

## JEWISH SPACES OF RETREAT AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



In the second and third chapters, I discussed the conception of Jewishness that appears in Jewish *Volkssänger* plays, as well Albert Hirsch's life and theatrical work. My analysis highlights how the representation of Jewishness takes precedent over its content, that is, what defines it. I have demonstrated how one cannot tie Jewishness to concrete, universal attributes. Rather, Jewishness reveals itself in a differentiation that comes to the fore in a performative way. I have shown how difference is inclusive, meaning that, in principle, non-Jews could also potentially adopt the related attributes (see chapter 5).

In the following section of the study, I explore a form of Jewish differentiation that is grounded in content matter, which I illustrate on the basis of concrete conceptions of space and time. This form of differentiation abrogates the notion of the fluidity of difference, without essentializing it. That is to say, these notions of time and place are determined by context. To outline them, we must expand our study beyond popular Jewish stage entertainment and take into account literary and artistic works by Jews as well. I thereby situate my thesis that (at least some) Viennese Jews at the turn of the twentieth century shared a specific Jewish understanding of time and space within a wider framework.

### **Retreating into the Past**

When Claude Monet and his fellow painters, who would later become known as Impressionists, turned to plein-air painting, they were still seen as eccentric. However, they were certainly not the first to set up their canvases outside to

capture the scenes of nature before their eyes and their impressions thereof. In painting outdoors, they followed the example of the Barbizon School.<sup>1</sup> From a broader point of view, they were not merely concerned with a new method of painting. Instead, nature became more significant as a motif against the backdrop of contemporary urbanization and industrialization.<sup>2</sup> Nature was understood as a retreat, and they depicted a premodern landscape that was in the process of disappearing. For those who questioned the acceleration of life in urban surroundings, this landscape became a site of longing.

Tina Blau, an Austrian Impressionist, also painted spaces of retreat within the sphere of tangible reality. Born in Vienna in 1845 and having converted from Judaism to Protestantism in 1883, the landscape painter achieved fame in Austria and beyond.<sup>3</sup> Among her large and varied painterly oeuvre are depictions of Vienna's periphery and past. These include *Aus der Wiener Vorstadt* (On the outskirts of Vienna; 1905) and *Altwiener Hof* (Old Viennese courtyard; 1910). They depict idyllic settings that had already been lost during the modernization of Vienna or were in danger of being demolished. Industrialization and the new construction boom, which demolished entire streets to replace seemingly peaceful rows of houses with new living quarters built from scratch, ripped many people from their familiar surroundings and awakened in them a desire for a simpler way of life. These were then located on the city's outskirts (*Vorstadt*) or in the topos of Alt-Wien (Old Vienna). In the late nineteenth century, these spaces were often conflated, their meanings intermingling. Old Vienna was localized on the periphery, and the outskirts respectively embodied conditions that were supposedly characteristic of Vienna's past. For Tina Blau, these locations assumed the same purpose that nature held for other Impressionists.

Blau's representations of spaces of retreat from the ostensible rigors of the present are similar to those of Felix Salten, a member of the literary circle Jung Wien. Salten was born as Siegmund Salzman in Budapest in 1869. His father, who came from a renowned family of rabbis, moved with his wife and children to Vienna, where Siegmund went to school. Shortly after completing secondary school, he became a member of the writers' circle Jung Wien. *Bambi* and *Josefine Mutzenbacher* are among his most famous works, although the authorship of the latter has not yet been fully clarified. Salten also wrote about the outskirts. He himself had spent part of his childhood on the periphery of Vienna, after his father had lost his fortune to speculation and his family had to give up their apartment in a bourgeois neighborhood. Salten's excursions to the outskirts therefore were motivated in no small part by his childhood memories.<sup>4</sup> In this manner, he associated them with a sense of safety and security. Occasionally, he was able to discover them in the way of life associated with the outskirts, as well as in some of the taverns and establishments in Vienna's city center. Essentially, he sought a place where people of various social strata, classes, and ethnicities, including Jews and non-Jews, came together and were able to forget their differences and

create a sense of fellowship in the context of Viennese congeniality and hospitality (*Gemütlichkeit*).<sup>5</sup> He wrote about Brady, a tavern that offered entertainment in the city center: “And as young princes, officers, old rakes, clerks, bourgeois, coachmen, and young women sit next to each other and sing, it feels as if one is in a very small town, where the residents come together to form a particular kind of family.”<sup>6</sup> Thus, for Salten, the outskirts were not necessarily a specific geographic location in the city, but rather a place that enabled the creation of a community that might include both Jews and non-Jews.

For Tina Blau and Felix Salten, Old Vienna and the periphery served as spaces free from the unrest of modernity, which therefore represented a bucolic counterpoint to the realities of everyday life. Further, both places evoked the past. Old Vienna stood for a lost Vienna—first and foremost for the Biedermeier era—although it could also reach further into the past. By contrast, the city’s outlying districts were associated with a contemplative life in a seemingly village-like atmosphere that had already disappeared in the rest of Vienna, or was vanishing in principle, as it was being displaced by the modernization of the urban surroundings.<sup>7</sup>

Incidentally, sites of retreat from the present into history were also represented in architecture. Sometimes the facades of the palaces on Vienna’s Ringstrasse that Jews owned evinced a strong longing for a world in which the chasm between Jews and non-Jews could be eradicated or at least bridged.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Jewish Difference in the Topos of Old Vienna***

Within the realms of art and literature, Tina Blau and Felix Salten depicted spaces of retreat that were transfigured by nostalgia. Anchored in the old Viennese past, they largely correspond with the refuge construed by Vienna’s general population.<sup>9</sup> In Old Vienna, they likewise perceived an imagined counterpoint to the transfigured, modern metropolis on the Danube.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, it appears that there are two substantial differences between Jewish and non-Jewish conceptions of space. These relate to the function of Old Vienna. For Jews, the embellishment of the city’s recent history did not merely serve as a critique of the present. Rather, Old Vienna was a foil that allowed them to inscribe themselves into the history of the city. A Jewish presence in the past was meant to serve as a counterpoint to the widespread view that Jews were foreign, immigrants, who did not truly belong to society. Although the topos of Old Vienna did not generally imply a reference to Jewish existence, Jews who represented it foregrounded this very notion. Indeed, they presented examples of a “shared history” (to use a term prevalent today).<sup>11</sup>

One exception among the general representations of Old Vienna, in which Jewish life in the past is indeed referenced, is found in a series of articles in the *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*. It repeatedly presents buildings that are tied to a Jewish existence in Vienna. For instance, in a text from the early twentieth cen-

tury, the Judenplatz is described as an example of Old Vienna that has endured in the midst of new Viennese (*neu-Wiener*) surroundings.<sup>12</sup> An article on sections of Leopoldstadt, the Prater and what is today the third district, or the Landstrasse, provides further documentation thereof. Among other things, the article goes back to the seventeenth century and mentions a house located on the Unterer Werd, which later became Leopoldstadt. It was torn down in 1901. The article specifies that it had been known as a Jewish tavern since 1623. The building was situated on a street that was named Herrengasse three hundred years prior and was known as the seat of wealthy Jewish merchants.<sup>13</sup> However, the article does not acknowledge that this circumscribed area was in fact the Jewish ghetto (1625–70) and that Jews were forbidden from occupying the city long after it was abolished.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, it gives the impression that there was a continuous Jewish presence well into the twentieth century.

The International Exhibition of Music and Theater (Internationale Ausstellung für Musik- und Theaterwesen), which took place from May to October 1892 at the Wiener Prater, illustrates a “Jewish” effort to present Jews as an integral part of Old Viennese society. One of the event’s most popular attractions was the representation of Old Vienna, with a reconstruction of the Hoher Markt, a square in Vienna’s city center, as the centerpiece.<sup>15</sup> Oskar Marmorek, a well-known Jewish architect, was commissioned for the project. To that end, he studied building plans from the seventeenth century. Nonetheless, these only served as rough guidelines for his work. To design the buildings, he relied upon his imagination, by means of which he “‘understood’ the historical square.”<sup>16</sup> To a certain extent, he played with and constructed the past. Marmorek, who was familiar with Zionism and had a keen sense of Jewishness, did not miss the opportunity to reveal the historical existence of Jews through his work. We may observe this in the fact that he included the Judengasse among the few side streets that led to his reconstruction of the Hoher Markt.<sup>17</sup> Marmorek constructed a notion of the past that was also marked by Jews. In this manner, the exhibition conveyed to viewers that Jews belonged to Vienna’s past.<sup>18</sup>

The second difference between the Jewish and the general constructions of Old Vienna was directly tied to the emphasis placed on a Jewish presence in the city’s past. This emphasis did not lie in the representation of the city itself, but rather in showing Jews in peaceful interaction with non-Jews.

