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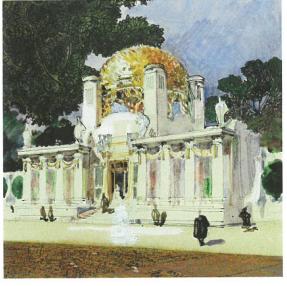
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Gustav Veit. Panorama (bird's-eye view) of Vienna, seen from the south, with the Ringstrasse district in the year of the World Exposition. In the foreground are the Karlskirche, Palais Schwarzenberg, and the Lower Belvedere. 1873. Pen and sepia. 57.7 x 91.4 cm. Vienna Museum.





Left:

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Below:

Erwin Pendl. The Music Association Building with Karlskirche behind it. Ca. 1900. Watercolor. 25.1 x 26.1 cm. Society of Friends of Music, Vienna.



FRANZ'JOSEPH'I



VIRIBUS



UNITIS

Above:

Double eagle, coat of arms of the crown lands, with election slogan of Emperor Franz Joseph I. 1915. Color lithograph.

Left:

Wilhelm List. Emperor Franz Joseph I. Painting from the assembly hall in the main building of the Austrian Postal Savings Bank, built by Otto Wagner in 1904-1906, Georg-Coch-Platz, Vienna. Ca. 1905. Oil on canvas.

Below:

Austria with Slavic and Magyar wet nurses. Satire on the conflicts between the nationalities. 1869. Colored lithograph by Vinzenz Katzler.







Above

Emperor Franz Joseph I and retinue in a Corpus Christi procession. In the foreground are members of the Hungarian Guard. 1908. Photograph.

Lef

Tribute to Emperor Franz Joseph I to mark the recapture of Lemberg. On Schloss Schönbrunn's balcony are seen (left to right) the emperor, Archduchess Zita with the young Archduke Otto on her arm, and the successor to the throne, Karl. June 24, 1915. Photograph.

Below: Visit of King Edward VII of Great Britain to Bad Ischl. August 15, 1907. Photograph.











Preceding two pages:

Wilhelm Gause. The Court Ball in the Grand Hall of the Viennese Hofburg. 1906. Watercolor. 49.8 x 69.3 cm. Unlike the "Ball at Court," which was only open to aristocracy, as many as 3,000 people took part each year in the "Court Ball" held in the Hofburg's Grand Hall.

Left top:

Gustav Klimt with friends (including Emilie Flöge, Emma Bacher, Helene Klimt, Heinrich Boehler) on an excursion to Gahberg Hill at Lake Atter. Summer 1908. Photograph.

Left center:

High society at the racetrack. 1902. Photograph.

Left bottom:

Anna Bahr-Mildenburg (left) and Hermann Bahr (right) with friends at the Lido in Venice. Ca. 1910. Photograph.

Opposite:

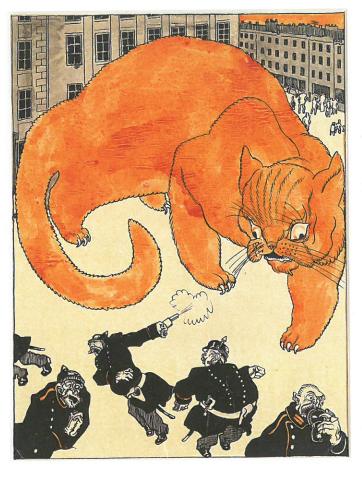
Elegant society at the racetrack in Vienna Freudenau. Ferdinand Prince Auersperg in Guard Officer uniform with Countess Draskovich. Ca. 1912. Photograph.











Left top: Jewish peddler and an official in Vienna. Ca. 1910. Photograph by Emil Mayer.

Neue Glühlichter magazine. Special edition for May 1, 1904. "Eight-hour workday. General, equal, and direct voting rights." Title page with color lithograph by F. Graetz.

Left bottom:

Group shelters. The largest bunkroom in the shelter on Flossgasse. 1904. Photograph by Hermann Drawe.

