

The Jews' Search for *Zugehörigkeit* in Austria up to 1938

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From the Enlightenment to the Nazi era, Jewish diaspora identity within the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy and its successor states (the Austrian First Republic and the Austrofascist system that existed between 1934 and 1938) vacillated between Jews' sense of integration, assimilation, and belonging to the larger society in which they lived and a sense of exclusion from it. Four historical turning points were most relevant to the lives and perceptions of the Jewish population of Austria: the 1780s, bringing legislation infused with the spirit of the Enlightenment; 1848 as the first expression of participation by Jews in the political life of society at large; the attainment of equal rights in 1867; and, beginning in 1879, anti-Semitism, nationalism, and rejection of the integration of the Jewish population. The Jews of the Habsburg Monarchy were ultimately the only discernable ethnic group to symbolize the dynastic principle of the multi-ethnic state, in that they did not live in a geographically defined region in which they constituted an identifiable majority; with the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1918, their role became that of a conspicuous and vulnerable minority.

De la révélation à l'ère nazie, l'identité de la diaspora juive sur le territoire de la monarchie des Habsbourg et des États qui lui ont succédé (la Première République d'Autriche et le régime austro-fasciste de 1934 à 1938) a oscillé entre le sentiment d'intégration, d'assimilation et d'appartenance des Juifs à la société plus vaste qui les entourait et un sentiment d'exclusion de ladite société. Quatre jalons ont le plus marqué la vie et la perception de la population juive d'Autriche dans l'histoire : les années 1780, caractérisées par l'avènement d'une législation imprégnée de l'esprit de la révélation; 1848, année où les Juifs ont commencé à participer à la vie politique de la société en général; 1867, année où ils obtinrent des droits égaux; et, à compter de 1879, l'antisémitisme, le nationalisme et le rejet de l'intégration de la population juive. Les Juifs de la monarchie des Habsbourg ont fini par devenir le seul groupe ethnique discernable à symboliser le principe dynastique de l'État

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multi-ethnique en ce qu'ils n'habitaient ni ne formaient une majorité identifiable dans une région géographiquement définie. Avec l'effondrement de la monarchie des Habsbourg en 1918, les Juifs devinrent une minorité ostensible et vulnérable.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT broke down the centuries-old tradition of regarding Jews as merely a marginal group and of intentionally employing discriminatory legislation to keep them on the fringe of society. The interrelated questions of participation, assimilation, and integration then became dominating points of discussion.

From the Enlightenment to the Nazi Era, Jewish diaspora identity within the Habsburg Monarchy and its successor states vacillated between, on one hand, a sense of integration, assimilation, and belonging to the larger society in which they lived (*Zugehörigkeit*) and, on the other, a sense of not belonging (*Unzugehörigkeit*) and exclusion. We focus here on several facets of this interplay of society and group identity, particularly within the territory of the former Habsburg Monarchy and the Austrian First Republic and Austrofascist system that existed there between 1934 and 1938.¹ The point of departure is a dynamic concept of identity that formed out of the conflict involving an internal Jewish discourse, an external non-Jewish discourse, and a dialogical discourse between Jewish and non-Jewish environments. A few examples, such as a portrait of the actor Fritz Kortner, illustrate the effects that the public discourse about identity had on the level of individual identity. Four historical turning points were most relevant to the lives and perceptions of the Jewish population of Austria: the 1780s, bringing legislation infused with the spirit of the Enlightenment; 1848 as the first expression of participation by Jews in the political life of society at large; the attainment of equal rights in 1867; and, beginning in 1879, anti-Semitism, nationalism, and rejection of the integration of the Jewish population. If the Jews of the Habsburg Monarchy were ultimately the only discernable ethnic group to symbolize the dynastic principle of the multi-ethnic state, in that they did not live in a geographically defined region in which they constituted an identifiable national majority, then with the collapse of Habsburg Monarchy in 1918, their role became that of a conspicuous and vulnerable minority.

Most of the sources and quotations used here come from prominent people involved in cultural life and leading figures in the Jewish Community. These individuals were spokespersons for the experiences of their generations. The perspective of this analysis would be much different if, as the point of departure, we took regional social criteria, for example, or religious differentiation among orthodox, liberal, and a-religious Jews. While Karl Kraus, Stefan Zweig, and Arthur Schnitzler are speaking their minds, we must bear in mind that these men represent literary generations that grew up

¹ The problematic issue of *Zugehörigkeit* of Jews to Austria also remained virulent after the time of National Socialism. See Ruth Beckerman, *Unzugehörig. Österreicher und Juden nach 1945* (Vienna: Löcker, 1989).

after Emancipation had been granted — Arthur Schnitzler was born in 1862, Karl Kraus in 1874, and Stefan Zweig in 1881. They were originally from the Bohemian region (Kraus and Zweig) and Hungary (Schnitzler).² With respect to social status, their families were members of the upper middle class who ranked cultural and intellectual values above those of the Jewish religion.³

“Making the Jews into a Useful Nation”:

The Concept of Enlightenment and the Breaking Down of Barriers

The Enlightenment can be regarded as the birth of the modern state system, with its separation of Church and State and the centralization of power and administration. For the Jewish religious community, it was above all the time of the passage of Tolerance Laws that brought about a shift in Jews' position within society. The policy of arbitrary expulsion, to which Jews had been subjected until well into the eighteenth century, thus seemed to have been finally overcome. The tolerance legislation ascribed a new position to the Jews, one based upon the concept of finally “making the Jewish nation more useful to the state”.⁴ This significant step towards integration — manifested, for example, by the repeal of regulations requiring stigmatizing clothing — was nevertheless accompanied by unrealistic expectations, such as the fostering of farming and handicrafts among the Jews.

The utilitarian and hegemonic political policies pursued by Austria-Hungary assigned the Jews an important function in the recently annexed areas of Bukovina, as well as Galicia, which was predominantly inhabited by a Polish-speaking populace. Through the tolerance legislation's Germanization policies — including Germanization of last names, use of German in written correspondence, and establishment of German-speaking Jewish schools — the Jews were to become models of compliance with German linguistic norms, a policy that actually did display long-term effectiveness.⁵ The individual Jewish communities sacrificed a great deal of their autonomy for the sake of centralization of power, and tremendous limitations were placed on the independent Jewish administration of justice. Thus, the initial steps were taken to bring the Jews out of their centuries-long isolation and to integrate them into socially relevant functions.