Albert Hirsch’s work serves as a significant example of this manner of portraying Jewish existence. At the beginning of 1902, his troupe performed a burlesque that he had written entitled *Der Apostel vom Schottenfeld* (The apostle of Schottenfeld).<sup>19</sup> On the one hand, newspaper advertisements demonstrate its ties to the city’s past, as they market it as an old Viennese play. On the other, this connection would have been apparent to many contemporaries from the title itself.<sup>20</sup> Although Schottenfeld was not on Vienna’s periphery, after it was incorporated into the seventh district in 1850, it stood in close relationship to the outskirts and

its contemplative way of life.<sup>21</sup> This is evident in the short stories by Jewish journalist Julius Löwy (1851–1905) for the *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*, which captured everyday life in Vienna and the periphery and which repeatedly align them with Schottenfeld. On March 4, 1900, his essay (“Der Kaiser vom Schottenfeld als eine Wiener Vorstadtgeschichte” (The king of Schottenfeld as a tale of the Viennese outskirts) was published,<sup>22</sup> and six months later, “Der Kirchtagegeiger vom Schottenfeld” (The church festival fiddler from Schottenfeld), which was termed an “old Viennese character.”<sup>23</sup> Old Vienna, the periphery, and Schottenfeld were strongly associated with one another, with Schottenfeld serving as a quasi-synonym for the old Viennese periphery.

It was no coincidence that Albert Hirsch wrote a play that referred to Schottenfeld, and by extension to Old Vienna. First, he understood himself as a member of the community of Viennese *Volkssänger*, which was closely tied to the folk music tradition and the atmosphere of historic Vienna. Additionally, he and his ensemble often appeared in the taverns on Mariahilferstrasse, which is in the immediate vicinity of Schottenfeld.<sup>24</sup> By explicitly naming this quarter of the city in the title of his piece, Hirsch was able to directly address the surrounding population and advertise his performances. He also did this with the character of the priest, who plays a central role in *The Apostle of Schottenfeld*. Hirsch based his character on Karl Stern, the parish priest of Schottenfeld, who had died in March 1901. He was truly beloved, enjoyed renown beyond his parish, and by virtue of his advanced age of eighty-six years personified a piece of Old Vienna.<sup>25</sup> Hirsch thus likely intended for his play to benefit from the reference to the well-known priest.

*The Apostle of Schottenfeld* is about a young Jewish couple, Bruno and Esther, who attempt to obtain permission to marry. Esther’s father, a stockbroker named Goldmann, and his wife are against the relationship because Bruno is too interested in sports, and they think his professional plans are pipe dreams.<sup>26</sup> He wants to train animals and have them perform at the Ronacher, as well as build a blimp, and therefore needs start-up funds for his ventures. However, he does not have any money, and Mr. Goldmann does not want to give or loan it to him.

In the first scene, Mr. and Mrs. Goldmann find their daughter having a rendezvous with Bruno. The young couple tells Esther’s parents that they cannot live without one other. Bruno concedes that he must seem like a terrible groom, because without a profession and financial means, he cannot provide for Esther. What is more, an improvement in his situation is not foreseeable in the near future. Yet he is certain that he will ultimately reach his goal. Mr. Goldmann does not share Bruno’s confidence. Convinced that he will never have any money, he tells Bruno that he may have his daughter’s hand as soon as he produces 1,000 gulden in cash. He then considers the matter settled.

Both Esther and Bruno are deeply troubled by this stipulation. A wedding no longer seems to be in the picture. Frustrated, Esther threatens to throw herself into the Danube. Bruno will not be upstaged and voices the same resolution. Mr.

Goldmann reacts to this pronouncement by stating that money rules the world. When Esther and Bruno are alone again, they hear the voice of the priest, Father Lorenz. Since they are especially familiar with his charitable reputation, they resolve to ask him for a way out of their predicament.

The following scene shows Father Lorenz, who is granting his assistance to a young woman. Her father lost his life a year ago in a work accident, and her mother desperately needs medication that she cannot afford. Father Lorenz, who collects money from the rich to help the poor, pays for the remedy.

Bruno and Esther hope to win his support, despite their particular circumstances. They tell him about Mr. Goldmann's decision to withhold his consent to their marriage until Bruno is in possession of 1,000 gulden. Father Lorenz knows Mr. Goldmann from his charitable donations for the building of the church. Conversely, Esther's mother is also acquainted with him, having heard him give a eulogy at a funeral several years before. According to Esther, his sermon moved Mrs. Goldmann so much that she returned home in tears. The Goldmann family and Father Lorenz have not cultivated a close personal acquaintance, but they respect one another. Over the course of the conversation with Esther and Bruno, Father Lorenz devises a plan to get Mr. Goldmann to change his mind about his daughter's marriage request. To that end, the priest must speak with him in person. He sends Esther back home to her parents, so that she may be present at the meeting.

In the fourth scene, Mrs. Goldmann reads aloud to her husband from the newspaper about a fund-raising drive in remembrance of those who perished in the Ringtheater fire.<sup>27</sup> All residents were asked to contribute something. Mr. Goldmann reckons that there must have been Jews among those who died and that he would therefore contribute 100 gulden. When the doorbell rings shortly thereafter and Father Lorenz enters, Mr. and Mrs. Goldmann believe that he is there for the door-to-door collection that had been announced in the paper. Without prompting, Mr. Goldmann declares his willingness to contribute a considerable sum. Yet, upon the Catholic priest's request for 1,000 gulden, Mr. Goldmann is so shocked that he almost faints. His wife has to help him stay on his feet. After he recovers, Mrs. Goldmann urges him to give Father Lorenz the requested sum. Initially, Mr. Goldmann protests, but he nevertheless gives in. Father Lorenz gives Bruno the money, who presents the sum to Mr. Goldmann.

In the end, Bruno and Esther receive Mr. and Mrs. Goldmann's permission to marry. Father Lorenz appears once more as well. His parting words to Bruno and Esther are "Fare thee well, children, live well with one another, you have seen that Father Lorenz does not only pray for Christians, but also for Jews, when they are decent people."

*The Apostle of Schottenfeld* is Hirsch's most famous work. In it, he not only portrays Jews as part of old Viennese society, but also presents them in close relationship to non-Jews. He foregrounds both of these aspects in the farce *A*

*Gschicht' von anno dazumal* (A tale from yesteryear).<sup>28</sup> It is about two women, Gertrud and her daughter Burgai, who can no longer pay the rent for their small house. The baron who owns the building is unmoved by his tenants' unfortunate circumstances and gives them an eviction notice. At over sixty years of age, the property manager promises to appeal to the aristocrat on the women's behalf if the eighteen-year-old Burgai marries him. However, she brusquely rejects this offer. Instead, she wants to persuade their aged roommate Isak to leave the house. "The old Jew," Burgai's derogatory name for him, lives with the women without contributing to rent or for his board. Burgai believes that if he moves out, they could save enough money to settle the rent. Gertrud, however, strictly opposes her daughter's plan. She tells Burgai that Isak was her late father's best friend. Isak had lent him the money that he needed to build his business, but because it had not gone well, Isak had never received any of his money back.

Isak has secretly listened in on the women's conversation and is deeply unsettled by Burgai's proposition. Consequently, he decides to leave the house forever. Before he goes, he tells Burgai why he and her late father were such good friends. Both were born in Langenzersdorf, a small town not far from Vienna. As a young boy, Burgai's father had often carried the peddler's sack belonging to Isak's father, while Isak would lie in the stall of Burgai's grandparents and drink milk fresh from the cow. After his parents died, Isak inherited 3,000 gulden from them. He lost 2,000 gulden and gave the remaining 1,000 to Burgai's parents over the years.

Shortly before the notice is up for Burgai and Gertrud to evacuate their home, the baron, his daughter, and the manager stop by. The aristocrat has had a hunting accident and wants to rest in the house for a while. Gertrud seizes the opportunity and implores him to withdraw the eviction notice. The baron will not be swayed and merely gives her a short extension. As justification for his decision, he claims that the women had declared they did not have money for the rent, but nonetheless could defray the costs for an old Jew's board.

When Isak enters the room where the women are sitting with their guests, the manager and the baron are voicing their anti-Jewish attitudes. Isaac, however, does not let himself be intimidated by their hostility toward him. He turns to the baron and tells him that he had saved his life some decades ago. At the time, Isak bought wares in Vienna and sold them to farmers in the surrounding area. On a forest path, he saw the baron, who at that precise moment had turned a revolver on himself. When Isak asked him why he was in despair, the baron explained that he was deeply in debt. Isak took pity on him and gave him 2,000 gulden. He explains further that he never asked to be paid back. For that reason, Isak assumes that the loan is sufficient to allow Gertrud and Burgai to continue to live in the house.