Moriz Jung. The Red Beast. Ca. 1910. Ink, watercolor. 24.4 × 187 cm. Vienna Museum.

Kitchen in a group shelter. The night shelter on Kleine Schiffgasse. 1904. Photograph by Hermann Drawe.





VIENNA AROUND 1900 The Duration of Denial Rainer Metzger

"Back when Oskar Kokoschka began...," art critic Julius Meier-Graefe takes up the banner for the wildest of Vienna's Junge Wilden, or Young Savages, "...the inner voice that the poets of Expressionism invoke was strong within him. It took place in Vienna in the circle surrounding Klimt. In this atmosphere, it would be difficult for a young person with similar drives to silence this inner voice, which in this case would have meant a categorical rejection of Klimt's Orientalist leanings. Any compromise made with the purveyor of perversities would make it impossible to establish a solid foundation. Kokoschka saw through Klimt's inadequate means of expression and broke away from the decorator's applied art. He envisioned a deeper, more inward-looking art. And he achieved it without effort; he even would have been able to go a hundred times further, had he been able to avoid the fatal sweetness of the Viennese Orient, which was akin to an incurable infection."

A very distinct German perspective echoes in these words, and it would not be difficult to find other like-minded commentaries, for example by Richard Muther, another German art historian: "As the most distinctive product of this very blue-blooded Viennese culture, we would doubtless have to choose Gustav Klimt. He is not everyone's cup of tea. And I myself must admit that I lack the faculty of appreciation for the finer nuances of his art. I feel a deep attraction for strong and natural artists, (...) while the pungent preciosity that characterizes most of Klimt's works simply irritates me." Muther's strong words were written in 1920, those of Meier-Graefe in 1924. In addition to the barbs directed specifically at Klimt, there are two main things these writers convey about Vienna around 1900, about its cultural heyday and its cultural idiosyncrasy. The city and its golden age have experienced phases in which they were less highly esteemed than they are today. The 1920s, in any case, with its devotion to abstraction and purism, perceived Viennese ornament as sickeningly sweet confection, and its refinement and filigree as empty, overblown gesturing. With their international focus and affinity for worldwide communications, critics of the I920s found the Austria that gave birth to this much-praised culture provincial, above all.

Now, we might just take the positions of Muther and Meier-Graefe to be anomalous and unjust, file them away and forget them. But it's not that easy. Purism, on the one hand, and the abstract International Style, on the other, are themselves also to a large



Opposite: Josef Engelhart. Society at the Sophiensaal. 1903. Oil on canvas. 100.5 x 65.5 cm. Vienna Museum.

Above: Oskar Kokosebka. Portrait of a Girl. 1913. Oil on eanwas. 67.7 × 54 cm. Salzburg State Collections.



Gustav Klimt. Nuda Veritas. 1899. Oil on canvas. 252 \times 56.2 cm. Theater Museum, Vienna.

extent products of turn-of-the-century Vienna, achievements that allowed critics just two decades later to attack the very historical status quo that brought them forth. This is the irony of history and the dialectics of enlightenment: if fin-de-siècle Vienna can be considered a veritable epoch, then it is precisely because of a diversity of interests that all came together into a single developmental logic. It is not only that the capital of the Habsburg Empire necessarily became a melting pot, which even today is revealed by a casual glance through the phone book, where Hungarian and Bohemian, Croatian and Italian, Slovakian and Slovenian names stand side by side. It is not only the character of the metropolis as fertile topsoil in which the most diverse forms of expression and identities take root and blossom into a hybrid idiom. It is instead, and much more distinctly than elsewhere, a certain narrowness in the urbanity and mentality here, it is a network of mutual referentiality and clearly arranged structure, thanks to which a generation of painters, musicians, writers, and architects were always able to keep a close watch on what the others were doing, and which motivated them to react accordingly and directly. They didn't work so much side by side as in constant reciprocal attentiveness and competition. Turn-of-the-century Vienna is less the sum of discrete individual, original, or even ingenious positions than an accumulation of egocentrics in a constant state of denial. In the beginning there might very well have been confection, as Meier-Graefe believed. But at the end stood the radical solution of the zealots, the purists, the rigorists. The topos of cultural history that is "Vienna around 1900," comprising the years from 1880 to 1920, without a doubt encompasses both; and above all the greenhouse effect that provided the intense pressure that propelled the rapid development from this beginning to this end.