2 The standard work on the reciprocal influences exerted by those creative individuals involved in cultural life and the political environment surrounding them is Carl E. Schorschke, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1981).

3 Outstanding work that sheds light on the historical period covered by this article has been done by Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700–1933* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980) and *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1988). One of the few comparative works to cover the period after 1867 is Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (London: Peter Halban, 1988).

4 Cited from the *Patent of Tolerance for the Jews of Vienna and Lower Austria*. See Joseph Karniel, *Die Toleranzpolitik Kaiser Josephs II.* (Gerlingen: Bleicher-Verlag, 1986), p. 567.

5 Karniel, *Die Toleranzpolitik*, pp. 453ff.

In contrast to the situation in Prussia during the time of Moses Mendelssohn, the Enlightenment among the Jews of Austria received no impetus from within; rather, the stimulus was provided by the state. It is a unique aspect of the Austrian experience that the Jewish reform movement (*Haskalah*) did not bring about a split in Vienna and Prague as it did in Germany and Hungary. With the so-called “Viennese rite” introduced by clergyman Isak Noah Mannheimer, Austrian Jews succeeded in finding a middle way between reform and tradition even in the religious service itself.⁶ Nevertheless, tensions between orthodox and reform-oriented Jews were never absent after the Enlightenment. In the Hungarian half of the empire, a split occurred between the orthodox and the modernizers, whereas in Austria an 1890 law mandated that Jews, regardless of their religious orientation, join together in religious communities on a geographical basis. The orthodox had already attempted to prevent this prior to the legislation taking effect and to establish autonomous orthodox communities. Later as well, and even after 1918, the orthodox in Vienna were considered a breakaway faction; nevertheless, they failed in repeated attempts to split away from the predominantly reform-oriented Jewish Community.

The orthodox justifiably feared that non-Jewish values would encroach into Jewish life as a result of the Enlightenment. Religious law that had determined everyday life and the workaday world was replaced for many people by the demands of a modernizing society. The intrusion of secular values into the Jewish lifestyle first made itself evident in the cities and in Jewish bourgeois circles. The most stubborn resistance to the invasion of non-Jewish values was put up by those living in regions characterized by pre-modern social structures — primarily agricultural areas like Bukovina, Galicia, and parts of Hungary.

The separation of Jews and non-Jews as an upshot of religious differences and discrimination was thus broken down by the Enlightenment, and it seemed that Jews had been provided an entrée into the bourgeois non-Jewish world without having to undergo baptism as had been the case in the past.⁷ However, this also meant the loss of intra-Jewish cohesion. In the wake of the Enlightenment, diaspora identity was a multiple and complex construction. The heterogeneity of the Jews as a group came to be defined above all through religious orientation and practice, political orientation, social position, cultural affiliation, and, with the abolition of impediments to migration in 1848 and 1867, through migration, region of origin, and language. Active participation in modernization — whether in the economic or cultural sphere, in public affairs, or in a scholarly field — gave rise to an additional category of difference: generations with differing experiences and conceptions of life.

⁶ Peter Landesmann, *Rabbiner aus Wien. Ihre Ausbildung, ihre religiösen und nationalen Konflikte* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 1997).

⁷ Michael A. Meyer, *Jewish Identity in the Modern World* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), particularly pp. 10–32.

The growing success of Jewish businessmen during the nineteenth century seemed to be one possible guarantee of security and social recognition — until the stock market crash of 1873. Thereafter, Jewish businessmen were confronted with a wave of accusations by anti-Semites. It is certainly no coincidence that the *crème de la crème* of Jewish creative artists either grew up precisely in this last quarter of the nineteenth century or presented their first works during this period. They had to seek out new ways to achieve integration. The writer Stefan Zweig drew up a three-generational model based on the example of his family on his father's side. Whereas his grandfather had been a distributor of manufactured goods in Prossnitz, one of the most important Jewish communities in Moravia, Zweig's father sought to establish himself as an industrialist by setting up a knitting mill in northern Bohemia. His grandfather had already turned away from orthodoxy and saw his interests best represented by liberal politicians. In his own generation, Zweig observed a movement away from a commercial mentality, which seemed to be losing out to the attractiveness of cultural and intellectual pursuits.

It is generally assumed that getting rich is the actual and typical goal in life of a Jewish person. Nothing could be further from the truth. For a Jew, becoming rich is merely an intermediate step, a means of achieving one's true goal and by no means the innermost objective. The actual desire of the Jew, his immanent ideal, is the ascent into the world of ideas, into a higher cultural plane. ... This is why in Jewry, the urge to achieve great wealth is almost always exhausted within two or, at most, three generations in a Jewish family, and even the mightiest dynasties discover that their sons are unwilling to take over the operation of the banks, the factories, and the going concerns that their forefathers built up.⁸

From a female perspective, however, the career pattern transcending the successive generations was completely different, and Zweig alludes to this as well. In bourgeois Jewish milieux of the late nineteenth century, it was the women who imparted a love for culture and intellectuality to the younger generation. Whereas men could live this lifestyle in professions like journalism or medicine, education for women was considered mere ornamentation until well into the twentieth century. If we now switch milieux and observe, for example, the sequence of the generations among orthodox or Chassidic families who moved to the big cities, we become aware of a different progression. Usually, women had to provide for the support of the household while the men devoted themselves to the study of religious writings, and the next generation very often broke with the religiosity of the parents. Vienna in particular had a reputation as a "baptism machine", and life in the imperial capital exerted powerful pressure to assimilate.

⁸ Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern. Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Fischer Taschenbuchverlag, 1986), pp. 25–26.

From Political Participation to Isolation

After the Enlightenment, Jews and non-Jews were gradually moving closer together in social life as well. The best-known manifestations of this were the salons of Rahel Varnhagen (1771–1833) in Berlin and Fanny von Arnstein (1757–1818) in Vienna, meeting places that became intellectual centres. Indeed, this also meant the flight from Jewry, especially among ennobled Jewish families: Rahel Varnhagen converted; the Arnsteins' children had already been baptized.

At the end of 1867, the Jews finally — and actually quite unspectacularly — received full civil rights as a consequence of Austrian foreign policy fiascos and the collapse of neo-absolutism. In accordance with the liberal concept, they considered themselves first and foremost citizens of the secular state and, secondarily, members of an officially recognized religious community. For a short time, it seemed as though affiliation with the Jewish religion had actually become a purely private matter.