The baron is moved by Isak's remarks, and his displeasure with him transforms into a feeling of solidarity. He replies to Isak that after he inherited his father's

title, he searched the entire country for his former benefactor. Since the baron did not know his name, he distributed fliers throughout the country to announce that he wanted to repay the sum. As a result, approximately one thousand Jews came to him claiming to be the creditor, but he saw through their lies.

The story has a conciliatory ending. The baron allows both women to keep living in the house. The manager is punished for his selfish behavior, while the baron takes Isak back to his castle and cares for the man until his dying day. A deep friendship develops between the Jew Isak and the non-Jewish baron, which alludes to their mutual sense of care. The performance ends with the sentence “No matter a Jew or Christian / As long as he is a good person.”

*A Tale from Yesteryear* takes place in a generalized past, in which Jews were part of society. While we discern a harmonious coexistence between Jews and non-Jews illustrated in the relationship between Burgai’s father and Isak, there is also anti-Jewish hostility. The latter stems in large part from misunderstandings. By resolving these, a path is cleared for friendships and close relationships between Jews and non-Jews. According to the conclusion of *A Tale from Yesteryear*, different ethnic or religious affiliations need not cloud Jewish–non-Jewish relationships. Isak, the altruistic Jew, seems to have more in common with the baron, who had initially revealed himself to be an antisemite, than he does with other Jews, who are portrayed as deceitful and dishonest.

The theatrical representation of close relationships and varied interactions between Jews and non-Jews in the Old Vienna period tends to mask tensions and frictions between them. Open anti-Judaism largely recedes in favor of harmonious relationships. Occasionally, possible references to it are placed in new contexts and thereby reinterpreted. We see this exemplified in a Purim ball organized by the Brigittenauer Israelite Support Society (Brigittenauer Israelitischer Unterstützungsverein) in 1903. Its board members attended this event in the “old Viennese fashion.”<sup>29</sup> Among other things, their attire included a “colorful tailcoat, gaudy doublet, and pointed hat.” One of the attendees even appeared as a “knight in shining armor’ with a silk cloak and sword.”<sup>30</sup> The Jews thus used the ball to present themselves as part of the distant past, by way of the concrete example of the Middle Ages.<sup>31</sup> In this respect, it is worth noting that Jews were required to wear pointed hats during that period to distinguish them from non-Jews.<sup>32</sup> However, in the context of the ball, it no longer contained an anti-Jewish meaning. Instead, it served as an indicator that Jews had participated in Old Viennese society.

## **The Transition from Past to Present**

We must situate the idealization of the periphery or outskirts, which maintained a reference to the past in its association with Old Vienna, as well as the glorification of the Habsburg capital of earlier decades and centuries, within the pan-



European context of historicism. Likewise, the notion of an idyll on the Viennese periphery that was largely free of the imponderability of the present was a reaction to processes of modernization, the effects of which were at once felt in people's immediate environments, and to the orientation toward the future that industrialization brought with it.<sup>33</sup> Historicism not only imbued the past with great importance, but also allowed for a pluralization of the past.<sup>34</sup> It was accompanied by a loosening of traditions and an undercutting of standardized interpretations of history.<sup>35</sup> This fundamental openness toward pluralistic interpretations of the past made it possible for Jews to introduce their own ideas about the history of Vienna to the contemporary discourse on modernity, which, like their conceptions of Old Vienna, differed from those of non-Jews.

The open juxtaposition of different representations of history was not to last long. At the end of the nineteenth century, professional historians, experts, and conservationists impeded laymen from interpreting the past, and these professionals alone increasingly determined how it was to be construed. A single, comprehensive narrative developed out of many histories presented to the public at museums and exhibitions. History no longer led people to "empathize," and the past was no longer "felt," but rather interpreted and rationalized according to strict methodology. The majority of the population who were enthusiastic about history thereby lost their access to the subject. In other words, it became foreign to them. Consequently, there was a renunciation of the past and an orientation toward the present.

We observe this reversal in the understanding of time in many areas of art and literature, as well as in numerous academic disciplines, and it was a transnational phenomenon. It found clear expression in the works of the Impressionists, whom I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, particularly in Claude Monet's painting *Quai du Louvre*. The painting depicts people strolling in the city from the high vantage point of an onlooker. In the process, the observer turns his or her back on the Old Masters in the museums. For them, prosaic movement in the here and now was far more significant than the creative endeavors of long-dead painters.<sup>36</sup>

Felix Salten provides a concrete example of this shift toward the present. Specifically, it concerns his reaction to the demolition of the Stalehner in 1907. The Stalehner was a tavern where *Volkssänger* groups held performances. It was located in Hernals, on the city's outskirts, and symbolized the Old Viennese way of life. Correspondingly, the daily paper *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt* evoked this when it wrote about the demolition of the Stalehner. The report maintains a maudlin tone throughout, and its representation of the history of the locale idealizes its location in the outskirts.<sup>37</sup> By contrast, Salten's commentary on the disappearance of the Stalehner is rather distanced. For him, the demise of the Stalehner meant the loss of a place where people of different social origins could come together and fraternize.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, he recognized that the conditions necessary for

this kind of communal sense of belonging had been relegated to the past. With great uneasiness, Salten followed the rise of antisemites in the Viennese outskirts, where they eroded the creation of community between Jews and non-Jews. Confounded by the increasing resonance of anti-Jewish hostility among the general public, Salten increasingly lost sympathy for the outskirts so closely linked to his biography. He therefore bid farewell to the Stalehner, and with it the periphery and the old Viennese period: “One must say, that better, more venerable and more valuable locales have been lost than the Stalehner. The new young city has overtaken it, and we have forgotten the one to which it belonged. We will also get over the Stalehner.” Shortly thereafter, he reckons, “It certainly deserves an obituary.”<sup>39</sup> Salten’s writings do not express a lament, but rather an epitaph that allows one to come to terms with the past. In this refutation of the past lay a significant moment of modernity, which played an important role for the formation of self-understanding among Jews in Vienna.<sup>40</sup>

In this respect, Old Vienna and the outskirts lost their relevance. This shift was not only apparent in a considerable decline in Jewish cultural figures’ efforts to draw attention to a Jewish presence in earlier decades and centuries. The Old Viennese past as a whole was also represented with increasing ambivalence. Ultimately, during this period, Jews in Vienna lived with many restrictions. Pogroms and residency bans made their existence in the city impossible for long spans of time. The last expulsion of Jews took place in 1670, and it would be 180 years before a new Jewish community was officially permitted to live in Vienna.<sup>41</sup> Julius Löwy’s texts highlight this sober view of Old Vienna. Löwy was born in the Bohemian town of Edlitz and came to Vienna at the age of three. There he attended secondary school and began to study medicine. After a year, he decided to devote himself instead to journalism, a field in which he was very successful. As early as 1873, he was a member of the editorial board of the *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*. For years, he published his “Wiener Skizzen” (Viennese sketches) there.<sup>42</sup> These short stories primarily equated the city’s past with Old Vienna. They illustrate nostalgic views of the past and homey descriptions of a time gone by. Unlike Hirsch, Löwy makes scarcely any reference to Jewishness in his writing. If Jews are present in his narratives, they merely play bit parts.

One of Löwy’s descriptions of old buildings and courtyards, which until then had been spared demolition, demonstrates just how idyllic his work depicts the past. Especially in comparison to the modern housing complexes for the working class, these buildings—most of which would soon be demolished—provide genuine sources of joy in everyday life for their occupants. In contrast to the dreary streets where the tenement houses stand, “everything in the old courtyard” is fragrant and

the pleasant fresh green of the garden beckons in such a friendly manner. The tender flowers in their simple beds are resplendent in red and green, yellow and white. Since

those who live in these old buildings usually have good neighbors, in the evenings there is sometimes a lively game of tarok [*Tarokpartie*] under the chestnut tree. What fun and banter are to be had at such courtyard tarok games. And as soon as dawn comes, the courtyard is again full of children, who set out ropes to make swings at the foot of the old chestnut tree.<sup>43</sup>

These homey descriptions represent only one side of his stories. Time and again, Löwy allows darker aspects to creep in that portray Old Vienna or the village-like structure of the city's periphery in an unflattering light. We see an example of this more insidious aspect in his text "Die Poldi" (Poldi), which is presented as a short story about the city's outskirts.<sup>44</sup> The main character, Poldi, is described as a charming and lovely young woman with whom many young men have fallen in love. Yet she does not pay her suitors any attention. None of them knows that she is having a love affair with a stranger. She becomes pregnant and has his child. Since she and her lover are not married and having a child out of wedlock is seen as shameful, Poldi tries to keep the pregnancy and birth secret. Her fear of public disgrace eventually leads her to infanticide. The police find out and Poldi is sentenced to a long imprisonment, but she dies only one year into her incarceration.