Gustav Klimt was the specific target chosen by Muther and Meier-Graefe. Klimt was the Secessionist par excellence, figurehead of a decorative, gilded style of painting. There is a constant struggle in his pictures between the naturalistic representation typical of a late-era existence marked by anxiety and neurosis, and the ornamental dissolution of reality in the rapport and intoxication of the pattern. Born in 1862, he was just three months younger than Arthur Schnitzler, the writer and physician, whose texts reveal a similar disharmony. Schnitzler's characters are torn between instinctual and hormonal drives, and a tendency to bow to society and its manners by obliging and sweeping everything under the rug. A year younger is Hermann Bahr, impresario of Vienna around 1900, a journalist and belletrist who was perhaps not a gifted writer, but nonetheless a reliable defender of current fash-

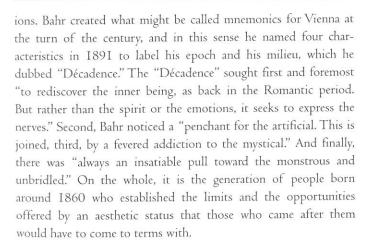




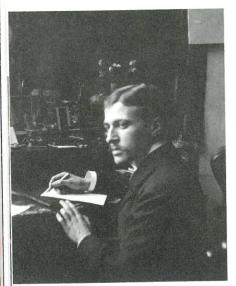
Above: Hermann Bahr and Anna Bahr-Mildenburg at the Lido in Venice. 1910. Photograph.

Left: Hermann Bahr in the office of his villa in Vienna XIII, built in 1899/1900 by Joseph Maria Olbrich. Ca. 1905. Photograph. Austrian Theater Museum, Vienna.

Below: Max Oppenheimer (Mopp). Portrait of Arthur Schnitzler. 1912. Etching signed "Mopp" and with the author's signature.







Above: Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Ca. 1905. Photograph.

Right:
Poster announcing a reading by Karl Kraus at the Vienna Concert Hall. 1914.
Color lithograph.

Below: Karl Kraus. Ca. 1913. Photograph.

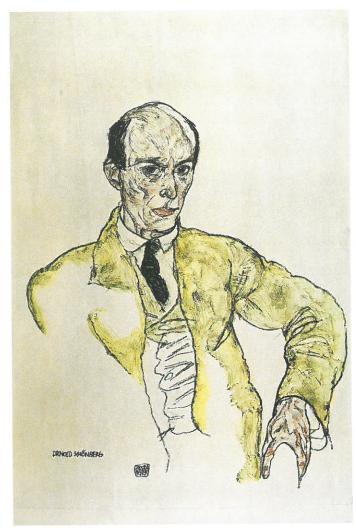


MITTLERER KONZERTHAUSSAAL DONNERSTAG, 19. NOVEMBER 1914 **1/8 UHR ABENDS VORLESUNG** PROGRAMM: BIBEL / VORWORT: LILIENCRON / NESTROY Der volle Ertrag dieses Abends fließt Rekonvaleszentenhäusern zu und wird zur Unterstützung wiedereinrückender und invalider Soldaten verwendet.

In a remarkable fashion, the year 1874 witnessed the birth of the subsequent generation. Within six months of each other, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Karl Kraus, and Arnold Schönberg were born, perhaps the most distinctive exponents of Vienna around 1900. In their oeuvres, these figures would build a bridge from the non-chalance and the specific brand of laissez-faire exhibited by their artistic predecessors to the implacability and absoluteness inherited by twentieth-century Vienna.