In the 1870s participation in all political camps was open to Jews, and the men who would later be the leading proponents of Catholic and racist, German nationalist anti-Semitism — respectively Karl Lueger and Georg Ritter von Schönerer — were still working together with politicians of Jewish descent such as Victor Adler, who had converted to Protestantism in 1878. It was not until the formation of ideologically defined, mass political parties and the intensification of conflicts among nationalities revealed the fragility of cooperation among different religious and ethnic communities that the nationalist factions of all these groups increasingly came to regard the Jews as outsiders. The Conservatives adopted anti-Semitism, the Liberals continued to lose political influence, and only the up-and-coming Social Democrats — a party maintaining opposition to religious values — offered themselves as a refuge for the despised. In the First Republic, as the Liberals were finally squeezed out by the other parties, the Social Democrats remained the only party with a chance of electoral success for which a Jew could vote. With Victor Adler (1852–1918), a politician of Jewish descent led the Austrian labour movement. In elections within the Jewish Community itself, though, the leftist and Social Democratic lists remained insignificant all the way up to the time of National Socialism.⁹

In the western regions of the Monarchy and in the large cities, the boundaries between Jews and non-Jews had thus become less clearly defined over the course of the nineteenth century. The noticeably declining influence exerted by religion on the conduct of life led to the dismantling of barriers between the groups. Baron Carl von Vogelsang, one of the early theoreticians of Christian Social anti-Semitism, regarded this as a growing danger:

⁹ Harriet Pass Freidenreich, *Jewish Politics in Vienna, 1918–1938* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991).

A people which preserves this Christian ethos in its political and social institutions is assured of not being dominated by the Jews as is the case now in so many European lands. Truly Christian peoples will be able to take up and absorb the Jews without being made Jewish by them; those people who have fallen away from Christianity in belief, law and custom, however, must hopelessly crawl upon their bellies under the humiliating yoke of servitude, exploited and dominated by the Jews, and made into a pariah.¹⁰

Jews' readiness to assimilate was mocked by the anti-Semites as undertaken purely for their own advantage. From the paranoid anti-Semitic perspective, assimilation could serve only one purpose: achieving Jewish domination and the enslavement of the other peoples. They regarded the willingness of non-Jews to become involved in relations with Jews as not only a danger but a betrayal. The anti-Semites' intention was to make the Jews visible again, to define them once more as an alien group, and to isolate them within society.

In addition to this were the centrifugal effects in Austria of the nationality conflict within the Habsburgs' multi-ethnic state, and their potential to mobilize anti-Jewish sentiment had already been made evident in 1848. The confession-spanning synthesis underwent a collapse from the 1880s to the end of the Monarchy; close relations between Germans and Jews in Bohemia and Moravia broke down, just as those between Jews and Czechs failed, and the collaboration of Polish and Jewish candidates in Galicia motivated by tactical election campaign considerations came to a halt as well.

The anti-Semites and nationalists considered the Jews in their various terminologies to be a foreign *Volk* or race. On the other hand, the Jews were merely a religious community in the eyes of the law, and the authorities refused to grant them the rights that had been bestowed upon individual ethnic groups. This legal view led to a number of miscarriages. Whereas various ethnic groups had the right to school instruction in their own language, Jews in the east were unable to obtain recognition for their mother tongue, Yiddish. Jewish children in Galicia and Bukovina whose parents spoke Yiddish thus had to attend German, Ukrainian, Rumanian, or Polish schools. The census conducted in the Austrian half of the empire did not even accept Yiddish in the category of "language used in everyday life".

The conflict among nationalities constituted a lasting impairment and restriction of the lives of all inhabitants of the Habsburg Monarchy, since it became increasingly important to declare one's allegiance to a single group. Double or multiple identities were irreconcilable with the definitions contained in legislation pertaining to nationality. That was one reason for the recognition of certain longstanding nationalities that, in light of migration and mixture that had occurred down through the ages, could only be described as a prescribed fiction. In numerous instances, the Jews got caught

10 Carl von Vogelsang, *Gesammelte Aufsätze über socialpolitische und verwandte Themata. Vol. I* (Augsburg: Verlag des Literarischen Instituts von Dr. Max Huttler, 1886), p. 199.

between the fronts. As the nationality conflict raged in Bohemia and Moravia, the aggressions of the Germans and the Czechs were turned time and time again against the Jews. In a few regions, the Jews had to serve as a temporary bolster to ensure national majorities, as was the case in Galicia where the Poles were in conflict with the Ukrainians (Ruthenians), or in Moravia and Prague where the Germans were in conflict with the Czechs. The situation at the turn of the century was frightening, with pogroms in Russia showing how far violence could go — all the way to murder. In Austria, the threat of pogroms — such as those brewing during the conflict over where German or Czech would be the official language of government — was averted only by declaring a state of emergency and calling in troops.

With the emergence of nationalism and anti-Semitism, the liberal conception based upon citizenship began to give way. Jews who had become involved in politics on the side of the Liberals and had been elected to office had seen themselves not in their role “as a Jew, but rather as a member of a political party”.¹¹ Not until the rise of anti-Semitism were they reminded of their previous, marginalized position within society, which most of them had experienced personally. In helpless, stunned and surprised silence, they witnessed the first unbelievably rabid verbal attacks of their enemies. For those whose Jewish religious heritage had been nothing more than a casual relationship carried on largely out of tradition, anti-Semitism had a shocking effect. They were suddenly thrown back to their Jewish identity that they believed to have cast aside.¹²

The non-Jewish peace activist Bertha von Suttner described in her memoirs how she and her husband, horrified at the anti-Semitism spreading from Berlin in 1879, fired off articles to Viennese newspapers. These were returned with the comment that there was no anti-Semitism in Austria; should it be transplanted there from Prussia, the only proper reaction would be scornful silence. The Suttners, however, were of the opinion that one must fight against injustice, not only on the side of the Jewish victims, but also among those who were seemingly not involved — the non-Jews. The establishment of the “Society to Combat Anti-Semitism” — whose membership rolls included celebrities such as waltz king Johann Strauss — could not dampen the anti-Semitic movement’s success at the polls.¹³

At the start, the “Berlin sickness” — as anti-Semitism was termed in the 1880s due to its unexpected popularity in the German capital — seemed to many to be a transient phenomenon, but the triumphant progress of anti-Semitism in Austria could not be halted. The medieval, anti-Jewish fantasies

11 Sigmund Mayer, *Ein jüdischer Kaufmann 1831 bis 1911* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humbolt, 1911), p. 289.

