



The Stranger in the Self. Hofmannsthal's Relationship to Jewishness¹

David Österle

Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for the History and Theory of Biography, Vienna

ABSTRACT

The article examines Hugo von Hofmannsthal's changing view on his own Jewish origins from a biographical perspective. In his youth Hofmannsthal not only repeatedly expressed sympathy for the Jews and their plights but also antipathy towards Roman Catholicism. However, the poet's views got increasingly skeptical towards his great grandfather's religion from the mid-1890s onwards. This shift of opinion needs to be seen in the context of continued migration of ethnic groups within the multi-ethnic Habsburg empire, especially of Jews and Slavs from Galicia, who were perceived as a threat by large parts of the rest of the population. With recourse to Michel Foucault (*Of Other Spaces*) Hofmannsthal's increasing identification with the Catholic culture of the Habsburg monarchy and the suppression of his Jewish heritage can be interpreted as a dialectical process of appropriation and resistance. The article discusses the question, if the poet's creative biographical engagement with prominent figures of the Habsburg monarchy such as Prince Eugen and Empress Maria Theresa became a surrogate for Hofmannsthal's own troubled and therefore unwritten history.

ABSTRACT IN GERMAN

Der Artikel widmet sich aus biographietheoretischer Perspektive der Auseinandersetzung des österreichischen Schriftstellers Hugo von Hofmannsthal mit seinen jüdischen Wurzeln. Hatte Hofmannsthal gerade in jungen Jahren immer wieder mit größtmöglichem Pathos Einfühlung in das Schicksal der Juden, Kritik an stereotypischen Zuschreibungen des „Jüdischen“ und

Befremden gegenüber dem Katholizismus zum Ausdruck gebracht, so stand er der Religion seines Urgroßvaters mit der anhaltend starken Migration ethnischer Gruppen des Vielvölkerstaates Mitte der 90er-Jahre, speziell von Juden und Slaven aus Galizien, zusehends skeptisch gegenüber. Mit Rückgriff auf Michel Foucaults Konzept der Heterotopie soll Hofmannsthals zunehmende Identifizierung mit der (katholisch geprägten) Kultur der Habsburgermonarchie und die alteritäre Verdrängung seiner jüdischen Wurzeln im Sinne dialektischer Aneignungs- und Abwehrprozesse interpretiert werden. Der Artikel stellt zur Frage, inwieweit die bio- und mythographische Auseinandersetzung mit herausragenden Persönlichkeiten der Habsburgermonarchie, etwa Prinz Eugen und Maria Theresia, in der Hofmannsthal die in den Turbulenzen von Nationalitätenkonflikten bereits längst verlorene Idee der einenden Wertegemeinschaft in Form jenes mythisch-überhöhten Konstrukts aufrecht zu erhalten sucht, aus biographischer Sicht als kompensatorisch zu bewerten ist.

Keywords: Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Judaism, Assimilation, Michel Foucault, Heterotopia, Alterity Theory, Othering, Mythography

The “problem (of Jewishness) itself, as one concerning me, never pressed upon me, either in my youth or at any later point”, wrote Hugo von Hofmannsthal to Hermann Bahr in early August 1919 (Hofmannsthal/Bahr 2013, p. 396).² This statement, made relatively late in the author’s career, corresponds to a view that was widely held in Hofmannsthal scholarship for some time: namely that Hofmannsthal was either barely aware of his Jewish origins, or that he chose to conceal them. One could be tempted to take the author at his word, given the notable blind spot in his engagement with his family and ancestral history. Hofmannsthal’s letters and notes contain barely a trace of Isaac Löw Hofmann, the ancestor whose philanthropic activities had led to the conferral of nobility and the granting of the title ‘Edler von Hofmannsthal’ in 1835. Löw Hofmann, Hofmannsthal’s great-grandfather, was a silk manufacturer who presided for many years over the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde*, and campaigned for its official recognition as the representative body of Vienna’s Jewish Community. He did not live to see the imperial sanction of the Community’s provisional statutes by Emperor Franz Josef, as this did not occur until 1852, three years after his death. Long before this, however, Löw Hofmann had been instrumental in the 1826 initiative to have a synagogue built in the Seitenstettengasse (Wurzbach 2001, p. 165). Even if it is the case that Hofmannsthal never set foot in the synagogue, despite its connection to his ancestor, he was doubtless aware of it as *lieu de mémoire*: the official headquarters of the Viennese Jewish community must have served as a spatial reminder of his own Jewish roots – an ‘other place’ within his biographical topography.