Karten bei Kehlendorfer, I. Krugerstraße 3 und an der Konzerthauskassa. Preise der Plätze: K 10.- 6.- 4.- 2.-

Hofmannsthal, who went by the name Loris in his younger years, was a wunderkind whose adolescence seems to have been nothing less than poetic. He hauntingly adumbrates the self-image of this generation of "heirs": their provincial grandfathers had come to the city and made it big, their fathers had consolidated their careers, and the children had then drifted away from the

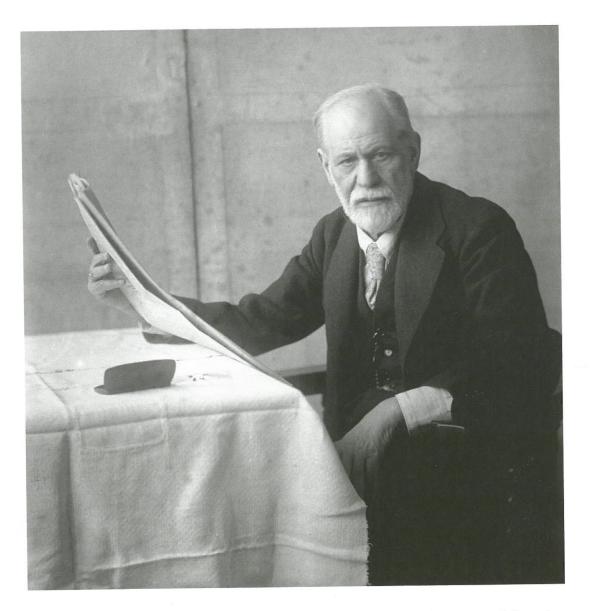




Left: Egon Schiele. Portrait of Composer Arnold Schönberg. 1917. Watercolor with black chalk. 45.7 x 29.2 cm. Neue Galerie, New York.

Above: Arnold Schönberg. Blue Self-Portrait. 1910. Oil on plywood. 31.1 x 22.9 cm. Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna.

world of commerce and turned their attention to aesthetic pursuits. Karl Kraus began his career as editor of the features pages of one of those daily papers that embodied the liberal spirit of the bourgeoisie. He then went on, from 1899, to light the way to the world of good taste with his journal Fackel (Torch). In the end, he wound up as sole editor of the irregularly published periodical; the acerbity and unbending integrity with which he flung his criticisms and invective into the world tolerated only the first person singular of the gifted gadfly himself. Arnold Schönberg, finally, a composer and painter, was one of the typical multitalents found in Vienna around 1900. He found work outside the city for almost a decade, only to return in 1911 in the kind of triumph the avant-garde adored, namely in a scandal, in tumult, in a brawl, meeting with a lack of understanding to which he responded by revolutionizing



Above: Sigmund Freud. 1926. Photograph by Ferdinand Schmutzer.

his art. Schönberg would find fame as the inventor of the twelvetone scale, bringing the implacability of mathematics to the world of music.

Of course, these contemporaries were surrounded by some outside their age bracket, for what would fin-de-siècle Vienna and its impact on the world have been without figures like Sigmund Freud, born in 1856, or Adolf Loos, born in 1870? But they, too, genuinely felt they belonged to a generation. Despite the focus of the Viennese world around 1900 on the city itself, something one might call "systematic age" also played a considerable role: entry into an aesthetic status quo at a very precise moment in its devel-



ADOLF LOOS

INS LEERE
GESPROCHEN

INNSBRUCK
BRENNER-VERLAG

Left:
Adolf Loos. Poster announcing a lecture on
"Ornament and Crime" at the Austrian
Engineers' and Architects' Association in Vienna.
1913. Color lithograph.