12 “I had actually forgotten already that I was a Jew. But then the anti-Semites caused me to make this unpleasant discovery,” wrote businessman and Vienna City Councilman Sigmund Mayer in *Ein jüdischer Kaufmann*, p. 289.

13 Bertha von Suttner, *Lebenserinnerungen* (Berlin: Verlag der Nationen, 1969), p. 244.

like the incredible rumours and fairy tales of ritual murder — often spread by superstitious Catholic maids in Jewish homes — were not just isolated occurrences but rather spread like an epidemic. The brutal speeches of the anti-Semites, directed at their audiences' basest instincts, envy and hate, were no longer only stuff for assemblies of craftsmen and the *petit bourgeoisie*, but made their way into the fragile institutions of a gradually developing democratic structure — into the city councils, the provincial legislatures, and the parliament. Finally, a member of the anti-Semitic party, the so-called Christian Socials, was elected mayor of Vienna, serving as the imperial capital's chief executive from 1895 to 1918. In 1907 the party formed a coalition with the Conservatives that made up the most powerful bloc in parliament.

How did Jews deal with a veritable flood of mean-spirited attacks against their own religious community? After initial paralysis and a sense of powerlessness, they responded with feelings of rage and a desire to fight back that were ultimately replaced by habituation to such unbearably hate-filled tirades. The initial reaction in the 1880s on the part of Jewish politicians and officials of the Jewish Community was thus to ignore them. There was still hope that this aggressive and, at first, *petit bourgeois* movement was merely a passing phenomenon, but the silence was also based on the liberal concept of assimilation and a willingness to set aside what might be construed as particularistic interests. The direct attacks by Rabbi Josef Samuel Bloch, then the parliamentary representative of a Galician district and a member of the Polish faction, against the most brazen speeches by the anti-Semites irritated the liberal-oriented MPs. The Union of Austrian Jews (Austrian-Israelite Union) that he co-founded in 1886 wanted to impart a new sense of self-assurance to Jews. In contrast to past actions, they should openly and confidently acknowledge their Jewishness, stand up for their interests, and, above all, defend themselves. The establishment in 1893 of the Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith was likewise based upon a reaction to anti-Semitism that called for public self-defence. With its own "Legal Defence and Protection Bureau" set up in 1897, the Union sought to defend the equal rights guaranteed Jews in the constitution.¹⁴

The concepts developed on the Jewish side to combat anti-Semitism were defensive. Despite individual successes, isolation in political and social life could no longer be prevented. The name of the theoretician of Zionism, Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), is synonymous with transcending this defensive position. He adapted the hegemonic concept of nationalism and concluded from it that, after centuries of persecution, Jews would only be able to attain recognition, a respite from maltreatment, and peace when they finally came to regard themselves as a separate people and lived together in their own

14 An outstanding overview of developments in Germany is offered by Steven M. Lowenstein, Paul Mendes-Flohr, Peter Pulzer, and Monika Richarz, *Deutsche Geschichte in der Neuzeit, Vol. 3. 1871–1918* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1997).

land.¹⁵ In 1896 Herzl published his programmatic work “The Jewish State” in which he described how his conclusions were a direct outgrowth of the anti-Semitism of the day:

Anti-Semitism — this highly complex movement — is one I believe I understand. ... I believe I am able to recognize what of anti-Semitism is coarse jest, and what about it is common envy, inherited prejudice, or religious intolerance, as well as what about it is presumably a defensive reaction. I hold the Jewish question neither for a social nor for a religious one, although it might sometimes appear to be so. It is a national question, and to solve it we must, above all, make it into an international political question that will have to be settled in the councils of the civilized peoples of the world. We are a people, *one* people.¹⁶

The liberating thrust of this idea was that one would no longer have to deal with nationalists and anti-Semites in “one’s own” land. Instead, solving the “Jewish question” internationally through the founding of a Jewish state was for many men and women — particularly in eastern Europe — a redemptive perspective in light of nationalist tensions which had become intolerable. At the same time, however, it was also an attack against the internalized diaspora identity and widespread patriotism.¹⁷

The Construction of a Counter-Identity: Individual Reactions to Anti-Semitism and Racism

The massive emergence of anti-Semitic prejudices pervaded the consciousness of European Jews all the way to the level of individual identity. Since one did not wish to conform to the fictional image of “the Jews” as defined by anti-Semitic prejudices, alternative images were developed to counter the prescribed anti-Semitic character definitions. For many of those born after 1880, negative, internalized anti-Semitism was more or less the point of departure for their own individual identity. Thus, in many interviews with survivors, we hear with striking frequency remarks as to whether one looked Jewish or not, and therefore whether one was subjected to anti-Semitic harassment or not.

In the reminiscences of actor Fritz Kortner (1892–1970), we find the following passing remark in which the aspiring actor explains why he decided

15 On the particularly Austrian aspects of the history of Zionism, see Adolf Gaisbauer, *Davidstern und Doppeladler. Zionismus und jüdischer Nationalismus in Österreich 1882–1918* (Vienna, Cologne, Graz: Böhlau, 1988).

16 Theodor Herzl, “Wenn Ihr wollt, ist es kein Märchen.” *Altneuland/ Der Judenstaat*, edited by Julius H. Schoeps (Königstein/Ts: Jüdischer Verlag bei Athenäum, 1985), p. 201.

17 The question of patriotism in German-Jewish history is elaborated on in Erik Lindner, *Patriotismus deutscher Juden von der napoleonischen Ära bis zum Kaiserreich* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1997).

not to wear a “prophet’s beard”: “For the simple reason that I wanted to be an actor, a modern man, and wanted to look as non-Jewish as possible.”¹⁸ Kortner showed the workings of this mechanism in his autobiography and traces a portion of its influence back to Karl Kraus, from 1899 the publisher of the magazine *Die Fackel* (The Torch). Kraus not only praised the anti-Semitic and anti-feminist book “Gender and Character” by the philosopher Otto Weininger, but also provided space in his publication for Houston Stewart Chamberlain to expound on his theories of German nationalist anti-Semitism.¹⁹ Both Kraus and Weininger resigned from the Jewish Community and are considered the very embodiments of “Jewish self-hate”. It is no coincidence that scholars investigating this phenomenon place particular emphasis on the example of Vienna, because there was hardly another place in that day and age in which the tensions between participation and dissimulation were so highly pronounced; on the other hand, there are many similar instances from all over Europe.²⁰

With his magazine *Die Fackel* and his legendary live readings, Karl Kraus influenced generations of intellectuals and seekers after meaning, including Elias Canetti, Nobel laureate in literature. Fritz Kortner describes in his autobiography how he sailed to Israel on a ship named *Theodor Herzl*, an experience that obviously moved him very deeply. He considers the role of Karl Kraus, whose writings made fun of the Yiddish-flavoured German spoken by Jews who had immigrated to Vienna from the eastern provinces of the Monarchy. Kortner asks himself why as a young man he “so uncritically” approved of the anti-Jewish pamphlets. “There were acquaintances of my parents against whom I developed an aversion due to their supposedly Jewish qualities.”²¹ As in the case of Kraus, his anti-bourgeois aversion was directed exclusively toward the Jewish bourgeoisie — after all, he had never even met the non-Jewish one.