Particularly given his passionate interest, from a young age, in all things historical, his later intensive literary engagement with cultural and political relics of the Habsburg monarchy, and his biographic-mythographical concern with the iconic Habsburg figures Prince Eugene and Empress Maria Theresa, Hofmannsthal's lack of interest in the history of his ancestors seems a deliberate omission. What I advance in what follows is an answer to the question of why autobiography was not a productive genre for Hofmannsthal, and why the construction of his own identity, especially in his later years, required an increasing, perhaps compensatory, interest in biographical forms. The autobiographical blind spot appears even more notable when we consider the frequency of his statements and comments concerning the 'problem (of Jewishness) itself' in a general, rather than personal capacity – that is, as one *not* concerning him. The blind spot is eloquent to the extent that it suggests an act of omission that can be understood as the result of suppression or repudiation. Such omission, involving as it does a *not* saying, a *not* showing, a silence of one kind or another, is preceded by processes of refusal, but also of acceptance, of various building-blocks of identity.

With respect to Jewish identity, Steven Beller notes that, irrespective of the position taken by assimilated Jews (in the broadest sense) regarding the 'Jewish question' – whether affirmative, negative, or simply dismissive – their Jewish origins remained a conscious factor in terms of identity formation (Beller 1989, p. 74). Beller also points to the precariousness of any attempt at 'de-Judaization' when he reflects on the situation of assimilated Jews and half-Jews at the time: "It is a myth to suppose, as many converts did, that they could escape the social stigma of being Jewish by conversion, or even by being only partly Jewish." (Beller 1989, p. 76). This resonates with Hofmannsthal's efforts to relativise emphasis on his own Jewish origins. Although he repeatedly referred to the fact that his grandparents were only 'one part of Jewish descent, the other three being Lower Austrian peasant stock, Southern German (Swabian), and Italian (Old Lombardian)' (cit. Haas, 1968, p. 93), he was considered by many to be a 'Jewish poet' (Weinzierl 2005, pp. 40–48, Rieckmann 1993, pp. 470–472).

Within his immediate circle of friends and acquaintances, too, there were those who identified in him the characteristic hallmarks of 'the assimilated Jew'. A striking characterisation is found in the diary of Leopold von Andrian: Hofmannsthal is "as sensitive as an hysterical woman", plays the gentleman, if not the cavalier, speaks somewhat nasally, uses Gallicisms – *charmant* and *exécrable* – all with a layer of Viennese – which he likes to emphasise – and beneath all of this one hears the soft music – as in Rossini's opera – of the Jewish accent, but I don't know why, of precisely the lowest of Jews, the *Watschenjuden* (punch-bag Jews)"

(cit. Renner 1988, p. 5). Inscribed in this sketch of Hofmannsthal, and revealing a certain anti-Jewish sentiment on Andrian's part, is the attribution of a sensual effeminacy and decadence, a staple of anti-Semitic stereotype in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A similar logic is at work in the assertion of the critic Ottokar Stauf von der March in the magazine *Die Gesellschaft*. Stauf von der March opines that the upcoming generation of Viennese literati known as *Jung Wien* ('Young Vienna') would never have developed such "pathological leanings" had the "Semitic influence" not been so dominant among them. The critic thus reveals his debt to a racialised view of literature that was widespread at the time, one which demonstrates the instrumental quality of hegemonic cultural discourses, in which the countercultural or minoritarian is cast in the role of deviant negative foil to the valorised norm. "Most decadents are Semites, at least in origin, and Jewry is now in the stage of physical and psychic decadence." (Stauf von der March 1984, p. 530f.). Against this background, it is not surprising, that anti-Semitic magazines claim to recognise "Jewish qualities" in Hofmannsthal's writing: his *Oedipus and the Sphinx*, for instance, is said to be written in a "Jewish German" (Beller 1989, p. 205).³