Above: Adolf Loos. Cover of Ins Leere gesprochen. 1897–1900. Die Schriften von Adolf Loos in zwei Bändern (translated as "Spoken into the Void. Collected Essays"). 1931. With a photo of Adolf Loos from 1912.

opment. Freud, inventor of psychoanalysis, who extended the *ur*-Viennese principle of the interior to the inner worlds of subjective orientation, viewed Schnitzler in particular as a congenial adversary; the writer had created a fiction that he himself then fleshed out with facts. "I've often wondered," said Freud in a beautifully phrased letter to Schnitzler in 1906, "where you were able to obtain this or that piece of knowledge, which I have only been able to acquire through arduous research into the subject; I finally ended up envying the poet whom I otherwise admired." Adolf Loos, architect and fierce critic of ornament, which, according to his famous dictum, was nothing less than a "crime"; Loos, designer



Karl Wittgenstein, Austrian industrial magnate, and his wife Leopoldine, nee Kallmus, parents of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Ca. 1900. Photograph by the K. u. K. ("Royal and Imperial") Court Studio Adèle, Vienna.

Title page of Ludwig Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosphicus. 1955.

Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL LTD

of the house on Michaelsplatz whose bare facade articulated by naked windows faced down the imperial juggernaut of the Hofburg across the square and thus, in timely conjunction with the scandal surrounding Schönberg, produced his own éclat - this Loos was the best friend of and embittered combatant for Karl Kraus. The two together formed the style police, the executive branch of serious discourse.

But let's continue following the logic of age cohorts, because we still have to deal with the generation born around 1890, and this is where the twentieth century really comes into its own. What Schönberg did for music, Ludwig Wittgenstein, born in 1889, tried to do for philosophy: to find answers that would be sacrosanct because they followed the inescapability of axioms and distilled the world's variety into the kind of elegant simplicity that characterizes logic. The philosopher - son of the steel magnate, patron, and collector Karl Wittgenstein, one of the typical "heirs" - reveals just what it is that constitutes orthodox modernism, whether in the twelve-tone scale, in functional architecture, or in artistic abstraction. Orthodox modernism is the broad-scale and almost century-long attempt to counter the complexity of the world with its own reduction. Egon Schiele, born in 1890, would attempt this on no lesser scale in his pictures, in paintings and drawings that reveal a phenomenal talent. And yet, despite their virtuosity, they indulge in a single perspective: the artist's own enormous ego, which in a kind of tunnel vision narrows the natural panorama before his eyes to his own subjective sensations.

The most successful, because he was literally the most worldshaking of all of these advocates of a reduction of complexity, was six days older than Ludwig Wittgenstein, attended the same school as he did for a time, and likewise experienced the most important period of his socialization in the milieu of Vienna around 1900. He is usually not counted among the proponents of culture, but he was in his own unique way inconceivable without the experience of radicalization and the radical dynamics of this city at this time. His name was Adolf Hitler.

Aesthetics do not exist in a political vaccuum, and in order to understand the mentality of an epoch it is not enough to simply separate the innocent and above all harmless purists from the world-tainting totalitarians. Vienna at the turn of the century, at any rate, saw the rise of both kinds of radicals, just as its central problems, its drastic contradictions, and its enormous inconsistencies encompassed all of being. Of course, the various cults of beauty - in which Klimt, for example, satisfied the escapist needs of a high society that had come into money and hence boredom -



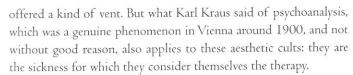


Adolf Hitler's residence during his stay in Vienna in 1909, adorned with a sign and swastikas in April 1938. Photograph.

Adolf Hitler during his imprisonment in Landsberg Fortress. 1924. Photograph.

Below:

Shelter for homeless men in Vienna. Ca. 1890. Wood engraving in a newspaper, from a drawing by Franz Kollarz.



The very factor that was commonly understood as a sign that this status quo had not shattered as a result of its own complexity long ago was perhaps its greatest problem. Franz Joseph I, who, unbelievably, had been in power ever since 1848, had a heavy burden to shoulder as God's chosen one. An emperor embodies universality, but it became increasingly difficult for him to hold together his multiethnic state; by virtue of its very multiplicity it was expected to demonstrate a greatness that elevated it above all else. Imperial universality necessarily goes hand in hand with the subjugation of all others. The response of these subjects was no





Above

"United and strong, German to the core!" Propaganda card for the Badeni Language Ordinances of 1897. Color lithograph.

Right.

