eye towards the horrific consequences that hatred towards Jews eventually caused. Rather, we must see how Schnitzler was able to mount a production which openly examined the situation in Austria: anti-Semitism was present and seemingly more universal than its citizens cared to admit, due in equal measure to the emperor's failure to actively attack it, and political groups who had encouraged racial hatred to stir up a political base. *Bernhardi*, in some ways mirroring *Das neue Ghetto* before it, seems to insist that, while Jews might be able to be heroic figures on stage, the only acceptable heroic role they could currently assume was that of a Job-like figure, bearing the consistent beatings of the society around them and still finding love not only for their country, but continuing to do their best to contribute to it.

Let us turn now to another piece often recognized as among Schnitzler's most political: *Der grüne Kakadu* (*The Green Cockatoo*). Although *Kakadu* is frequently

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<sup>119</sup> Yates, *Schnitzler, Hofmannsthal and the Austrian Theatre*, 99.

viewed mostly in terms of its social and moralistic criticism, almost no scholar can escape mentioning the obvious connotations of setting the piece against the backdrop of the French Revolution. Martin Swales's deft study of Schnitzler frames *Kakadu* as a light comedy and a delirious examination of to what degree the human psyche can be expressed on stage, and the piece is well remembered for its light-handed examination of the mindset of the Viennese upper-class and its detached re-imagining of the origin of the French Revolution.<sup>120</sup> Schnitzler calls the play a "grotesque," and the action unfolds entirely at a pub aptly named *Der grüne Kakadu*. The bar houses groups of woefully unaware aristocrats who playact at revolution, whilst the Bastille falls to the popular masses only blocks away. As Roberts notes, the work stands critical of censorship within Austria, which may be a direct result of the strong censorship Schnitzler's earlier play *Freiwild* (*Fair Game*) received. Equally, both Roberts and Hartmut Scheible point to *Kakadu* as Schnitzler's first and most glaring admonition to the bureaucracy that, without serious revision, would be undone by the growing disparities within.<sup>121</sup> Roberts suggests that *Kakadu* is a Marxist call to the proletariat. However, *Kakadu* focuses on the middle and upper classes, and the revolutionaries at the end of the piece are merely "citizens and philosophers," not commoners or workers.

Rather than a parable of the lower class overthrowing a wealthy Viennese aristocracy, in actuality the audience sees a ubiquitous power group out of touch with reality

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<sup>120</sup> Martin Swales, Arthur Schnitzler, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 271-275.

<sup>121</sup> Roberts, 35.

facing an uprising amongst a collective mix of those from “out groups.” *Kakadu* is not a metaphor forewarning class warfare, but rather a parable regarding the very real dangers of inequity within the empire. Schnitzler’s aim is to show a catastrophically out of touch government collapsing under the weight its own constantly disregarded minorities. This message is particularly relevant to the varied audience of the Hofburgtheater, most of whom possessed middle or upper-class backgrounds, and which often included Viennese cultural and political leaders. The fact remains the comedy was well received by the public and, while creating some controversy in its depiction of the government, never caused enough concern amongst viewers to force a premature closure or even poor attendance.<sup>122</sup>

In this regard, *Kakadu* was a successful vehicle calling for equality for all nationalities and a warning that further ignorance of the problem would lead to a volatile awakening within the disparaged ethnic groups.

Finally, let us look to *Reigen*, his most famous work. The play consists of ten scenes, each with a male and female character who have sex with each other. One of the

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<sup>122</sup> *Kakadu* was questioned by both government officials and prominent aristocrats who requested alterations making the piece less focused on its critique of government, however Schnitzler balked these oppositions and was able to navigate the controversy with minimal consequence. For more on the *Kakadu* affair, see Renate Wagner and Brigitte Vacha, *Wiener Schnitzler-Aufführungen 1891-1970*, 31-33.

characters then appears in the following scene, operating in a kind of circle until the first introduced character couples with the final character. Each couple we are introduced to is comprised of members of varying classes and, arguably, distinct nationalities. The conceit of the play is that all parts of society affect each other, as the prostitute who sleeps with a common soldier at the start of the play finishes the play by emerging from bed with a general.

While often viewed purely in terms of its critique of sexual mores—and certainly the theme of promiscuity in the play was startling—the work merits more attention than as a mere exploration of the pervasiveness of sex amongst all peoples. *Reigen*'s tone possesses a constant danger that is often understood as the unspoken and indiscriminate power of disease.<sup>123</sup> But this following of lover to lover, and indeed the understood potential for disease that accompanies each sexual encounter up the social ladder, highlights another of Schnitzler's dramatic themes: equality. With sex, and its accompanying dangers, no one is safe. No rank, notoriety, or political clout may protect from carnal desire and consequence, and the continued ignorance of natural desires leads only to painful, potentially fatal, damages to all peoples. This metaphor well extends into the political philosophy that the ignorance of the Viennese leadership was perilous. If action was not taken to incorporate all peoples of Austria, the ensuing harm would befall the entire Empire, and not just sole parties.