In "Poldi," Löwy not only recounts the memorable fate of a young woman, but he also criticizes the manners and morals in the outskirts, especially the antiquated stance on intimate relationships, which are only considered legitimate upon marriage. Other forms of sexual activity are frowned upon in such a way that the fear of being found out proves to be greater than the horror of committing murder.

Löwy's book *Geschichten aus der Wienerstadt* (Stories from the city of Vienna) makes the tension between the idyll and a moral abyss even more explicit. The foreword states that the author delights readers with stories from the outskirts and Old Vienna. It goes on to describe the outlying districts as places where Viennese women and men "sit in little houses, humble parlors, courtyards from which the green has not yet disappeared."<sup>45</sup> Only one Jew appears in the whole book. His Jewishness is not addressed specifically and is evident only in his name: "Moses Goldschlagpapier from Rzeszow."<sup>46</sup> Apart from a short mention that he works as a buyer, he does not play a role in the story. Above all, Löwy characterizes life in Old Vienna and the outskirts respectively as convivial spaces. People make merry together and spend most of their free time with one another. Unlike the present, which many of Löwy's contemporaries experienced as solitary and isolated, premodern Vienna seems to have provided for a fulfilling existence.

According to Löwy, the conviviality that characterizes the existence in Old Vienna and the outskirts stems not least from the cramped housing and living conditions that drives people out of their homes and thereby encourages contact with neighbors. However, the effects of these conditions are not limited to fostering community. They also sow the seeds for various types of wrongdoing. Poverty

and the lack of prospects that so often define life in these locales abet alcoholism, often accompanied by violence, in most cases perpetrated by husbands against their wives.<sup>47</sup> For some women who married hastily before sufficiently getting to know their husbands, the early death of a spouse is more of a relief than an occasion for mourning.<sup>48</sup>

Löwy paints a complex portrait of historic Vienna. On the one hand, nostalgic and romanticized qualities characterize life in the past or in Vienna's village-like outskirts. On the other, he sheds light on their shortcomings. In this respect, the modernization of the city is not necessarily a reason for lament. Emphasizing the tranquility of these locales also means downplaying their disadvantages. Old Vienna and the periphery therefore seem particularly ambivalent in Löwy's stories. Furthermore, his portrayal suggests that a longing for the past is misplaced.

### *From the Periphery to the Prater*

The replacement of the past with the present was tied to the development of new concepts of space. With regard to artistic and literary representations of the periphery, the Prater often makes an appearance. Tina Blau's paintings that feature this Viennese leisure area as a motif are among the most significant documents within her oeuvre. They are therefore even more significant than her images of the periphery.<sup>49</sup>

While Felix Salten turned away from the outskirts due to increasing antisemitism in Vienna's outlying districts, he projected his ideas of a refuge onto the Prater, which he denoted as "the eternal periphery."<sup>50</sup> He described the Würstelprater, the amusement park within the extensive recreational area, as a domain that was largely cut off from the rest of the city. Specifically, antisemitism and nationalism were absent from this space, and it therefore did not provoke hostility. These circumstances made it possible for visitors to assume hybrid identifications.<sup>51</sup> People who would not normally associate with one another in everyday life could come into contact with one another and experience a sense of camaraderie and belonging. To Salten's mind, the Prater was not a nostalgic site of longing anchored primarily in the past, but rather a real locale that was accessible at any time, even if he exaggerated its positive qualities.

Stefan Zweig, another Jewish author from the circle of Jung Wien, was also interested in the Prater. He too saw it as a typically Viennese place that was nevertheless distinct and shielded from the rest of the city. It therefore enabled social interactions that seemed impossible in other locations. Hillary Hope Herzog argues that, in a sense, Zweig thought of the Prater as a space similar to the Wild West, in that prevailing norms were suspended there. In a description of the horse races that took place at the Prater, Zweig describes how the onlookers turned into a frantic, wild mass during the competition, deteriorating into a frenzy together. Through this collective experience, the differences between the

attendees receded to the background or remained entirely unnoticed.<sup>52</sup> Hence, for Zweig, the Prater was a space where people could be transformed through a new type of togetherness, even if only momentarily.

Felix Salten and Stefan Zweig thought that the sweeping entertainment and recreation area in Vienna's second district represented a space that was open to every social class. Moreover, the city's ethnic and cultural groups, including Jews, could mill about and frolic there. Numerous accounts indicate that this was indeed the case. For Galician immigrants and wealthy resident Jews alike, the Prater was a site of entertainment and diversion.<sup>53</sup> It gained this ability to forge connections and create community through its role as a kind of intermediary space. Although the Prater was part of Vienna, it was not to be equated with the city. Thus, the social barriers that one usually encountered in the metropolis were not an issue at the Prater. In this manner, it did not displace the periphery with a geographically fixed location, but rather in its function as a liminal space.

### *Two Types of Present*

Since the turn to the present extended to all disciplines and was not constrained by geography, its most important proponents were active in various intellectual and cultural fields and in different societies. Among its most significant European advocates were the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen, and the Austrian architect Otto Wagner, as well as the Italian Futurists.<sup>54</sup> They proclaimed a break from the past and disputed its relevance for the present.

Not everyone, however, cast aside the past in the same spirit. There was also a group of intellectuals who in fact rejected the excess of history and welcomed the newfound relevance of the present. At the same time, they believed that the present could not be understood without the past. Nevertheless, these intellectuals did not refer to a "factualized" past, but rather to a subjectivized one. The inclusion of personal experiences of the past were to make the present comprehensible. As it were, supporters of this approach were international as well. The French philosopher Henri Bergson, his compatriot the writer Marcel Proust, the German-Austrian philosopher Edmund Husserl, and, above all, Sigmund Freud may be counted among their ranks.<sup>55</sup>

As they allowed biographical experiences to slip into present consciousness, which was especially vital to Freud's psychoanalysis, they understood the present as a vast epoch in which the past acted.<sup>56</sup> Their perception was distinct from the widespread understanding among their contemporaries that the present could only be experienced as the sum of discrete points in time, which were full of contingencies. This sense of the present as transitory, distracted, and fragmented was the result of technological innovations and their impact on people's lives.<sup>57</sup> A host of artists, scientists, and intellectuals grappled with this new understanding

of time. Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, and especially Georg Simmel, all of whom were Jewish, are some of the most famous commentators on this perception of time.<sup>58</sup>

A comparison between the aforementioned proponents of a break from the past and those who advocated that it be made subjective, and with it an expansion of the present, reveals that the first group does not include Jews, while the second consists of Jews alone. The American historian Stephen Kern traces this difference to the historical experiences of the Jews. According to Kern, Jews, on account of their historical existence in the ghettos and the lack of their own home, ascribed little meaning to place and instead became fixated upon time. Since Jews could look back on a long history, their concept of time was anchored in the past to a far greater degree than that of non-Jews.<sup>59</sup>

Generally speaking, Kern provides an insightful point of departure for tracing the development of a distinct concept of time and place among Jews over the course of their history.<sup>60</sup> For my analysis of fin-de-siècle Vienna, however, Kern's assertion applies only in part. Space, in its function as an interstice, was of the utmost importance to Viennese Jews, as I have demonstrated with the examples of Felix Salten and Stefan Zweig.<sup>61</sup> Nonetheless, we may bring Kern's argument regarding the differences between how Jews and non-Jews understood time to bear on the case of the Hapsburg capital. It appears that there was a dividing line also in Vienna between Jews and non-Jews, between those who sought to break from the past and those who advocated the notion of an expanded present. Moreover, this difference in the perception of time, as I demonstrate below, was connected to ideas about social interaction and concepts of space. A present that is experienced as the sum of momentary impressions largely corresponds to a network of interpersonal relationships that is just as fragmented. The reason for this lies in the lack of the temporal continuum that is necessary to deepen liaisons. In this manner, people often remain strangers. Georg Simmel clearly describes this atmosphere in his thoughts on life in the metropolis, which is defined by a multitude of selective sensory impressions. He writes, "In formal terms, the spiritual attitude of city dwellers toward one another may be deemed as reserve." Moreover, Simmel continues that "as a consequence of . . . [the reserve] we often do not recognize by sight neighbors of many years."<sup>62</sup> Although physically present, one's closest neighbor is a stranger in everyday life. There is no time to engage with fellow human beings. In lieu of places where differences among people become insignificant and solidarity may be forged, different groups have their own respective spaces. In this context, we may also refer to the spaces the *Volkssänger* Carl Lorenz denoted as Jewish (see chapter 3).