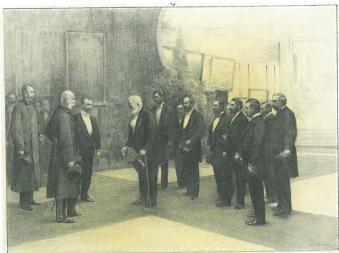
Rudolf Bacher. Emperor Franz Joseph I at the First Viennese Secession Exhibition. 1898. Pencil. 34.5 x 44.6 cm. Vienna Museum.

Below:

Emperor Franz Joseph I greets representatives of the Muslim and Orthodox clergy in Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina). May 31, 1910. Photograph.



less necessary, consisting in both a drive for emancipation and the instrumentalization of this emancipation for separatist ends. Precisely because the monarch basked in timelessness and superiority, the opportunity arose for a population fragmented by its heterogeneity to demarcate what was individual and real. It was no accident that the artists of the Secession – who segregated themselves in 1897, disassociating from the traditional organizational form of the "artists' cooperative" – paid special homage to the emperor. The many admiring speeches the artists gave on his behalf, and a personal visit by the all-powerful one to the Secession Exhibition in 1898 in return, testify to a telling complicity between the most upright traditionalism and the spearhead of the avant-garde. Another testament to this connection is a pavilion



built on the city tramline expressly for the emperor, Schloss Schönbrunn Station, in the finest Secession style. Franz Joseph actually made use of it — on just one occasion. The experience of a group trip on the Stadtbahn was not really covered by imperial etiquette.

Less an isolated problem than perhaps the basis of them all was the era's special proclivity for double standards. We have already seen that the emperor was not free of this ambivalence, but the sphere that was most deeply affected is revealed by how the epoch dealt with sexuality. In his autobiography, Eine Jugend in Wien (My Youth in Vienna), Arthur Schnitzler described the following dialogue with his father: "In the course of the conversation, the question forced itself over my lips of how a young person should go about it, in order not to come into conflict with the demands of morals, society, or hygiene. Seduction and adultery are illicit and dangerous, relations with coquettes and actresses risky and expensive, and then there's a certain kind of, so to speak, respectable girl

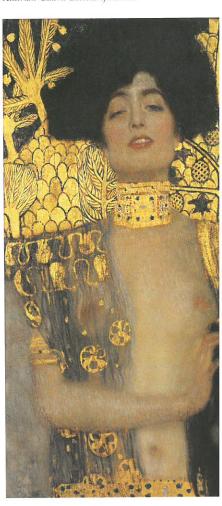
who, although she may have deviated from the path of virtue, one still risked 'getting stuck with,' to use my father's expression; so all that's left really are the prostitutes, but this is always, even if you know how to protect your health, quite a nasty affair. And so I asked my father to give me some advice. My father did not deign to discuss the matter any further; instead, with a wave of his hand, he remarked simply and at the same time abstrusely: 'You just brush it aside." The parallelism between taboo and licentiousness, by which a woman is either put on a pedestal or unabashedly exploited, according to her social standing, is what gives Viennese literature its most enduring greatness. But the question of the connection between "Gender and Character," the title of Otto Weininger's famous dissertation, is much more than a matter of motives, subjects, and literary material. Its double standards managed to do nothing less than ruin Vienna around 1900; they corrupted it and paved the way for both the zealots and the advocates of a unified moral standard to run riot with full abandon, along with their salivating, caterwauling onlookers.