In their historical variability, these unfavourable characteristics, which function within a given social context as attributes of alterity, reveal the arbitrary quality of images of the (in this case Jewish) Other. With the rise of industrialisation, the paradox emerged that 'the Jew' – who up until that point had been figured as the sensual counterpoint to rationalism – began to acquire characteristics such as intellectuality and emotional coldness, attributes of 'rational man' which brought with them the notion of a specifically Jewish intelligence (Spörk 1996, p. 25).

The invocation of these attributes in criticisms of Hofmannsthal's literary work could already be observed at an early stage in the author's writing career. In a letter from Richard Dehmel, we read: "I know of your drop of Jewish blood. It is of great value for you; I love your clever intellect. But don't be too intellectual, dear fellow! Don't only be intellectual!" (Hofmannsthal/Dehmel 1979, p. 18).

Specific images of Jewish alterity – such as the negatively connoted association of 'Jewishness' with excessive 'reflection' – are eagerly taken up by the poet himself. In a letter to his friend and future brother-in-law Hans Schlesinger in 1899, Hofmannsthal notes the "tendency towards reflection, to the 'critical', 'historical', 'objective', [...] educated Jewish way of thinking", and condemns it as "horribly bloodless, unfit for life", as "detrimental to one's capacity for experience" (cit. Rieckmann 1993, p. 477). To Schlesinger's mother, later the poet's mother-in-law, he had already written the previous year that the "Jewish-Viennese" milieu was

one of the “most dangerous” for young people (cit. Rieckmann 1993, p. 477). An oft-quoted diary entry of 1893 demonstrates the extent to which the poet's perception of his Jewish heritage was determined by the social perception of a distinctively Jewish rationality, thus constituting an essential field of conflict within the construction of his own identity: “What if all of my inner developments and battles are nothing but the disquiet of my inherited blood, the rebellions of the Jewish drop of blood (reflection) against the Germanic and Romance, the reactions against these rebellions?” (SW XXXVIII 2013, p. 224). This diary entry of Hofmannsthal's, in which he reflects ‘biologically’ on his own personality structure, is indebted to the widespread acceptance in the early 1890s of the supposed findings of pseudo-scientific racial theory (Rieckmann 1993, p. 467).

Particularly in his youth, Hofmannsthal repeatedly expressed sympathy for the plight of the Jews and antipathy towards Roman Catholicism, in terms redolent with pathos.⁴ In a narrative fragment of 1891 which draws on his own family background and his difficulties in constructing a coherent identity, the poet refers critically to Catholic dominance and bigotry, to the church's rituals of flagellation and its persecution of the Jews (SW XXXVIII 2013, p. 128). But from the mid-1890s onwards, the poet began to take an increasingly skeptical view of the religion of his great-grandfather. This shift is to be seen in the context of continued migration of ethnic groups within the multi-ethnic Habsburg empire, especially of Jews and Slavs from Galicia, who were perceived by large parts of the rest of the population as a threat. The fear of ethnic difference, a fear which the poet shared with many of his assimilated Jewish contemporaries, was expressed in apocalyptic terms in a diary entry of 1894:

And how strange it is, that we in Vienna are perhaps the last thinking people, the last of those who are whole and ensouled, that then perhaps a great barbarism will come, a Slavic-Jewish, sensual world. To think of Vienna destroyed: all of the walls crumbled, the city's entrails exposed, its wounds choked with endless weeds (...) and to be a watchman in one of the Trajan columns, still standing before the Karlskirche, and to walk among the ruins thinking thoughts no one else would be able to understand (SW XXXVIII 2013, p. 283f.).

