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Vienna 1910: A City Without Viennese

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Vienna entered modernity during the fin-de-siècle against the background of a remarkably modern movement of migration in which millions wandered across Europe to leave the old Continent for the New World. This immense shift brought people from the periphery of civilization into its centers, where many helped form a new European "modernity." Leon Botstein could claim, with respect to the interesting relationship between Jews and modernity, that "with the exception of Schnitzler, Wittgenstein, and Stefan Zweig, most Jews who played a role in culture at the turn of the century were persons whose families had come to Vienna after 1860."¹ The immigrants produced hopes and fears, feelings of insecurity, and populist reactions. Nevertheless barely a generation later, this atmosphere seemingly vanished in the vision of a past best described by Stefan Zweig as the "world of yesterday" and "the golden age of security."²

The empirical data put together by an army of civil servants of the later Austro-Hungarian Monarchy for their "Statistical Reports," however, paints a totally different picture. In the year 1910, Vienna had 2,031,421 inhabitants; it was larger than at any time in its history before or since. In the span of only a few decades, the capital of the "kakanian" Dual Monarchy gathered together within its city limits a shimmering cross-section of peoples and nationalities. Not even half the "city folk" (48 percent) were actually born in Vienna. Today with about 1 million inhabitants, just over two thirds are natives.³

In 1910 almost one fourth of all Viennese stemmed from Bohemia and Moravia. The female cooks and nursing mothers from the former and the shoemakers from the latter, in fact, found their way into proverbs. The workers of the tile factories at the southern city limits were called "tile bohemians" (*Ziegelböhm*). In keeping with the growth of the city, the demand for them and the bohemian mortar mixers (*Maltaweiber*) was quite high. The inhabitants of Vienna almost doubled in the three decades between 1880 and 1910, from 1,162,591 to 2,083,630. The greatest increase was brought about through migration.

In 1910 a quarter of the inhabitants in the Austrian half of Kakanian, 6,350,000 persons, changed their political district. In addition, 8.6 percent actually crossed state borders. Another 6.5 percent of the total population of the Dual Monarchy left entirely with the German Empire and the "New World" being the most desired countries of destination. Austria-Hungary was deemed the "country of emigration" par excellence. Looking at the statistics from the end of the nineteenth century, one finds that "the numbers of migrants nearly 'exploded,'" and this trend still continued unabated during 1910.⁴

The telephone book of modern Vienna, in fact, presents a central European Babylon of names with Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Croatian, or Serb origins. The Austrian national government is today headed by a chancellor with the name Vranitzky, whose predecessors were called Sinowatz and Kreisky; all these names identify the ancestors of these leaders as migrants of the late nineteenth century. At the same time, however, Vienna offers no Czech or Slovenian city quarter. One will search in vain, even in the city district of Ottakring, for remnants of that southeastern European migrant culture where as important a Slovenian author as Ivan Cankar was living around 1910. Today he is virtually forgotten as are the inhabitants of the district in which he wrote his most important works.

Slowenes are once again living in Ottakring along with even larger numbers of immigrants from the southern Republics and regions of the disintegrated Yugoslavia, especially Serbs, Montenegrines, and Kosovo-Albanians. But these exiles only arrived in Austria during the 1970s and 1980s as a migrant labor force. There is no sign of continuity between the earlier wave of migration of the late nineteenth century, which was attracted by Vienna's remodeling into a modern metropolis and the latest tide of immigrants.

Great efforts are nonetheless necessary to erase such a rich legacy of historic transformations from the memory and the culture of a city. Rendering all this "invisible," by the same token, is a sign of complex changes in the patterns of culture and identity in this city. Attempts to make the history of migration part of the portrait of Vienna, furthermore, have generally been unfocused and often produced great distortions.

When I am in New York, by way of comparison, I can visit Ellis Island or museums on the Lower East Side that document the history of migration and offer intense images of identity-formation. But in Vienna no such comparable place exists where the human faces that shaped the city during the past hundred years can become visible. Quite the contrary. When demographers and city planners in the late 1980s presented statistics showing that Vienna—after having shrunk to only about 1.6 million inhabitants—would for the first time in seven decades increase its number of inhabitants, the announcement was political dynamite. Public polemics about refugees and immigrants in the city council elections of 1991 were responsible, according to all analysts, for the

drastical shift toward the right-wing populist Freedom Party (FP), which had agitated strenuously against immigrants.

Since 1990 the question of whether Austria is or can become (again) a "country of immigration" determines many of the hottest political and mass media discussions in the country. Opinion polls show that the majority of Austrians—even in the capital city of Vienna—view a further increase in immigration as threatening, agreeing with slogans such as: "the boat is full."