By contrast, the expanded present offers a time frame in which human relationships can be formed such that a feeling of togetherness arises. Primarily taking Niklas Luhmann's argument as a point of departure, Aleida Assmann writes that in "an expanded space of the present" there may be "simultaneous perceptions,

information exchanged and coordinated acts with one another.”<sup>63</sup> Further, these mutually created and interdependent experiences can build alliances and connect people to one another. In Stefan Zweig’s abovementioned horse race at the Prater, for example, there is a charged communal sense of conviviality that brings the on-lookers together as a group and minimizes their differences. Likewise, for Salten, collective action and intensifying emotionality are the most important prerequisites for a new sense of solidarity that transcends divisive nationalisms and ethnic isolation. In a description of the dancing at the Prater, he writes:

For all the simple and humble ones who stream into Vienna from the empire’s colorful provinces, for all the youth who move to the metropolis from the villages and smaller cities, . . . there is comfort here. . . . The musicians play an Austrian *Ländler*. . . . And now Steiermark, Salzburg, Tirol are here. . . . The music plays a *Kreuzpolka*. . . . Now Bohemia is here, the sunny hilly country of Moravia is here. . . . The orchestra begins playing a Hungarian *czárdás*, and now Hungary is here. . . . Here no one revolts against the song of another.<sup>64</sup>

Independent of their backgrounds and traditions, the dancers move to the rhythm of the music and merge into a group of boisterous revelers.

The following section analyzes Jewish *Volkssänger* plays in which the different regimentations of time—the fragmented present and the expanded present experienced as ongoing—play a major role. The first piece, *Der kleine Kohn* (Little Kohn), demonstrates that momentary experiences of time make it impossible to build interpersonal relationships and can lead to antisemitism. In the second piece, *Die Reise nach Grosswardein* (The journey to Grosswardein) by Josef Armin, the extended present plays a significant role, as it leads to the development of relationships between Jews and non-Jews.

## The Fleeting Present

Georg Simmel articulated an insightful analysis of just how much a present that is constructed of selective, ephemeral impressions prevents human interaction and leads to individual isolation. The German painter Lesser Ury (1861–1931), who like Simmel was Jewish, was also a sharp observer of this context. In his 1889 painting *Café*, we see a guest smoking a cigar and a few tables away another man who is absorbed in his newspaper. Although they do not sit far from one another, there is nothing to bring them together. Outside the coffeehouse, pedestrians hurry by, and life in the metropolis takes its course. Despite the lively bustle on the nearby street and the presence of other people in the café, each guest remains alone, virtually trapped in an impenetrable cocoon.<sup>65</sup> Lesser Ury was the first painter in Germany to capture the experience of big-city dwellers, while his colleagues often remained imprisoned in the past and devoted themselves to

representations of Alt-Berlin.<sup>66</sup> Early on, Ury took the step from the past into the present, which for him was accompanied by experiences of alienation.

### **Little Kohn**

The written version of *Little Kohn*, a work by Caprice, was approved by the censorship board at the end of 1902 and performed by the Budapest Orpheum Society the following year.<sup>67</sup> The performances were among the troupe's greatest popular successes, even though they did not begin to approach the popularity of *Die Klabriarspartie*. *Little Kohn* reflects the consequences of a transitory present that is experienced as fleeting and reveals the difficulty of building relationships between people, especially Jews and non-Jews, against this backdrop. At the same time, the work takes up antisemitic ideas and provides an illuminating glimpse of one of the tactics that part of Viennese Jewish society employed upon encountering views hostile to Jews.

*Little Kohn* counters two specific antisemitic stereotypes. First, the piece constitutes a response to the figure of the "Little Kohn," a motif that was very popular in the form of a series of postcards and as a theme for songs and poems around the turn of the century.<sup>68</sup> Little Kohn's appearance was an emblematic product of the contemporary antisemitic imagination. He exhibited the essential physical features that were ascribed to Jews. These included the hooked nose, thick lips, large ears, crooked legs, and a small stature.<sup>69</sup> These peculiarities are clearly discernable in the caricatures of Little Kohn that appeared in *Kikeriki*, an antisemitic Viennese satirical journal.<sup>70</sup>

In addition to his physical characteristics, Little Kohn had two other defining attributes. The first concerned his flightiness. He was difficult to catch, always appearing briefly and then disappearing again. In a sense, Little Kohn simultaneously embodied the temporal experience of the late nineteenth century and contemporary mobility. Hundreds of thousands of people were ripped from their everyday existence each year and roamed about, searching for better living conditions. They migrated from the rural provinces into the cities and from one country to another. Whereas some accepted this uprooting from their spheres of experience, others perceived a threat to the existing order in the ensuing uncertainty. Little Kohn embodied this sense of instability that could not be circumvented. Yet even more than the general phenomenon of vagrancy, he was the epitome of the wandering Jew. Jews were perceived as far more itinerant than others. Contemporary antisemitic publications certainly perpetuated this idea; Adolf Wahrmund's text *Das Gesetz des Nomadenthums und die heutige Judenheerschaft* (*The Law of Nomadism and the Modern Domination of Jews*) is a primary example.<sup>71</sup> However, the centuries-old tradition of Jews being in perpetual motion and unable to put down roots was crystallized in the trope of "the eternal Jew."<sup>72</sup> In



the late nineteenth century, scientists also researched and devised medical justifications for the phenomenon of nomadism among Jews. In this manner, they associated it with nervous disorders to which Jews were particularly susceptible.<sup>73</sup> Thus, Little Kohn's perpetual appearance and disappearance was nothing out of the ordinary. According to the prejudicial thinking of the time, Jews were to a certain degree generally characterized as itinerant.

Little Kohn's second defining attribute was his extraordinary appetite for extramarital sex. This idiosyncrasy was an integral part of the contemporary anti-semitic repertoire as well. Jews were seen as sexually hyperactive.<sup>74</sup> However, Little Kohn was hardly successful in his libidinous affairs. His relationships were always only short-lived, were destroyed by a series of mishaps, and never resulted in the longed-for gratification. Thus, they remained nothing more than innocuous trysts.

Both of Little Kohn's attributes circulated in an extremely popular contemporary street song (*Straßenschlager*). Written by Julius Einödshofer (1863–1930), the song describes Little Kohn enjoying the company of a young woman. While strolling along the street, he suddenly recognizes his wife. Since he does not want her to see him with his female companion, he disappears suddenly, without informing her of his escape beforehand. Bewildered, she begins to search for him with increasing worry and in the process asks every obliging person if he or she has seen Little Kohn. A growing crowd of sympathizers joins the search, asking, "Haven't you seen Little Kohn?"<sup>75</sup> These words were a common phrase in Vienna in the late nineteenth century, lending Little Kohn a presence in the everyday antisemitic discourse of his time.

The second prejudice that the play *Little Kohn* challenged stems from newspaper accounts of the Jelinek affair. Edmund Jelinek was a bank employee who had embezzled money and escaped his arrest by going on the lam (see chapter 1). The majority of the daily papers attributed Jelinek's criminal activity to his Jewishness. *Little Kohn* sought to expose the contradictions of antisemitic thought that found expression therein and thereby rob them of their potency.

### ***The Plot of Little Kohn***

Caprice's play is far more complex than Hirsch's *The Apostle of Schottenfeld*. In no small part, this is due to the fact that *Little Kohn* is named for an anti-Jewish stereotype. In order to prevent the attributes commonly associated with Little Kohn from becoming more firmly anchored in common discourse, Caprice had to expose the weaknesses of antisemitic thinking and portray Little Kohn in an agreeable manner. This required a subtle approach.

The first scene begins with the entrance of Leopold Kohn, the teller at Marcus Spitzer's bank. He is in his employer's home teaching a parrot to say "Little Kohn." Kohn is clearly at ease and appears to be fully integrated in the Spitzer

family's private sphere. This comes as no surprise: after all, he maintains amorous relationships with Spitzer's daughters Bertha, Ida, and Ella and plans to run away with Spitzer's wife, Malvine. Nevertheless, each family member remains unaware of the other romantic relationships. Kohn promises Bertha, Ida, and Ella alike to ask for their father's hand in marriage. He is of course unable to keep his promise. It seems that Kohn is insincere in his liaisons and lives out his pronounced sexual desire by deceiving his gullible partners.