Names here take on great power. For instance, the first character we meet, the young prostitute Leocadia hardly possesses a Germanic name. Beyond this obvious refer-

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<sup>123</sup> Rudiger Mueller, *Sex, Love and Prostitution in Turn-of-the-century German-language Drama* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), 43-59.

ence though, other characters, especially the servants and the poet, seem to offer ripe opportunity for representations of varying nationalities. The poet writes under a false name, a point of great contention for him.

Poet: By the way, aren't you interested at all in knowing my surname?

Sweet Maid: Well, what is your name then?

Poet: I'd prefer to tell you what I call myself, rather than my name.

Sweet Maid: So, what's the difference?

Poet: Well, what I call myself as a writer.

Sweet Maid: Ah, so you don't write under your real name.

*The Poet moves very close to her*

Sweet Maid: Ah!... Come on... don't.

Poet: What fragrance ascend to greet one. How sweet.

*He kisses her breast.*

Sweet Maid: You're tearing my blouse.

Poet: Off... off... all this is superfluous.

Sweet Maid: But Robert!

Poet: And now come inside our Indian palace.<sup>124</sup>

Here, the poet chooses to engage the Sweet Maid, to consummate the scene, only when the issue of names, of identity, emerges. He prefers to be called by the name he has chosen, the identity he has claimed, not the one he was born with. In another scene, the sweet maid is unable to recognize the accent of the husband, as he reveals to her he is not actually Viennese. Subtle hints build to a pattern which may seem to suggest many of these characters are not from Vienna, or at least exist in its marginal communities. Perhaps the most damning moment in the play comes when a count, dressed in full military regalia, sleeps with a prominent actress of the Burgtheater. While the suggestion of an affair between a high ranking member of the nobility (two affairs, in fact, as the count awakens next to the prostitute in the following scene) is already somewhat provocative, there is a second layer to this scene which yields greater meaning: Emperor Franz Joseph was well known to have had a decades *affair de coeur* with Burg actress favorite Katharina Schrott.

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<sup>124</sup> Davies, 87.

Schratt, a favorite actress in Berlin and Vienna who spent time touring the world in performances, captivated the Emperor first when he saw her on stage in the 1880s. From there he went on to write, visit, and entertain the actress for decades. She and the Empress Elisabeth grew close together. The nature of the relationship has never been precisely determined. Franz Joseph was clearly in love with her, funding her lavish lifestyle for years. At times, he wrote her daily and included such instructions as for her to wait by a window in her apartment when he knew he would be passing by.<sup>125</sup> While their letters seem to indicate a chastity in the relationship, it has endured as a popular bit of gossip into the present—and certainly when it was happening it was a known event to the city's elite, although there would have been far less doubt as to the sexual nature of the relationship then as there is today. Recognizing this coupling changes the way we examine the count and actress in *Reigen*.

W.E. Yates, the foremost scholar on the Viennese theatre, has noted Schnitzler's works like *Reigen* have more of a political agenda than critics often credit them for. Equally, Yates points out that Schnitzler displays his political investment in the issue of Austrian anti-Semitism in *Professor Bernhardt*.<sup>126</sup> Where Yates and Schnitzler's other critics always find fault with the author is a lack of political philosophy.<sup>127</sup> Yet this seems a hefty order from a playwright, and a somewhat excessive one at that. While *Bernhardt* does not offer a full voiced attack on Austrian anti-Semitism, this is to its advantage.

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<sup>125</sup> Ernst Benedikt, "Franz Joseph and Katharina Schratt," *The Contemporary Review*, (Jan, 1950: 177), 292-293.

<sup>126</sup> Yates, *Schnitzler, Hoffmannsthal and the Austrian Theatre*, 84-89.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, 105.

Firstly, from an artistic view, a deliberate diatribe bemoaning or accosting anti-Semitism as a piece of political drama is not only out of style for Schnitzler, but would limit his work. Secondly, the chances of a work of this kind ever being produced—especially at the major German and Austrian theatres that regularly clamored to produce the works of Schnitzler—are remote. Those rare plays which sought to put forward an overt political platform rarely made it to the stage. *Das neue Ghetto*, the only overtly political work of Herzl's, only reached the stage after years of Herzl searching for a theatre. Even then, it was because Herzl had already established a minor reputation as a playwright thanks to the support and assistance of Schnitzler in earlier years.<sup>128</sup> It is essential to our understanding of the significance of the Viennese theatre that we recognize, first, the sheer accomplishment of Schnitzler's plays reaching the Burgtheater with political statements built in, and second, that, upon acknowledging a political current within the playwright's works, we reassess these dramas and look for strains of thought in them outside of Freudian psychology, even if it may be the sexiest element.