"Whether she is called Hygieia or Judith, Madame X or Madame Y," begins another of the many jibes against Klimt, "all of his figures have the pallor of the professionally misunderstood woman, and Mr. Klimt has given them unmistakable dark rings or shall we say Schottenringe [a play on words - see below] under their eyes." This was written by Karl Kraus. While his criticism of Klimt cannot be overlooked and his misogyny is at least noticeable here, yet another resentment has crept into these lines. This was the worst of them all, for it had the gravest of consequences - and it had its breeding ground in Vienna, as well. What is in principle a delightful play on words using Schattenringe (dark rings) and "Schottenringe" stems from nothing cleverer than anti-Semitic prejudice. It refers in this case to the coincidence between the dark eyes of Klimt's female clients and the Schottenring, that particularly well-situated section of Vienna's Ringstrasse where many members of the Jewish bourgeoisie lived. In fact, many of the female clients of the Secession artists were of Jewish origin, and it doesn't improve matters any that Kraus himself was of Jewish heritage. His two contemporaries born in 1874 were also Jewish, Schnitzler and Freud, and many others as well, and all of them formed an integral component of a specifically Viennese constellation. In the Vienna embodied by the heavy-set figure of Mayor Karl Lueger, anti-Semitism grew for the first time from a kind of psychosocial background noise, which was always audible, into a full-fledged political program. It was no longer religiously motivated, but instead racially motivated, and it merged with envy and



Above: Emperor Franz Joseph I at his desk. 1909. Photograph.

Below: Gustav Klimt. Judith I. 1901. Oil on canvas. 84 x 42 cm. Austrian Galerie Belvedere, Vienna.



Die Juden immer zudringlicher!

Euch vor der Juden - Derrichaft!!!

Die ter Burickin so Clarber.

in ter Burickin der Clarber.

in ter Burickin der Burickin.





xenophobia to become the prime characteristic of the totalitarian century. It is with this anti-Semitism more than anything else that Vienna played an epoch-making role.

Around 1900, this was all still comparatively harmless, and a figure like Felix Salten was perhaps the perfect spokesman for these times. Salten, an art critic of Jewish background, coined the not-exactly likeable term "Jewish Jourdame" to describe Klimt's female subjects. Salten would go on to achieve literary fame as the creator of a very popular figure — by the name of Bambi. Finally, another text that people inevitably associate with Salten was the most important piece of pornography to come out of Vienna, available for the first time under the counter in 1906: *The Memoirs of Josefine Mutzenbacher*.

Not only are anti-Semitism and avant-gardism not contradictory, they both resented a common third party. Otto Wagner's Postal Savings Bank, beacon of the new architecture, might be





cited as a further example. This architectural showpiece, despite all its cutting-edge aesthetic aspirations, served the ends of the political reactionaries. It was designed for all those good little Catholic penny-pinchers, meant to bolster their reservations against the rich and sharpen their focus on the Jews as the source of all evil. Whatever may have motivated this complicity, which is no less significant than that between the Secession and the emperor, the idea of immaculateness, of purism, of the removal of all ornament – something despised as bourgeois and dishonest – surely played a role here. What begins in aesthetics is passed on to the moral sphere, and ends up being political.

Emperor Franz Joseph tried for two years to prevent Lueger from being elected mayor of Vienna. In 1897, however, the founding year of the Secession, the emperor was forced to back down. Perhaps the most characteristic elements of the history of Vienna at the turn of the century are the failed attempts to stave off the incursion of the zealots. Culture most definitely benefitted from this process, and paid a high price for it, as well.



Above:

Remigius Geyling. Mayor Karl Lueger. Printed in "Ballspende zum Ball der Stadt Wien" ("Ball Donation for the City of Vienna Ball"). 1909. Color lithograph.

DE KARL LE PLVE

Left: Cover of Felix Salten's Gustav Klimt. Gelegentliche Anmerkungen ("Occasional Remarks"). 1903. Color lithograph.

Opposite page:

Lop left:

"The Jews are intruding more and more!" Ca. 1890.

Anti-Semitic flyer.

Top right:

Karl Lueger (right) with entourage in a Viennese restaurant garden. Ca. 1905.

Photograph.

Center

Caricature of the assimilated "stock exchange Jews." Ca. 1890.

Silhouette by Gustav Imlauer.

Bottom left:

Karl Lueger: "Do I look like a Jew-eater?" December 1892.

Newspaper illustration by Friedrich Kaskeline in Glühlichter.

Bottom right:

Wilhelm Gause. City of Vienna Ball. Emperor Franz Joseph I with Mayor Karl Lueger.

1900. Grisaille