Marcus Spitzer is an irritable patriarch. Fixated upon his work, he neglects his family and is unaware of Kohn's liaisons with his daughters. It is only when his bookkeeper, Moritz Beer, tells him that he encountered Kohn with Spitzer's housekeeper Marie at a hotel, who were likely there for an intimate tryst, that Spitzer gets an inkling of Kohn's sexual excesses. He, too, seems to have a liaison with her, becomes enraged, and wants to admonish Kohn at once. To that end, Spitzer searches the entire house but cannot find him anywhere. The other family members are also interested in Kohn's whereabouts and ask about him tirelessly. All the while, the parrot caws "Little Kohn." These circumstances make Spitzer so angry that he bellows, "No matter what is going on in this house, Little Kohn has a hand in it."<sup>76</sup>

Although Leopold Kohn is physically absent, he nevertheless displays a striking presence. Everyone in the house is talking about and looking for him, and everything revolves around him. The Jewish Kohn is the axis around which the events revolve. Without taking specific action, he is presented as an all-powerful figure. Finally, Kohn turns up, utterly bewildered by all the fuss. Spitzer pounces on him in order to reprimand him for his conduct with Marie. To Spitzer's surprise, Kohn does not deny that they had met at the hotel. However, he claims he did not do anything dishonorable in the process and instead becomes infuriated with Spitzer for interfering in his personal life. Thus, the question of whether Kohn has a romantic relationship with Marie remains unanswered. Although there is much to suggest that he does, in the end there is no proof.

That said, Spitzer is still convinced that Kohn maintains intimate relations with Marie. He therefore orders him to change his behavior and end the affair with her, because "it cannot go on like this."<sup>77</sup> Yet Kohn does not want to adhere to any code of conduct. When he has heard enough of Spitzer's grumbling, Kohn asks what he wants from him. The banker answers, "I want to rid myself of you; in six weeks I want to be de-Kohned."<sup>78</sup> Kohn answers that if Spitzer does not approve of his presence, he could always leave.

Spitzer's desire to divest himself of Kohn is easier said than done. After the sparring match between the two, Ida confesses to her father that she is pregnant with Kohn's child. This revelation makes Spitzer so angry that he yells at Kohn, "You have taken the liberty of populating my house with illegitimate children? You have laid the cornerstone for my future progeny?"<sup>79</sup> To his great consternation, he cannot get rid of Kohn because he now belongs to the family. The ties between the Jew Kohn and the non-Jew Spitzer appear to be unbreakable.

In the following scene, Moritz Beer informs Spitzer that thieves have emptied the till at his bank. Spitzer immediately accuses Kohn of the misdeed and calls the police. Yet he is too nervous to speak on the phone himself and therefore has Beer do it for him. Beer tries to give the police a profile of Kohn, beginning with his family name. The policeman on the other end of the line tells him that because there are 3,700 Kohns in the city, Beer must give more specific details. Thereupon, Beer gives Kohn's first name, which is of no further help because there is a total of 2,826 Leopold Kohns. Even the tip that Kohn is small in stature helps little, since almost 1,200 Leopold Kohns are short. And Beer's reference to Kohn's hook nose is superfluous, because according to the policeman, all Kohns have this type of nose.<sup>80</sup>

It does not take long before a policeman calls on the Spitzer family. However, instead of relaying the capture of the fugitive Kohn, he notifies them of Leopold Kohn's probable suicide. The policeman tells them that Kohn was seen jumping off a bridge into the Danube. Witness descriptions of the suicide leave no doubt that it was him. In order to close the case once and for all, the Spitzer family must help identify the deceased. When the policeman mentions that the perpetrator had twisted legs, curly hair, and a hooked nose and was very small, Spitzer's daughters are certain that it was Kohn. Marcus Spitzer is nevertheless skeptical of Kohn's suicide because he did not enjoy taking a bath and therefore would not have willingly jumped into the Danube.<sup>81</sup> Only when the police officer shows him an article of clothing belonging to the drowned man is Spitzer convinced that Kohn has committed suicide.

In the final part of the play, Josef, the bank's porter, enters. He tells Herr Spitzer that he has taken his wife's suitcase to the train station. Spitzer is shocked by Malvine's departure. When Joseph adds that he saw her with Kohn in a private compartment, Herr Spitzer is fully perplexed. This would not only mean that Kohn was still alive, but also that his wife had been unfaithful to him. Josef hands Spitzer a letter from Kohn, in which he admits to stealing the money from the register at the bank because he needed it for the journey. Amidst this general chaos, Malvine reappears. She tells her husband that she had not really planned to abscond with Kohn. Instead, she only wanted to shock Spitzer because he had been acting so cruelly toward her of late. In this regard, the Spitzer family is reunited, while the wrongdoer Kohn flees to America.

Assumptions course through the entire plot of *Little Kohn*. The protagonists do not have time to question or prove them, which in turn leads to distrust among them. Their encounters are too brief and fleeting for them to be able to respond to and really get to know each other. Impressions and suspicions therefore define their immediate surroundings, instead of facts. In this context, Kohn appears as a thief and a heartbreaker. However, it becomes clear at the end of the performance that his surroundings have forced him into this role; he does not play it willingly. By contrast, Spitzer, who sees himself as Kohn's victim and makes a great fuss

about it, is the real monster. Almost bankrupt, he commits insurance fraud to maintain the appearance of his prosperity. Yet all of this remains hidden from his family and other people. They are too busy with their daily routines to uncover his machinations. Ultimately, momentary impressions define everyday life and erode trust between individuals.

## **The Persistent Present**

At this juncture, we should not regard Stephen Kern's conclusion that the proponents of an expanded present were Jewish as a stark opposition between the ways Jews and non-Jews conceived of time, but rather as a point of departure for further research on the subject. As we have seen, there were no exclusive markers of consciousness among Jews (*Bewusstseinsmerkmale bei Juden*) that would allow us to make a hard and fast contrast. In general, a certain conception of place and time may be more pronounced among Jews than non-Jews, due to the formers' desire for a Jewish–non-Jewish coexistence. However, since non-Jews also expressed a continuous present in various forms of cultural production, we cannot consider this an exclusively Jewish concept. For instance, we see a persistent present in the work of Gustav Klimt (1862–1918).<sup>82</sup> His paintings are characterized by their equilibrium. These dreamlike images evoke an Arcadian realm. Further, they convey a state of passivity that is embedded in a seemingly everlasting temporal framework. We also see such a notion at work in Leopold Andrian-Werburg's 1895 *Der Garten der Erkenntnis* (The garden of knowledge), in Richard Beer-Hofmann's 1900 novel *Der Tod Georgs* (The death of Georg), and in Hugo von Hofmannsthal's 1893 *Der Tor und der Tod* (Death and the fool).<sup>83</sup> While Beer-Hofmann may certainly be considered a Jewish author, Andrian-Werburg's and Hofmannsthal's status as Jewish remains open to debate.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, their writings convey the idea of a persistent present.

## ***The Journey to Grosswardein***

One such continuous present may also be found in the piece *Die Reise nach Grosswardein* (The journey to Grosswardein). Like *Little Kohn*, it was performed by the Budapest Orpheum Society.<sup>85</sup> Essentially, the plot revolves around the attempt of a Jew who is evidently from Vienna to travel to Grosswardein (present-day Oradea in Romania). Josef Armin's farce is divided into five scenes, all of which take place at a train station.

Lipperl, who is fleeing from his wife, enters at the beginning of the performance. He feels oppressed by her, and in a full-throated monologue, he huffs and puffs that she forbids him from speaking. Having arrived at the train station

without a concrete travel destination, Lipperl only wants to leave as quickly as possible, regardless of where he may end up. He is determined to leave on the earliest train possible. The station staff informs him that the next train departs for Grosswardein. Until it arrives, he reads the paper to pass the time. During this spell, he notices an advertisement from an Englishman (*Engländer*) who is traveling in Europe. The latter had heard the song “To Grosswardein” (“Nach Grosswardein”), which was beloved in Austria-Hungary, and decided to go there. However, he still needed a travel companion and writes that interested parties should meet him at the train station at nine o’clock. Lipperl immediately decides to offer to accompany the Englishman.

Maxi appears shortly thereafter. He is also running away from his wife. He explains that they have been married for five years. His wife is angry that their marriage has remained childless and blames him for it. Always irritable, she fights with him tirelessly and does not hesitate to inflict physical harm upon him. First thing in the morning, she threw dishes at him, one of which struck his head. Maxi also read the Englishman’s notice in the newspaper and wants to travel with him to Grosswardein. When Lipperl sees him, he thinks Maxi is the sought-after Englishman, so he addresses him in English. However, Maxi only speaks German. When Lipperl asks him, “How do you do?” he hears, “Hau du Jud, du” (“Get lost, you Jew, you!”). After a while, they resolve the confusion and are both deeply disappointed.