There was no escape from the stereotypes of purportedly Jewish character traits and physical characteristics, and they made an impression on successive generations up to the time of the Nazis. Some were ashamed of their black curly hair, some of a seemingly typical Jewish nose. To appear non-Jewish in order not to stand out or be recognized was part of the experience

18 Fritz Kortner, *Aller Tage Abend. Autobiographie* (Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1979), p. 19.

19 On the subject of Karl Kraus and Otto Weininger, see Robert S. Wistrich, *Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph* (Oxford, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 497–536; Kortner, *Aller Tage Abend*, p. 171; Jacques Le Rider, *Das Ende der Illusion. Zur Kritik der Moderne* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1990), pp. 347–374.

20 Le Rider, *Das Ende der Illusion*, pp. 354–357.

21 Kortner, *Aller Tage Abend*, p. 263. In his 1908 novel *Der Weg ins Freie*, Arthur Schnitzler also described his particularly acute sensibility toward the shortcomings of fellow Jews: “If a Jew shows bad form in my presence, or behaves in a ridiculous manner, I have often felt so painful a sensation that I should like to sink into the earth.” Cited in Dennis B. Klein, “Assimilation and the Demise of Liberal Political Tradition in Vienna: 1860–1914”, in David Bronson, ed., *Jews and Germans from 1860 to 1933* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1979), p. 248.

of socialization of many Jewish children in a predominantly non-Jewish environment. “Muscle Jewry”, a term coined by Max Nordau in 1909, was meant to take to the point of absurdity the cliché of the weakly, effeminate Jew who did no physical labour. Indeed, Jewish musclemen like wrestlers, boxers, soccer stars, and swimmers did embody a new physical ideal. Frederic Morton, a New York writer who was born in Vienna in 1924, sees his childhood identity as having been consciously oriented in opposition to the anti-Semitic image of the overly ambitious Jewish weakling:

That came out of what you might call my internal anti-Semitism. ... Although I was never ashamed of being Jewish, I [distanced] myself from this image of being the cowardly, frail Jew who was also very bright, but who had a very strained manner, and who was a real apple polisher with the teacher. With me it was always the exact opposite. I wasn't a good student, and although I always wore glasses — even as a kid I was nearsighted, and had such a thin face — I was always very powerful and was good in gymnastics. That was just my strength. But at the same time, it didn't bother me in the least that I was a poor student. That was often terribly dismaying for my parents. But ... partly because of this anti-Semitic situation, it was pretty much quite alright [*sic*] with me.²²

The palette of individual reactions to this hostile environment full of clichés and prejudices was more wide-ranging than I have been able to indicate in the examples presented. What they show, above all, was that there was no escaping from anti-Semitic stereotyping in the central European diaspora identity of that time. All of these were strategies designed to stabilize a diaspora identity and to signal one's sense of belonging to the society at large. Even Austrian Zionists turned their attention after a time to domestic political life to gain influence within the Jewish communities and were as a result once again cast into a defensive role.

Homeland versus Fatherland

Let us return to the question of *Zugehörigkeit*. There is endless source material giving evidence of the many expressions of loyalty by Jews to the state and its ruling house. The pressures for self-justification are based upon long-standing prejudices toward Jews as a group cultivating relations that transcend national borders, which is why they were repeatedly suspected of being spies and “traitors to the Fatherland”. The expressions of loyalty were also meant to show non-Jews that they ought to regard Jews as an integral part of the society as a whole and not as aliens.

Vienna Chief Rabbi Moritz Güdemann (1835–1918), originally from Hildesheim in the Kingdom of Hannover, entitled his sermon delivered on

²² *Wien — New York. Rückkehr in Büchern* (documentary film by Helga Embacher and Albert Lichtblau, 1992).

Sukkoth 5627 (1866) “At Home”.²³ Exhorting his congregants to “be at home in the homeland of humanity!”, the homeland of faith, and the homeland of the family, Güdemann defended the sense of life in the diaspora, in exile, and saw in it a place of belonging — a homeland. But since the Jews were not yet equals among equals, it was not so simple to employ a nationalistically oriented conception like “fatherland” in connection with such a diaspora minority. On the other hand, the term “fatherland” did seem justified; after all, in many regions, the Jews, in spite of repeated expulsions, could point to a tradition of settlement going back over centuries, and Jews had most certainly served in the army of the Habsburg Empire ever since the Enlightenment.²⁴

An internal conflict that remained unsettled until the very end manifested itself in the discourse surrounding the terms “homeland” and “fatherland”, and the circumlocution inherent in the phrase “at home”. The Jews of the Monarchy, despite their progressively advancing integration, were still considered a separate group or, in the worst case, foreigners. Whatever Jews wanted was interpreted by those unfavourably disposed to them as stemming solely from Jews’ intention to advance their own interests. As a reflex to such charges, Jews demanding equal rights during the years prior to 1867 saw themselves forced time and again into the position of having to prove that they were not only looking out for themselves. The best-known expression of this kind was a speech delivered during the Revolution of 1848 by Isak Noah Mannheimer (1793–1865), the highest-ranking Jewish clergyman in Vienna. At the funeral held on March 17, 1848 for the first five victims claimed by the revolution in Vienna — among them a Jewish student and a Jewish journeyman weaver — Mannheimer was in attendance along with a Catholic priest and a Protestant minister. His words are still impressive to this day: “They fought for you, bled for you! They rest in your earth! So now, also grant that those who fought together in the same struggle, and shared the same heavy burden, might live together with you in one world, as free and unharassed as you. ... Accept us too as free men, and may God’s blessing be upon you!”²⁵ On the day after the funeral, Mannheimer called upon his coreligionists to exercise restraint: “Not a single word about Jewish emancipation unless it be others who speak out on our behalf, no petitions, no written pleas, no imploring and complaining from us! ... Let no one accuse us of always thinking about ourselves first. ... Our day will come, it will not fail...”²⁶

23 When Güdemann arrived in Vienna, he discovered to his horror that assimilation in religious life had already progressed so far that a *sukkah* was not even put up on the holiday of Sukkoth. In this light, his sermon was also an act of religious revival.