In a letter to Hermann Bahr of the same year, a similarly apocalyptic scenario is evoked. The title of the journal founded by Bahr, *Die Zeit* (*Time* or *The Time*) is, writes Hofmannsthal, “a beautifully tragic and deeply symbolic title”, “because we are perhaps the last Viennese, the last whole and ensouled people in this peculiar city; after us there will be only Slavs and Jews and no longer any genuine Viennese (...) *Die Zeit* = le gouffre

(the abyss)”; (Hofmannsthal/Bahr 2013, p. 283f) the reference is to Baudelaire’s poem of the same title in *Fleurs du mal*.

The feeling of alienation when confronted with ethnic groups from the far east of the multi-racial empire was one to which Hofmannsthal gave vent in the course of his voluntary year of military service a year later. Writing from Göding to Hannibal Karg von Bebenburg, the poet noted that apart from the “almost exceptionally dear fellows” in the familiar environment of the barracks, the place was inhabited by “nothing but Jews and Slovaks”. In Chortkiv and Tlumach in East Galicia, where he had to report for arms training and where he saw non-assimilated Jews for the first time, he found himself confronted with a culture – the pre-modern world of his great-grandfather’s religion – which unsettled him thoroughly: Tlumach, a “Jewish-Ruthenian dump”, appeared to him as “an unthinkable ugly, dirty, and miserable place”, one in which he was surrounded by “completely strange” people, by “Jews who are very ugly and devious” (cit. Rieckmann 1993, p. 478). The reaction is typical for the experiences and impressions of the assimilated Jews of Vienna, who had “left the shtetl of the empire’s easternmost regions behind them, and found the orthodox faith of their ancestors increasingly alien” (Rieckmann 1993, p. 478). In these defining encounters with “Eastern Jewry” in all its ‘strange sensuousness’, Hofmannsthal became fully aware for the first time of the true otherness of the Other. His disparaging statements can also be understood as a defensive stand against the Other or stranger within in the self, against his family history, specifically the Judaism of his great-grandfather.

It is perhaps unsurprising in this context that Hofmannsthal’s assessment of his grandfather’s efforts to assimilate is generally positive. August von Hofmannsthal had converted to Roman Catholicism on the occasion of his late marriage to the Milanese Petronilla von Rhò, mixed marriages between Jews and Gentiles being forbidden at that time. This grandfather had been Christian “from early on”, wrote Hofmannsthal in a letter to Willy Haas, the Prague-based literary journalist who to the poet’s surprise had described him as a “Jewish poetic genius” (Haas 1922, p. 156) and had associated the “crisis of the subject” (p. 142) running through his work with the “spiritual crisis of the Jewish people” (Haas, p. 152). August von Hofmannsthal, according to his grandson, had followed a “highly natural tendency, perhaps the only tendency possible at the start of the nineteenth century, by moving out of an isolation that had become incomprehensible, and entering the generally recognised sphere, the sphere recognised as human.” (Hofmannsthal/Haas 1968, p. 46).

Drawing on Rieckmann’s account, we can reasonably assume that this statement is based on a false assessment by Hofmannsthal: his

grandfather is unlikely to have been fully accepted by high society, as these circles tended to keep their distance from the 'new money' of the recently ennobled (Rieckmann, 1993, p. 473). It is also telling that Hofmannsthal's general attitude to Jewish assimilation is usually rather more negative than the above quotation suggests. In a note from the year 1903, we read under the heading "Jews in Austria":

Foreigners, as such (they) quickly get to know and enjoy the forms of life; to expand within them, as the summer holiday-maker spreads himself out on the alpine meadow. They are the audience of Viennese-ness, self-satisfied sentimental introspection gives way to a sense of playful involvement. They speak the rural dialects, dress in peasant costume. The concept of the 'süßes Mädel' [sweet maiden, a stock figure of Viennese theatre] (SW XXXVIII 2013, p. 456).