In the third scene, two new characters are introduced: Mayer Jamfrosch and his son Lebele. Both are from Grosswardein and are in Vienna for a visit. Lebele is scared of train travel and seeks excuses to avoid the journey. Soon thereafter, Teppenhuber and Rosl, the only non-Jews among the protagonists, arrive at the station. In contrast to the others, who continually intermingle Yiddish words like *meshugge*, *ganef*, *treyf*, and *tsores* in their speech, Teppenhuber’s and Rosl’s extremely limited vocabulary is made up of pure German words. In the course of the conversation, they refer to themselves as “honest farm folk,” whereas the others emphasize their Jewishness. Lebele falls in love with Rosl, who is admittedly less taken with him.

Finally, Rosalia and Jentel, the wives of Lipperl and Maxi, mingle among those waiting on the platform. They are also looking for the Englishman, because they have seen his newspaper announcement. Unlike their husbands, they do not seek to join him because they want to escape the fighting and hostility, but rather because their husbands are missing and they no longer have any reason to stay at home. It takes a while for Lipperl’s and Maxi’s wives to notice them on the platform.

In the fifth scene, a group of students comes to the train station. Among them is Fritz, who placed the notice in the paper. He explains that he was falsely taken for an Englishman because he had declared his name to be Fritz Engländer. He is also a member of a fraternity. Subsequently, the train to Grosswardein arrives, but

the protagonists are in such deep conversation with one another that they take no notice. They fail to board the train, and it departs without them.

In *The Journey to Grosswardein*, the train station constitutes a liminal space.<sup>86</sup> It stands between the past, which was defined by oppression, and the future represented by Grosswardein. The events at the station take place in the present. However, it is not the fleeting present, which we can only apprehend as transitory moments of the here and now that are fused together. Rather, the period that is defined by waiting for the train is expanded. There is no action to interrupt the tedious boredom that overtakes the passengers; nothing happens to rip them from their stupor. Time does not seem to pass quickly. And this excess of time allows those who are waiting to begin a conversation with one another, in which they increasingly immerse themselves, thereby allowing them to form a sense of community. The bonds between them become so strong that they even give up their original intention to travel to Grosswardein. Ignoring the train's arrival, they let it depart without them. Being together at the train station is more important for the characters than achieving their intended outcome.

## Conclusion

The analysis of *The Apostle of Schottenfeld*, *Little Kohn*, and *The Journey to Grosswardein* brings to light concepts of place and an understanding of the present that other Jewish cultural figures articulated as well. In the longing for Old Vienna, Jews realized the potential of writing themselves into the history of Vienna. Through evidence of their historical presence in the Danube capital, they wanted to divest themselves of their status as foreigners who had come from somewhere else and therefore did not truly belong to society. The inscription in the past is tied to the delineation of a largely harmonious relationship between Jews and non-Jews. In this manner, they set forth a counternarrative to the history of anti-Jewish animosity. With the shift from the past to the present, a liminal space thus replaced one that was constructed in retrospect. Indeed, this space exists in Vienna, but the events that take place there are distinct from everyday urban life in that similarities rather than differences come to the fore. As Stephen Kern observed with respect to Jewish European intellectuals, Jews in Vienna likewise seem to have articulated a preference for an “expanded present” in art and literature.<sup>87</sup>

The social context clarifies the difference between a Jewish and non-Jewish understanding of time and space. Jews in Vienna around 1900 regimented time and experienced space differently than Jews in other epochs and in different social contexts.<sup>88</sup> In Vienna, this understanding appeared distinct, in a manner that replaced religion and other prevalent signifiers of Jewish difference, but without running the risk of being essentialized.

## Notes

1. Philip Nord, *Impressionists and Politics: Art and Democracy in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2000), 11.
2. Felix Krämer, “Monet und die Geburt des Impressionismus,” in *Monet und die Geburt des Impressionismus* (Munich: Prestel, 2015), 16–18.
3. Whether we may consider Tina Blau a Jewish painter despite her conversion is a difficult question, for her exact relationship to Judaism remains unknown. However, for the purposes of this study, I categorize her as a Jewish artist, as the Jewish Museum in Vienna also dedicated an exhibition to her work in 1996. See G. Tobias Natter and Claus Jesina, *Tina Blau (1845–1916)* (Salzburg: Galerie Welz, 1999). On Tina Blau, see also Zdrawka Ebenstein, “Zum Werk von Tina Blau,” in *Tina Blau (1845–1916): Eine Wiener Malerin*, ed. Österreichische Galerie im Oberen Belvedere (Vienna: Eigenverlag), 17–22.
4. Hillary Hope Baron, “Vienna Is Different,” in *Jewish Writers in Austria from the Fin de Siècle to the Present*, Austrian and Habsburg Studies 12 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), 42–43; Felix Salten, *Das österreichische Anlitz* (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1910), 117–26.
5. Salten, *Anlitz*, 78.
6. Salten, 78.
7. Old Vienna (Alt-Wien) was occupied periodically as early as the Middle Ages. See Richard Kralik and Hans Schlitter, *Wien: Geschichte der Kaiserstadt und ihrer Kultur* (Vienna: Holzhausen, 1912), 736.
8. Elana Shapira and Moses und Herkules, “Ein Beitrag des jüdischen Bürgertums zur Gestaltung der Ringstraße und des Praters, in *Ringstrasse: Ein jüdischer Boulevard*, ed. Gabriele Kohlbauer-Fritz (Vienna: Amalthea, 2015), 168. On the ways Jews in the nineteenth century engaged with Hellenistic Judaism, see Yaacov Shavit, *Athens in Jerusalem: Classical Antiquity and Hellenism in the Making of the Modern Secular Jew* (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1999).
9. In *Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars*, Lisa Silverman writes, “For Jews, however, this vision [Old Vienna] had little appeal, given that it did not include them” (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2012), 118. This estimation appears to stem less from original research than from simplistic reasoning, as it cannot be substantiated here.
10. On Old Vienna, see Wolfgang Kos and Christian Rapp, eds., *Alt-Wien. Die Stadt, die niemals war* (Wien: Czernin Verlag 2005); Monika Sommer and Heidemarie Uhl, eds., *Mythos Alt-Wien. Spannungsfelder urbaner Identitäten* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2009); Inge Posbrecky, “Die Wiener Ringstrasse,” in *Der Traum vom Glück: Die Kunst des Historismus in Europa* (Vienna: Christian Brandstätter, 1996), 267 (267–73). A space of retreat without the burdens and tensions that shaped reality was a prevalent topos in many cities, in addition to Vienna. Just as the Habsburg metropolis Vienna did with Old Vienna, the French capital for example created a copy of itself that extended back into history with Vieux Paris (Old Paris). At the World’s Fair in 1900, the historic version of the city was one of the most popular attractions (Philipp Blom, *Der taumelnde Kontinent: Europa 1900–1914* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 2009), 23.
11. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia,” *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735–61.
12. *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt [IWE in subsequent citations]* 115 (27 April 1903): 1.

13. *IWE* 352 (25 December 1902): 50.
14. Hans Tietze, *Die Juden Wiens: Geschichte, Wirtschaft, Kultur* (Vienna: E. P. Tal, 1933), 41–78.
15. Theophil Antonicek, *Die Internationale Ausstellung für Musik- und Theaterwesen 1892* (Vienna, 2013), 129–30.
16. Arkus Kristan, *Oskar Marmorek 1863–1909: Architekt und Zionist* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), 160.
17. Antonicek, *Ausstellung*, 130.
18. The effort to visualize the historical existence of Jews in the city extended to a variety of other endeavors. In this respect, the work of the historical commission of the Jewish *Gemeinde* (community) of Vienna must be mentioned, as they produced studies on the history of Viennese Jews at the turn of the twentieth century. See Lisa Silverman, *Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture between the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 114–15.
19. Albert Hirsch, “Der Apostel vom Schottenfeld,” *Niederösterreichisches Landesarchiv* [NÖLA in subsequent citations] (Theaterzensur), Box 21/22 (1902).
20. See *IWE* 11 (12 January 1902): 25.
21. See Felix Czeike, “Schottenfeld,” in *Historisches Lexikon Wien*, vol. 5 (Vienna: Kremayr and Scheriau, 1992), 135–36.
22. *IWE* 61 (4 March 1900): 7–8.
23. *IWE* 241 (2 September 1900): 7.
24. See, for example, *IWE* 1 (1 January 1899): 3.
25. *IWE* 76 (18 March 1901): 4.
26. On the casting, see *IWE* 10 (11 January 1902): 12.
27. The fire at the Vienna Ringtheater took place on 8 December 1881. It was one of the worst fires in Austria during the nineteenth century. Almost four hundred people lost their lives.
28. Albert Hirsch, *A Gschicht' von anno dazumal*, NÖLA (Theaterzensur), Box 21/1 (1898).
29. “Altwiener Toilette,” *Die Wahrheit* 12 (1903): 7.
30. “Altwiener Toilette,” 7.
31. On this topic, see also Klaus Hödl, “The Quest for Amusement: Jewish Leisure Activities in Vienna circa 1900,” *Jewish Culture and History* 14, no. 1 (2013): 1–17.
32. Naomi Lubrich, “The Wandering Hat: Iterations of the Medieval Jewish Pointed Cap,” *Jewish History* 29 (2015): 203–44.
33. Friedrich Jaeger, *Jörn Rüsen, Geschichte des Historismus* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1992), 165.
34. Moritz Csáky, “Geschichtlichkeit und Stilpluralität. Die sozialen und intellektuellen Voraussetzungen des Historismus,” in *Der Traum vom Glück. Die Kunst des Historismus in Europa*, ed. Hermann Fillitz (Vienna: Christian Brandstätter, 1996), 29.
35. Bernhard Giesen, *Kollektive Identität. Die Intellektuellen und die Nation* 2 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1999), 184.
36. Krämer, “Monet,” 19–20.
37. *IWE* 112 (25 April 1907): 5.
38. Baron, “Vienna,” 47.
39. Salten, *Anlitz*, 61.
40. On Jewish cultural figures’ references to the past, see Peter Gay, *Die Moderne* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 2008), 59, 101.
41. Nikolaus Vielmetti, “Vom Beginn der Neuzeit bis zur Toleranz,” in *Das österreichische*