Looking back at the assimilation of the first migrant generation makes a number of patterns and connections clear. In the year 1880 when the migration from Bohemia and Moravia to Vienna gradually began to increase, for example, the capital and its surroundings already counted 68,158 Czech inhabitants. In the following decade, the number increased about 44 percent and, between 1890 and 1900, again about 46 percent, until the census for Vienna reported around the turn of the century that a total of 102,974 inhabitants had identified themselves as "speaking bohemian."⁵ Different methods of accounting would have led to even larger numbers. In fact a quarter of all Viennese at the time had Czech ancestors. Yet in opinion polls, which then became the basis for the official census, only 10 percent indicated their nationality as "Czechian."

Two circumstances cast some light on this discrepancy: on the one hand, there was a high fluctuation among the Czech workers who had come to Vienna in search of a better life; on the other hand, the change in nationality of so many among the first generation is a clear indication of the pressure to assimilate. Czechs had organized their social life better than any other group of immigrants; there were close to four hundred fifty clubs, associations, syndicates, and parties. Most even spoke German in accordance with the over 94 percent of the capital of the Austrian multinational state. But, nonetheless, these Czechs provoked a radical reaction from the Austrian majority. The immigrants became targets of populist politicians like the mayor of Vienna, Karl Lueger (1897–1910), who proclaimed: "Vienna must remain German, and the German character of the city of Vienna should never be in doubt."⁶ Thus along with being refused the right to have courses held in the Czechian language in public schools, those who wished to enjoy the full rights of citizenship in the city had to swear an oath promising to uphold the "German character of the city" in the future. The Vienna city statute was changed specifically for that purpose on 28 March 1900.

Until the outbreak of the First World War, a consistent political policy gave Czechian immigrants the choice of either rapidly assimilating—and only in this way could they become professionally successful in Vienna—or returning home. Such an uncompromising policy, however, was not pursued in Vienna alone. The Magyarization of Budapest presents an even more drastic cultural struggle. Even after the Compromise of 1866 between the Hungarian and the

Austrian part of the Dual Monarchy, that is, during the unification of the twin cities at the Danube, Buda/Ofen and Pest in 1873, the Hungarians were only 46 percent of the total population of the city as opposed to a strong group of Slovaks, Serbs, and in particular, German-speakers who comprised 19.4 percent of the population in 1880. Only a short time later in 1910, however, nearly 86 percent of the city's inhabitants already considered themselves "Hungarian-speaking."⁷ A contemporary demographer could thus—with some unintended irony—make the point regarding the paradoxical relations of identity in Vienna, which is perhaps valid for other cities like Budapest as well, that "in earlier years immigration eclipsed assimilation; that is why an increase in xenophobia had to follow. Since then, immigration has slackened [...] Assimilation dominates and automatically the proportion of foreign language speakers decreases. Needless to say, this is only the case for the colloquial language, and not for the national identification."⁸

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Precisely during the years of assimilationist mania, Europe generally and Central Europe in particular witnessed a strange, if little researched, parallel development. Cultural and technological modernism, which explicitly sought to appear internationalist, was accompanied by the propagation of locally nuanced, yet essentially unified, movements of "folk art" (*Heimatkunst*) and "national culture" (*Nationalkultur*). There is much to support the assumption that these seemingly contradictory transformations were interconnected with one another and, in fact, exactly analogous to the aforementioned movements of migration and the pressure on their members to assimilate. Nowhere is this contradictory development more apparent than in Vienna at the turn of the century.

Not only the economic but also the cultural influence of the metropolis was great, and it reached even beyond the borders of the Empire. Elias Canetti, for example, had this to say about his birthplace Rustschuk, a harbor town at the Danube between Bulgaria and Romania: "Viewed from there, the rest of the world was Europe. When someone was travelling up the Danube to Vienna one said that he was travelling to Europe. Europe began, where once the Turkish Empire had ended."⁹

Vienna was the city of modernity during those first years of the twentieth century. Modernization in the form of industrialization brought the railroad into the most remote corners of the Empire and thereby triggered the great migration. People came from the villages into the cities, which not only promised work and wages, but also—equally tempting for some—education, training, a new culture, and, in short, a new identity. It has already been remarked that few of those who would advance this new culture of modernity in Vienna—or Budapest—were born in the great metropolitan center and, even those who were, had a

father or mother who had come from the periphery just one or two decades earlier.