Hofmannsthal's concern here is less with ethnic difference and foreignness than with the 'playful' involvement, the staged, opportunistic partaking of 'foreigners' in an adopted culture. Assimilation in the narrower sense of the word is figured here as a costume ball, the Jews as chameleons of identity who take on various cultural markers all too freely and superficially. "But then", he continues in the same passage, "freedom. Not dull insularity. They come from the whole world, are connected to the whole world," and, drawing on the motif of Ahasverus, the 'Wandering Jew': "The angel of death has accompanied them through dark times." (SW XXXVIII 2013, p. 456). Here Hofmannsthal works the motif of Jewish wandering, which folds the temporal into the topographical, into a coded cultural history of the Jewish diaspora – clearly misreading the latter as an act of freedom, in order to use it as the criterion against which Jewish assimilation is then viewed in a negative light. Ironically, Willy Haas, in the essay mentioned earlier, sees Ahasverus as a template for many of Hofmannsthal's fictional characters, reading them as "homeless, as travellers, wanderers, as those who are always searching for home." (Haas 1922). Hofmannsthal's reflections on the 'foreignness' of "Jews in Austria" are based on historical prefigurations of Jewish otherness, as later analysed by Zygmunt Bauman. As Bauman shows, the Jews represented the epitome of universal strangerhood, as they were 'foreign' not with respect to any specific place, their 'other country' did not exist, and there was in fact no country in which they could claim the right to be 'native'. They thus embodied strangerhood, as eternal wanderers, encapsulating non-territoriality, the essence of homelessness, a spectre of conventionality that could not be exorcised, as Bauman puts it, from the house of the Absolute, a nomadic throwback in a settled era (Baumann 1992, p. 112).

‘Strangerhood’ is spatially inscribed into those who have been chosen as the prototypical ‘wanderers’ in a society which has constituted itself through settlement: ‘deracination’ thus reproduces exclusion at the topographical level. The history of the Jews in Vienna makes this clear: from the earliest Jewish areas on the city’s periphery, the ghettoisation of Leopoldstadt in the seventeenth century, to the later Jewish community, which, while accepted by the authorities, was structured by the dominant culture and subject to constant controls. The various cultural and political meanings ascribed to Jewishness thus had spatial and topographical implications. The history of Vienna’s Jews can be read, following Michel Foucault, as a history of successive heterotopisations. Heterotopias are “real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society” and in which real sites “are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places” (Foucault 1986, p. 24 f.). Heterotopias of deviation, which are particular manifestations of the heterotopian, function as counter-sites to the extent that they produce the social understanding of the normative through their representation of its negation. Inversely, they become a kind of benchmark for the ‘normal’ itself. Building on key insights of alterity theory, then, heterotopias of deviation can be understood as the ‘constitutive exterior’ of the social body, productive of social identity by very dint of their exclusion and distinction from it. The ‘constitutive exterior’ is, however, not just identity’s condition of possibility, but also and always a part of identity itself. “Centre and periphery are intrinsically interwoven with each other” (Babka 2014); it is in this way that the hegemonic or dominant culture is produced in the first place, by means of processes of othering. Cultural identity, predicated – as Derrida’s paradigmatic analyses of Western ‘logocentrism’ suggest – on binary oppositions that reflect techniques of domination (Derrida 1992, p. 12), thus becomes a formative part of both the self-concept and the social praxis of actors.