- Judentum: Voraussetzungen und Geschichte*, ed. Anna Drabek et al. (Vienna: Jugend und Volk, 1982), 72–77.
42. [https://www.wien.gv.at/wiki/index.php/Julius\\_L%C3%B6wy](https://www.wien.gv.at/wiki/index.php/Julius_L%C3%B6wy) (accessed 14 August 2015).
  43. Julius Löwy, “Der alte Hof: Eine Geschichte aus dem Wiener Leben,” *IWE* 6 (6 January 1901): 7.
  44. *IWE* 317 (15 November 1904): 6–7.
  45. Julius Löwy, *Geschichten aus der Wienerstadt* (Vienna: A. Bauer, n.d.), preface.
  46. Löwy, *Geschichten*, 62.
  47. Löwy, *Geschichten*, 52.
  48. Löwy, *Geschichten*, 60.
  49. Natter and Jesina, *Blau*, 10–12.
  50. Herzog, *Vienna*, 47–48.
  51. Herzog, *Vienna*, 48.
  52. Herzog, *Vienna*, 52–53.
  53. Gertraud Pressler, “Jüdisches und Antisemitisches in der Wiener Volksunterhaltung,” *Musicalogica Austriaca* 17 (1998): 66.
  54. Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space 1880–1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 51–57.
  55. Giesen, *Kollektive Identität*, 233–34.
  56. A second form of this vast present was created by simultaneity. In the late nineteenth century, the telephone and other technological inventions made it possible to transcend great distances and to provide people with information largely at the same time. See Rüdiger Safranski, *Zeit. Was sie aus uns macht und was wir aus ihr machen* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 2015), 96.
  57. Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 13.
  58. Georg Simmel, *Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2006; original 1903). See also Lynn Hunt, *Measuring Time, Making History* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008), 20.
  59. Kern, *Culture*, 50–51.
  60. See also Michal Kümper and Barbara Rösch, eds., *Makom: Orte und Räume im Judentum* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2007); Barbara E. Mann, *Place and Space in Jewish Studies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012); Sylvie Anne Goldberg, “Temporality as Paradox: The Jewish Time,” in *Jewish Studies in a New Europe: Proceedings of the Fifth Congress of Jewish Studies in Copenhagen 1994 under the Auspices of the European Association for Jewish Studies*, ed. Ulf Haxen (Copenhagen: Reitzel, 1998), 284–92.
  61. In this respect, I should also mention the coffeehouse, as it too constituted a kind of liminal space between the public and private spheres and facilitated interactions that more seldomly took place in everyday life. It may be argued that Viennese Jews developed a penchant for these cafés for this very reason. See Charlotte Ashby, “The Cafés of Vienna: Space and Sociability,” in *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-siècle Culture*, ed. Charlotte Ashby, Tag Gronberg, and Simon Shaw-Miller (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015), 22.
  62. Simmel, *Großstädte*, 23.
  63. Aleida Assmann, *Ist die Zeit aus den Fugen? Aufstieg und Fall des Zeitregimes der Moderne* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 2013), 71.
  64. Felix Salten, *Wurstelprater: Mit Bildern von Dr. Emil Mayer* (Vienna: Fritz Molden, 1973; photocopy of 1911 edition), 71–76.

65. Susan Tumarkin Goodman, “Reshaping Jewish Identity in Art,” in *The Emergence of Jewish Artists in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Susan Tumarkin Goodman (New York: Merrell, 2001), 26–27.
66. Emily D. Bilski, “Images of Identity and Urban Life: Jewish Artists in Turn-of-the-Century Berlin,” in *Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the New Culture 1890–1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 118.
67. Caprice, *Der kleine Kohn*, NÖLA (Theaterzensur), Box 117/31 (1902), 87. Caprice was a pseudonym for Antal Oroszi. See Nikola Roßbach, ed., *Wien parodiert. Theatertexte um 1900* (Vienna: Praesens, 2007), 131.
68. Fritz Backhaus, “‘Hab’n Sie nicht den kleinen Cohn geseh’n?’ Ein Schlager der Jahrhundertwende,” in *Abgestempelt: Judenfeindliche Postkarten*, ed. Helmut Gold and Georg Heuberger (Frankfurt: Umschau Buchverlag, 1999), 238.
69. See “Kohn-Lexikon des Kikeriki,” *Kikeriki* (21 September 1902): 5, 7.
70. Sarah Holzinger, “Die Darstellung von Juden und Jüdinnen im humoristischen Volksblatt *Kikeriki*” (MA thesis, University of Graz, 2015), 94–96.
71. Adolf Wahrmund, *Das Gesetz des Nomadentums und die heutige Juden Herrschaft* (Munich: Deutscher Volksverlag, 1887).
72. Galit Hasan-Rokem and Alan Dundes, eds., *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).
73. See Klaus Hödl, “Der ‘Juif Errant’ in der französischen medizinischen Literatur,” *Aschkenas* 9 (1999): 109–31; Henry Meige, “Étude sur certains névropathes voyageurs: Le Juif-Errant à la Salétrière” (medical dissertation, Paris, 1893).
74. See Sander L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 168.
75. Julius Einödshofer, *Der kleine Kohn*, Archiv des Wiener Volksliedwerkes, Box 82,69/35.
76. Caprice, *Kohn*, 21.
77. Caprice, *Kohn*, 33.
78. Caprice, *Kohn*, 36–37.
79. Caprice, *Kohn*, 49.
80. Caprice, *Kohn*, 71.
81. Caprice, *Kohn*, 89.
82. André Dombrowski, “Augenblicke, Momente, Minuten: Der Impressionismus und die Industrialisierung der Zeit,” in *Monet und die Geburt des Impressionismus* (Munich: Prestel, 2015), 45.
83. William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind: An Intellectual and Social History 1848–1938* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 145–47; Baron, “Vienna,” 79. In Hofmannsthal’s short play, the figure of death comes to the protagonist Claudio. He is shocked and dismayed by this unexpected appearance. He converses with Death and attempts to convince him that his demise has come too soon. However, his arguments are not persuasive. There is no more future for him. This lack of prospects firmly anchors the storyline in the present, which is protracted and appears not to elapse (Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Der Tor und der Tod* [North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013]).
84. Leopold Andrian-Werburg’s mother was a daughter of Giacomo Meyerbeer, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s father was Jewish. On Hofmannsthal’s relationship to Judaism, see Jens Rieckmann, “(Anti-)Semitism and Homoeroticism: Hofmannsthal’s Reading of Bahr’s Novel *Die Rotte Kohras*,” *German Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (1993): 212–21.

85. Josef Armin, *Die Reise nach Grosswardein*, NÖLA (Theaterakten), Box 113/16 (1894).
86. Graeme Gilloch, *Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 131.
87. The distinction at hand is merely tendential. In this sense, I should mention the Jewish author and notorious bohemian Peter Altenberg (1859–1919), who epitomized the distraction and fragmented character of the present like almost no other. See Dagmar Lorenz, *Wiener Moderne* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2007), 188.
88. Nils Roemer, “Conceptions of Time and the German-Jewish Experience in the Nineteenth Century,” *Jewish History* 14, no. 3 (2000): 245–363.