24 Erwin A. Schmidl, “Juden in der k. (u.) k. Armee 1788–1918”, in *Studia Judaica Austriaca*, vol. 11 (Eisenstadt: Roetzer, 1989).

25 Jacob Allerhand, “Die Rabbiner des Stadttempels von J. N. Mannheimer bis Z. P. Chajes”, in *Studia Judaica Austriaca*, vol. 6 (Eisenstadt: Roetzer, 1978), p. 13.

26 Hans Tietze, *Die Juden Wiens. Geschichte, Wirtschaft, Kultur* (Vienna and Leipzig: Wiener Journal Zeitschriftenverlag, 1987), p. 186.

As a petition requesting equal rights for Jews was being prepared, the reactionary forces in Vienna promptly responded with aggressive anti-Jewish pamphlets. The bitter feelings resulting from the rejection of equal rights for Jews made public during the revolution is indicated by the poem “Our Maturity” by Marcus Keller, which appeared on April 7, 1848:

You're mature enough to send your best men to fight for the fatherland; ...
 You're mature enough to bear the terrors of war in the heat of combat where
 the armies' flags flutter and the thunder of battle roars.
 But to grant you a minor post no matter how insignificant, such as court officer
 in some tiny village,
 To grant you the rights of freedom where you enjoy only tolerance, and to
 remove the impediments that continue to hold you back,
 To allow you to make your way along a path that you have yet to tread,
 For this dear young Moses, you're not yet mature enough.²⁷

It very quickly became apparent how tense the situation was in 1848 for Jews who hoped that crumbling absolutism would lead to a liberal, tolerant society. Not only did anti-Jewish publications suddenly recover a large readership; the tensions escalated and culminated in attacks on Jewish businesses in Prague and in the storming of ghettos in Prague on May 1 and in Pressburg (Bratislava) during Easter of 1848.

Despite these unexpected acts of violence, equal rights would have been granted to the Jews had the revolution not failed. Nevertheless, a few positive developments brought about by the revolution remained intact during the years after 1848; particularly important was the removal of limitations on Jewish immigration to Vienna, which led to the metropolitanization of the Jewish population. Other provinces and regions such as the city and province of Salzburg, however, remained closed to Jewish settlement. The path upon which Mannheimer had set out — not placing the interests of the Jews as a group in the foreground, but rather emphasizing the common good and general welfare — can also be observed after 1848–1849. Identification with the state as a whole is evident, for example, in a piece arguing for equal rights written in 1859. Its author, Heinrich Jaques, likewise makes use of the term “fatherland”: “I write no document in defense of the Jews, but rather an essay concerning them; what has motivated me is not enthusiasm for my Jewish coreligionists' own affairs, but rather my fervent interest in a matter that certainly is of great concern to me: the development and progress of my Austrian fatherland.”²⁸

27 Cited in Wolfgang Häusler, “Demokratie und Emanzipation 1848”, in *Studia Judaica Austriaca*, vol. 1 (Vienna and Munich: Herold, 1974), p. 104. The poem originally appeared in *Österreichisches Central-Organ für Glaubensfreiheit, Cultur, Geschichte und Literatur der Juden*, no. 2 (April 7, 1848), p. 24.

28 Heinrich Jaques, *Denkschrift über die Stellung der Juden in Oesterreich* (Vienna: Carl Gerhold's Sohn, 1859), p. viii.

An alternative to the rather martial concept of the fatherland was the softer concept of *Zugehörigkeit* to the “homeland”. This was very strongly internalized by many people, which became one of the reasons why the dangers of National Socialism were not recognized. For instance, memoirs written after 1945 frequently employ the word “love” to describe the perceived relationship to the homeland prior to the catastrophe. Rabbi Güdemann directly addressed this aspect of “fatherland” versus “homeland” in his 1866 sermon cited above. “Among the Children of Israel, the true citizen of the world is alive. He is everywhere called a foreigner and is nevertheless everywhere at home. He has no fatherland, but nowhere is he without a homeland.”²⁹

Nationalism and anti-Semitism undermined Jews' willingness to assimilate completely with their persistent emphasis on love of fatherland. Loyalty to the imperial house could serve as a surrogate, however, and the veneration of Kaiser Franz Josef I had a lot to do with his pro-Jewish attitude.³⁰ World War I became a last hurrah of the dynastic principle transcending individual nationalities. As in the time of absolutism, state censorship could prevent for a short time the tirades of anti-Semitic hate, and it seemed as if all the peoples of the Empire would come together to extract revenge for the murder in Sarajevo of the heir to the throne. One of the many quotes that might be cited here comes from actor and later director of the Vienna Volkstheater Paul Barnay, who was not very enthusiastic about the war. Although he was baptized, he still bore the stigma of his Jewish descent. “After a while, a couple of Jewish colleagues came to us as well, and I was able to establish that there had been no signs of anti-Semitic utterances, to say nothing of mistreatment. Jews and Christians were comrades ..., not all enthusiastic, but ready to march off to war.”³¹ Once again, the fatherland concept was brought into play; once again absolute loyalty was displayed. In the magazine put out by the Union of Austrian Jews, it was written in 1914: “With the blood of our children, with everything that we possess, we want to show our thankfulness to our Kaiser for having set us free....”³²

When in 1915 troops on the Russian front were being forced to retreat temporarily, the Zionist executive committee sent a memorandum to the Austrian prime minister which pointed out that the Jews of Galicia and Buk-

29 Moritz Güdemann, *Sechs Predigten im Leopoldstädter Tempel zu Wien gehalten* (Vienna: Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1867), p. 14. Nevertheless, this rabbi, originally from a German province, was an exceptional case in that he did not get carried away with an exaggerated display of patriotism as a response to the German-Austrian tensions of the day.