In Hofmannsthal’s case, a dialectical process of appropriation and resistance can be observed, in which an increasing identification with the Catholic culture of the Habsburg monarchy determines, and is determined by, a suppression of his Jewish heritage. As the ‘stranger’ within the self, the heterotopian sphere – if Foucault’s concept can be mobilised for a socio-psychological interpretation – has a stabilising function for that self, for the homotopia; in other words, Jewishness, considered as the ‘other’ or ‘foreign’ and thus subject to exclusion, in fact constitutes and stabilises Hofmannsthal’s increasing identification with the culture of the Habsburg monarchy. The poet’s negative view of Jewish efforts to assimilate – “Jews: their unending presumption and conformism – dangerous” (SW XXXVIII 2013, p. 698), he writes in his diary in May or June

1917 – may be understood as follows: If the presence of the Other within the sphere of the Self is the indispensable precondition of an identity founded on difference, and Hofmannsthal casts the Jew as Other, then Jewish assimilation poses a threat of dissolution or destabilisation to the Self. For with the de-othering of Jewishness through a process of assimilation, or as Hofmannsthal sees it through ‘conformism’ to the dominant culture, the poet loses the moment of differentiation, the constitutive moment of his self-concept.⁵

Against this background, it is worth revisiting Hermann Broch's theory of ‘twofold narcissism’ as elaborated in his study *Hofmannsthal and His Time* (1955). If assimilation to the dominant culture is successful, and this dominant culture is positively and narcissistically perceived by its members to be somehow aesthetically superior, whether through its arrangement of everyday life, its distribution of physical beauty, or its capacity for pleasure, then the assimilated member, who is also proud of his assimilation – even if this took place many generations ago – , “perceives himself as a chosen one of a high degree: a chosen one among the chosen people”. The condition of possibility for ‘chosenness’ is, therefore, the existence of the non-chosen, of those who have not achieved the transition from heterotopia to homotopia. For reasons of overcompensation, that is, from a sense of not truly belonging to the dominant culture, there emerges within the ‘chosen one’ a sort of ‘inner anti-Semitism’ (Broch 1984, p. 90).

Hofmannsthal's radical suppression – heterotopisation – of his Jewish heritage finds its nadir in a letter to the German conservative philosopher of culture Rudolf Pannwitz in the year 1917.⁶ In its inclusion of available Jewish stereotypes, this anti-Semitic tirade points discursively towards a future, darker, chapter of the history of Europe's Jews. In the letter, the poet declares that his antipathy towards “a particular Jewish intellectual milieu in Vienna”, which is “for me the worst of the worst”, has intensified over the years into “hatred” and “contempt”. These “lemurs of a parasitic existence”, consisting of Jewish doctors and stockbrokers, ladies, psychoanalysts and newspaper columnists, this “world of molluscs and parasites” is, he writes, “the true and absolute opposite pole” of the society which he, in his writings, posits and presupposes. Here Hofmannsthal distances himself in the strongest possible terms from a milieu with which he was closely familiar, to which indeed he felt he belonged, during his youth and early adulthood. This was the milieu not only of the poets and writers of *Jung Wien*, many of whom were assimilated Jews, but also and above all of families such as the Gomperzes, Todescos, Wertheimsteins, particularly Josephine von Wertheimstein, the famous *salonnière* and widow of Leopold von Wertheimstein who, as founder of the officially recognised

Jewish Community in 1852, is very likely to have known Hofmannsthal's great-grandfather personally. In the 'Cottage quarter', an exclusive residential area in Vienna's nineteenth district, where Arthur Schnitzler and Richard Beer-Hofmann – fellow writers with whom Hofmannsthal was in close contact until his death – both owned houses, there “dwells this veritable *vermine du monde*”, this host of vermin, continues the letter to Pannwitz (Hofmannsthal/Pannwitz 1993, p. 55ff.).