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<sup>128</sup> It is also important to remember that *Das Neue Ghetto* never achieved a performance at a major theatre in Berlin or Vienna as Herzl had hoped for, but only achieved productions at third tier venues.



## Conclusion

The world had renewed itself. Everything has become entirely different, all around. It began with the observation of the external. That is the first direction restless curiosity turned. To portray the unfamiliar, the external, in fact, the new. First phase.

But it was precisely that way that man also renewed himself. He is what matters now. To say how he is—second phase. And more important, to assert what it is that he wants: the urgent, the impetuous, the licentious—wild lust, the many fevers, the great enigmas.

To be sure, psychology, too, is just prelude. It is merely the awakening of naturalism from this long self-alienation, the rediscovery of the joy of the exploration of the self, the harkening to one's own impulses. But it goes deeper: proclaiming oneself, the egotistical, the singular individuality, the wonderful new. And this is to be found in nervousness. Third phase of the modern.<sup>129</sup>

Hermann Bahr was something of a father figure to the Coffeehouse Wits. His theatrical writings were tremendously influential, whether in encouraging Schnitzler to pursue new artistic directions or giving Kraus a new avenue of mockery. While he didn't personally share the artistic success of Gustav Mahler or Gustav Klimt, he was, in the same way they were, a seminal force for others in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna. He begins his essay, "The Overcoming of Naturalism," with two questions: "First, the question of what the new will be that is to overcome naturalism. Second, the question [of the] destiny of naturalism."<sup>130</sup> Bahr did not see the two ideas as mutually exclusive. While he believed naturalism should survive, he felt it needed the jolt of rival forms to reinvent itself to be modern, and truthful. Likewise, he felt that the stagnation of naturalism meant something

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<sup>129</sup> Hermann Bahr, "The Overcoming of Naturalism," in Harold B. Segel, trans. *The Vienna Coffeehouse Wits 1890-1938*, (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1993), 50.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

new must emerge, to break away from the overly-long reign of the artistic ideal. He was, perhaps, in exactly the right place, at exactly the right time.

Yet the flowering of art which emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Habsburg Capital was not merely the result of a great mentor or great artist. Nor was it born of many great thinkers and artists, even living and interacting together (although this was undoubtedly helpful). It is essential for our understanding of the period to recognize the necessity of self-expression. This was a country painfully aware of its own antiquation, yet change, to many, seemed impossible. What was it to be an Austrian? If German is the prerequisite, then what else? Must one be Catholic? Must one stand for all Germans, or merely Austrians? Is it only to hold fast to the Habsburg leadership? If one is not German, does it follow one cannot be Austrian?

This was a state torn apart by nations. Language, religion, custom, food, heritage, tradition all pulled tightly against an ancient force desperately trying to remain rooted. For anti-Semitism to emerge in the vitriolic, virulently racist form it did was perhaps inevitable. Yet hatred forces new understandings of who we are. Why am I hated? What is about me and my people which is so loathsome? How may I exist as an outside in my own home? These are not readily resolvable questions. It is no wonder Freud sought to understand the peace which comes with that grand “oceanic feeling” he seeks to find.<sup>131</sup>

What we see in these studies are attempts to understand, or even forcibly create, a space for these identities. There are those, like Lueger and Schönerer, who define themselves by what they are not, by establishing “others” to more firmly establish their own

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<sup>131</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2010), 4.

power base. They perform their identity with assurance, as they stand in contrast to those they have targeted. There are others, such as Herzl, who search out how to perform their role in a society which has thrown never welcomed them. We see Herzl reject the very society he is from, and the one in which he lives. His hopes for a rebirth, a new start is the only conceivable way to purifying the stained image not only foisted upon his people, but which he views as having crept into their very existence. Freedom and distance are the only salvation. Then there is Kraus who seeks for a return. Perhaps if we build a new world, but one built on the greatness of the best of our earlier selves, we might then abandon the failure and stagnation which have enveloped our surroundings. Finally there is Schnitzler, who begs for understanding from his peers and superiors, and not to isolate or escape, but to change: to heal. Each is a response to a changing world.

Vienna has a richer cast of characters than any playwright could imagine. I have presented scenes with only a few of them. Yet, I believe they tell an engaging story of self-determination. Bahr's query on overcoming naturalism, goes beyond this idea. It is a question of how to engage in modernity. We may not escape our time, whether it be for the past or future: life is lived in the present. As the nineteenth century closed and gave light to the next, this reckoning was wrought by the necessity of finding one's place. The happy discovery that came with this search? Modernity.

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