30 David Rechter works on this issue. See, most recently, David Rechter, “Kaisertreu: The Dynastic Loyalty of Austrian Jewry”, in Klaus Hödl, ed., *Jüdische Identitäten. Einblicke in die Bewußtseinslandschaft des österreichischen Judentums* (Innsbruck, Vienna, Munich: Studien-Verlag, 2000), pp. 189–208.

31 Albert Lichtblau, ed., *Als hätten wir dazugehört ... Österreichische-jüdische Lebensgeschichten aus der Habsburgermonarchie* (Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 1999).

32 Bruce F. Pauley, *Eine Geschichte des österreichischen Antisemitismus Von der Ausgrenzung zur Auslöschung* (Vienna: Kremayr & Scheriau, 1993), p. 100.

ovina were suffering much more than any other group “because their unshakeable love for their fatherland, and their undying loyalty to the state had provoked the furious hatred of the advancing foe. The Jews constitute the mightiest bulwark of the Austrian state in the east.”³³

On October 1, 1918, a few weeks before the collapse of the Habsburg Empire, the Zionist-oriented chief rabbi of Vienna, Dr. Zwi Perez Chajes (1876–1927), paid a visit to the man who was still emperor, Kaiser Karl. In an exchange of views on the subject of the eastern European Jews, the chief rabbi stated that the “only possibility [would be] to help the Jews secure the rights of a national minority”. The emperor also asked the chief rabbi about the Zionist perspective. Chajes made it clear that the Jews could not build their existence upon a miracle; rather, they needed a national and religious focus in Palestine. To the question of whether Palestine would be in a position to take in all Jews, Chajes also saw future prospects for the diaspora: “even at the time of the second Jewish state, the majority of the Jews lived in the Diaspora, and each one of them served the respective land to which he belonged as a good citizen.”³⁴

The bond of camaraderie on the field of battle was deceptive. The Monarchy broke down into its component parts, and in the end the Jews comprised the only group that embodied the multinational dynastic principle of the then-obsolete multi-ethnic state.

Swan Song: Anti-Semites as Protectors

The disintegration of the Habsburg Monarchy meant that the Jews then living in newly established national states suddenly found themselves in the position of a vulnerable minority, cut off both from the territories from which their families originally came and from further migration. In 1923, 57.7 per cent of the 201,513 Jews in Vienna had been born “abroad”.

Men’s experiences in World War I radicalized and brutalized the political culture, including that of the anti-Semites. The campaign platform of the Christian Social Party dated December 15, 1918, stated: “The corruption and hunger for power exhibited by Jewish circles in the newly formed states as well forces the Christian Social Party to call upon the German-Austrian people to join in a fierce defensive struggle against the Jewish peril. Recognized as a separate nation, the Jews will have their right of self-determination, but they may not be permitted to become the masters of the German people.”³⁵ This quote alone indicates the complicated national conception of self-prevailing in the newborn republic, which hardly anyone believed would survive. Only much later did Austrians develop a national consciousness;

33 Gaisbauer, *Davidstern und Doppeladler*, p. 525. See also Jerusalem, Central Zionist Archive, A 30/7 Chajes Estate.

34 *Die Wahrheit. Unabhängige Zeitschrift für jüdische Interessen*, no. 21 (October 18, 1918), p. 6.

35 Berchtold Klaus, *Österreichische Parteiprogramm 1868–1966* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1967), p. 357.

before they did, they still related to the German nationalism of the Monarchy, and this was true of the Social Democrats too.

Since more than 90 per cent of the Jews in Austria lived in Vienna — until 1934, the so-called “red Vienna” in which Social Democratic municipal administrations enjoyed absolute majorities at the polls — they could live in a climate that was comparatively tolerant politically and oriented toward modernism. For this reason, the anti-Semites denigrated the Social Democratic Party as the “Jewish protective troop”; for them, Vienna was not only “red Vienna” but also “Jewish Vienna”. In fact, Jews accounted for about 10 per cent of the inhabitants of Vienna; in the rest of Austria, they made up only 0.3 per cent of the population.

The Christian Socials left no doubt that, in their opinion, Jews did not belong to the “German-Austrian people”. This intended dissimilation can be seen in the example of the school question. The Christian Socials of Vienna decided in 1919 that “Jewish children should be transferred to their own schools or classes”. Once the Christian Socials had grabbed power following the Civil War in 1934, they actually began isolating Jewish children — as well as Protestants — in separate classes in a few Viennese high schools, including well-known college preparatory schools like the Wasa Gymnasium and the Sophien-Gymnasium. The enforced separation reminded Jakob Ehrlich, an official of the Jewish Community, of the “Jewish ghettos of former times”.³⁶ The protest of the Vienna Jewish Community to Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg prevented the expansion of this drive to include other schools.³⁷

Openly avowed anti-Semitic parties participated in all governments of the Austrian First Republic, and, when the Social Democrats withdrew from the coalition in 1920, the parties that remained were all anti-Semitic. Whereas the Czech minority — most of whom lived in Vienna — enjoyed rights and protection as the result of a bilateral treaty between Austria and Czechoslovakia, the Jewish minority lacked such a power to look after its interests. That had particularly dire consequences in the “option” question having to do with the bestowal of Austrian citizenship. When Leopold Waber, then a member of the Pan-German Party and later vice-chancellor and third president of the National Assembly, was appointed minister of justice in 1922, he instituted a policy whereby option petitions filed by Jews would be denied without exception since the Jews did not belong to the majority population due to their “language and race”. He based his racist argumentation on a highly questionable interpretation of the Austrian peace treaty following World War I and a ruling of the administrative court.³⁸ This affected prima-

³⁶ Jerusalem, Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, A/W 1528.

³⁷ *Bericht des Präsidiums und des Vorstandes der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien über die Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1933–1936* (Vienna: Verlag der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, 1936), pp. 48ff.

³⁸ Oskar Besenböck, “Die Frage der jüdischen Option 1918–1921” (unpublished dissertation, Vienna, 1992), p. 123.

rily those refugees from the eastern provinces of the former Monarchy who had been stranded in Austria by the war.

Despite highly unfavourable external circumstances — for instance, anti-Semitic demonstrations, calls for boycotts, exclusion from associations and clubs through so-called “Aryan paragraphs”, and fist fights at the universities — a vigorous and multifaceted Jewish life developed during the First Republic featuring Jewish schools, newspapers, cultural facilities, and numerous associations. The community could take great pride in the success of the Hakoah Sports Club, which fielded an outstanding football team that once even won the Austrian national championship. Assimilation, integration, and the anti-Semitic fantasy of an apartheid system were played out parallel to one another.