'Overcompensation' (as Hermann Broch has it) and simultaneous heterotopisation are also at work in Hofmannsthal's intensive literary pre-occupation with the idea, ultimately the myth, of an Austria remote from the political realities of the multi-ethnic empire's incipient decline. With his editorial role in the Austrian Library of the publishing house Insel Verlag, which he understood as a cultural-political mission, and after the First World War, with the establishment of the Salzburg Festival in 1920 as a conscious counterpoint to the Wagnerian Germanicism of Bayreuth, Hofmannsthal sought to invoke the national and above all cultural unity of the multi-ethnic state in the form of a utopian appeal to the past. In the context of this discussion, for reasons of space, this myth-building can only be sketched in key words: it includes the poet's creative biographic-mythographical engagement with prominent figures of the Habsburg monarchy such as Prince Eugene and Empress Maria Theresa, and his attempt to reanimate, through mythic exaggeration of these figures, the long-lost idea of a unifying community of values (Nodia 1999, p. 52). In the style of nineteenth-century political biography, the aim of which was to establish and consolidate national identity and memory, Hofmannsthal portrays Maria Theresa in an essay of the same name as the patron saint of Austrian unity: in a paradoxical image, he ascribes to her the 'Janus face of the good and great ruler, who seems to fix the past with one pair of eyes and look into the future with the other' (Hofmannsthal 1979, p. 448).

The mythicised history of the Danubian monarchy thus becomes a surrogate for Hofmannsthal's own troubled and therefore unwritten family history. With the purchase of his own Theresian *Schlössl*, the castle in Rodaun some fifteen kilometres south-west of Vienna, the poet weaves the history of Old Austria ever more closely into his own biography, turning himself from resident into representative. It is as if the imperial past, preserved in the baroque façade, becomes physically accessible: the journalist Hermann Menke writes of experiencing there “the charm of the Theresian era more strongly than ever before” (Menkes 1910, p. 7), and Grete Wiesenthal finds the house “as beautiful as in an Adalbert Stifter story” (Wiesenthal 1963, p. 186). “I still believe that I will be able to build my own world into the world”, Hofmannsthal had written as early as 1895,

in a letter to Beer-Hofmann. "It is, admittedly, a question of building Potemkin villages as far as the eye can see, but ones that one believes in. And that calls for a strong feeling for the past." (Hofmannsthal/Beer-Hofmann 1972, p. 47). In Hofmannsthal's case, this 'strong feeling for the past' becomes ever more selective. Jewishness – the Other of "the generally recognised sphere, the sphere recognised as human" – is increasingly driven out of the Potemkin village. But as with the repressed, which, in psychoanalytic parlance, is destined to return, the Other remains, as a heterotopia.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Österle is a researcher and assistant to the director at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for the History and Theory of Biography in Vienna, where he is working on the research strand *Group biography* “*Young Vienna*”. He is also writing a dissertation about modernism and tradition in life and work of Hugo von Hofmannsthal.

NOTES

- 1 Translated from German into English by Cairíona Ní Dhúill.
- 2 The statement can be found in the correspondence on Hermann Bahr’s “Die Rotte Korah”, in which the Jewish family background of Raibl the Notary, a central character in the novel, is based on Hofmannsthal’s own history.
- 3 Michael Kane provides an interesting account of Hofmannsthal’s reflective ability and his Jewish heritage (Kane 1999, pp. 141–155).
- 4 Hofmannsthal adopts a defensive attitude towards Judaism, for example, in relation to the performance at the Viennese Burgtheater of Hermann Mosenthal’s play “Deborah”. In a letter to his boyhood friend Gabriele Sobotka, the thirteen-year-old boy complains that the play is to be understood as a denunciation of anti-Semitism past and present, a denunciation of that which “the inexpressible witlessness [*Geistlosigkeit*] of centuries has broken down, and regrettably continues to break down”. Mosenthal’s error, however, was to have rejected the “pathetic allegation of greed”, and in this the play would have had its “apotheosis”, to an even greater degree than in the “defence of Judaism” visible in its implicit bias (cf. Rieckmann, 1993, p. 474).
- 5 In this context, Reinhardt Koselleck’s analysis of the “semantics of historical time” (Koselleck 1979) may be informative. Koselleck discusses the continuity of binary constructions as a mode of hegemony since early antiquity (Greeks-Barbarians, Christians-Heathens, Mensch-Unmensch).
- 6 The letter can be linked to a great many of anti-Semitic statements made by Hofmannsthal. (Rieckmann 1993, pp. 479–481, Weinzierl 2005, pp. 30–40).