Austrofascism (1934–1938) led to one final intensification of the tension between integration and disintegration. The Christian Social Party, still pervaded by anti-Semitism, installed a fascist regime in which anti-Semitism remained a legitimate state ideology but which did not do away with the constitutionally guaranteed principles of equal rights under the law. This contradictory situation led to the most peculiar manifestations of inter-group relationships. On one hand, discrimination against Jews became very widespread, particularly in occupational life — Jewish medical school graduates, for example, had virtually no chance of being appointed to residency positions or to other jobs at community hospitals.³⁹ On the other hand, the leaders of the Austrofascists’ corporatist state system signalled a willingness for integration that was expressed symbolically in the appointment of Dr. Desider Friedmann, a Zionist and chairman of the Vienna Jewish Community, to membership in the Austrian State Council. When Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss, the initiator of Austrofascism, was murdered by the National Socialists on July 25, 1934, as a matter of course the Jewish Community showed a public expression of grief and held annual mourning services in his memory, thus displaying their loyalty to the regime.⁴⁰ Like all of their classmates, Jewish schoolchildren as well sang the so-called *Dollfußlied* in commemoration of the martyred former leader of the anti-Semitic party. In retrospect, the situation can only be described as grotesque: the conservative anti-Semites protected the Jews of Austria from the far more radical anti-Semites — the Nazis threatening from across the German border.

The formerly liberal Union of Austrian Jews, which had led the Vienna Jewish Community for decades, lost the 1933 community elections and had to hand over the presidency and leadership of the community to the Zionists. Even in this situation, the conflict between the various groups within the community escalated. The Union carried its assimilation of Austrian patrio-

39 Sylvia Maderegger, *Die Juden im österreichischen Ständestaat 1934–1938* (Vienna: Geyer-Verlag, 1973).

40 Aside from reports in the Jewish media, there is an overview of this subject in *Bericht des Präsidiums und des Vorstandes der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien*, pp. 20ff.

tism to an extreme, and claimed for itself the role as “the organization of all Viennese Jews living upon this positively religious and *vaterländisch* Austrian soil”.⁴¹ A complaint drawn up by the Union in 1936 called the community’s Zionist-led administration intolerable, and backed this up by charging that the Zionists had to a great extent “foreign Jews” to thank for their electoral success.

Most Zionists had accepted and come to terms with a diaspora existence, and they had already become involved in domestic political life during the First Republic as elected representatives and journalists. Finally, in 1933 they assumed leadership of the community, which they continued to head during the Nazi years. In these days, a popular joke about the definition of Zionism made the rounds in Vienna: “What is Zionism? It’s when one Jew assigns another Jew the task of raising money from a third Jew so that a fourth Jew can be sent to live in Palestine.”⁴²

Finally, a few examples indicate the extent to which they had indeed adjusted to life in the diaspora. At the start of the last school year before the catastrophe, the Vienna Jewish Community disseminated the prayer and the address that would be spoken at the back-to-school prayer service held on September 16 and 17, 1937: “May the Jewish youth that has gathered together here in joint devotion make its honest and modest contribution to building our Jewish community and to strengthening our beloved fatherland to which we are devoted in undying loyalty.”⁴³

Over the course of more than 50 years, these people had become accustomed to radical verbal anti-Semitism. The autobiography of Viennese author Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931) indicates that even he felt that the so-called “Jewish question” would eventually subside.

But it is at least my hope that when these pages may someday be read, one will hardly be able to form a proper mental picture of the tremendous significance assumed by the so-called Jewish question — spiritually perhaps even more than politically and socially — at the time when these lines were written. ... And even if one was able to maintain one’s internal and external composure to such an extent that one displayed a tendency neither in one direction nor the other, remaining completely untouched was nevertheless completely out of the question — as if a person could possibly remain indifferent while, after having been superficially anesthetized, being forced to watch with wakeful and open eyes as a filthy knife slit open and cut one’s skin until blood began to flow.⁴⁴

41 *Ibid.*, p. 27.

42 Cited in Dalcia Landmann, ed., *Der jüdische Witz. Soziologie und Sammlung* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1988), p. 571.

43 Jerusalem, Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, A/W 1.629/5.

44 Arthur Schnitzler, *Jugend in Wien. Eine Autobiographie* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Fischer Taschenbuchverlag, 1986), p. 322.

In spite of the anti-Semitic and racist ideas of expulsion and even murder that were already being propagated, no one could imagine that the apocalypse of the Shoah could actually happen in the civilized societies of central and western Europe. The “beloved homeland” would become a lethal trap for a third of all Austrian Jews. From the contemporary point of view, the symbiosis between Jews and non-Jews was functioning successfully and still intact. Until 1938, most Jews certainly did feel an “emotional attachment to their native land”.

To this day, the Austrian cultural landscape continues to profit from this wealth that — in spite of political adversity — took shape during a phase of rich creative diversity.⁴⁵ Cultural life offered an oasis free of prejudice and a sphere of activity. The writer Stefan Zweig described the connection between Austrians and Jews in almost euphoric terms in his autobiography “The World of Yesterday”:

Now, assimilation into the milieu of the country or people in whose midst they live is not just an external protective measure for Jews, but rather a deep inner desire. Their need for a homeland, for peace, for calm, for security, to cease being a stranger in a strange land urges them to passionately adopt the culture of their surroundings. And there has hardly been a case in which such a connection has come to pass ... in a happier or more fruitful fashion than in Austria.⁴⁶

Nevertheless, power was assumed in 1938 by those forces for which homeland had nothing to do with citizenship or feelings of *Zugehörigkeit*, but rather with racist conceptions of descent. According to these ideas, the Jews were a “migrant host of the descendants of an Asiatic desert people” who had assumed dominion.⁴⁷

45 The reference to the past can also be observed in the search for new identities conducted by Jews in Austria after 1945. See Matti Bunzl, “Die Wiener Jahrhundertwende und die Konstruktion jüdischer Identitäten in der Zweiten Republik”, in Sabine Hödl and Eleonore Lappin, eds., *Erinnerung als Gegenwart. Jüdische Gedenkkulturen* (Berlin and Vienna: Philo Verlag, 2000), pp. 149–172.

46 Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern*, p. 35.

47 Robert Körber, *Rassiesieg in Wien, der Grenzfesten des Reiches* (Vienna and Leipzig: Braumüller Verlag, 1939), p. 201.