Hermann Bahr, the eloquent commentator on Viennese life during the fin-de-siècle, published a famous essay in 1891 entitled "The Modern" (*Die Moderne*). But he also published another piece in that year with the title "The Discovery of the Hinterland" (*Die Entdeckung der Provinz*). In the former he threw the windows wide open to let the new air of modernity enter into the living quarters of Vienna; in the latter, however, he furnished those rooms with rustic peasant furniture when he proclaimed: "we must leave the circle of a few writers and diletantes and go into the broader country of the people."¹⁰

Viennese modernity was not only richly bedecked with flowers in Gustav Klimt's ornaments. The entire formal language of the *Jugendstil* was developed to attract and stimulate students from the hinterland to discover and create local differences and peculiarities, which becomes evident in the architecture of the Slovenian Joze Plecnik and the Czech Jan Kotra. A musical innovator like Bela Bartok, in the same vein, found his own language by taking extended trips through the Carpatians with the single aim of becoming able to differentiate between exotic blends of popular Kitsch, which had sprung up everywhere after 1900, and "authentic" forms of folk music. Letters to his mother with summons like "Speak Hungarian with each other!" in fact exhibit a certain nationalist fervor without which his later ethno-musical work would hardly have been possible. The attack of Adolf Loos against *Jugendstil* with his programmatic statement that *ornament is a crime* was remembered with equal horror by the revolutionary and film theorist Bela Balázs later remembered with equal aesthetic horror: "Hungarian peasant lads with protruding cheek bones and somewhat tilted tatarian eyes were shouting the refrain of a Jewish couplet: 'Ich bin selbst der Goldstein Szami.'"

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The dialectic of departure into the new period and retreat into the old has reasserted itself in the aftermath of the Communist collapse in 1989 and the unexpected return of nationalist fervor to Europe. For some decades, after all, many wished to view modernity and national pathos as irreconcilably opposed. It is necessary to reconsider the matter.

In the summer of 1992, the Vienna Museum for the Applied Arts organized a programmatically conceived exhibition on the work of the architect and design artist in the house in Bohemia where Josef Hoffman was born. The curator of the project, Jan Tabor, himself a native of Czechia and a Viennese "immigrant"—if only as a political refugee of 1968—centered the exhibition on the opposing ways in which folk art and modernity are integrated in the work of Hoffman. "The discovery of a Strange Region" was the title given by Tabor to his explanation of the exhibit in the catalog:

Simply stated, one can say that historicism [the traditionalist stance supplanted by the "modern" *Jugendstil*; R.W.] was an international style precisely because it emphasized eternal rules and hardly allowed for regional deviations. *Jugendstil*, in turn, was not grounded in any set of rules. It was thus well suited for being altered to fit regional specifics (*Heimatgerecht*) through actual or invented regional or national models. Especially in countries evidencing a strong nationalism, one clearly finds national-romantic variants of the *Jugendstil*. The *Jugendstil* was a patriotic reaction to a historicism that was considered imperialistic and decadent.¹¹

The common interpretation of Viennese modernism around the turn of the century as an expression of cosmopolitan cultural consciousness is therefore one-sided at the very least. Under the heading of modernity, in fact, are placed very different and contradictory elements whose marked particularity consists of a complex paradox. Modernity occurred in concert with the migratory movement of masses and the transformation of complex patterns of culture and identity. It thus generated radical changes, which instantaneously triggered the longing for a return to the conditions existing prior to those changes. Modernity created a longing for inertia (*Bewegungslosigkeit*). These developments are inseparable. One does not exist without the other; they are two sides of one and the same development.

The laboratory of modernity and the apocalypse are indivisible. Modernism never took hold in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe. The inhabitants were faced with the existential choice of either emigrating to a geographically distant "New World" and undergoing assimilation or embracing a national counterreaction and retreating into premodern ideals and conceptions. Both—unfortunate—options were taken. The tensions between them, however, remain unresolved and explosive.

Notes

1. Leon Botstein, *Judentum und Modernität: Essays zur Rolle der Juden in der deutschen und österreichischen Kultur, 1848 bis 1938* (Wien: Böhlau, 1991), 42.
2. Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern: Erinnerungen eines Europäers* (Frankfurt/M.: Fischer TB, 1970), 14.
3. Michael John, Albert Lichtblau, *Schmelztiegel Wien—einst und jetzt: Zur Geschichte und Gegenwart von Zuwanderung und Minderheiten* (Wien: Böhlau, 1990), 15.
4. All data according to Heinz Fassmann, "Einwanderung, Auswanderung und Binnenwanderung in Österreich um 1910" in *Demographische Informationen 1990/91*, ed. Institut für Demographie an der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Wien: 1991), 92–101. See also, H. Fassmann, "Migration in Österreich: 1850–1900: Migrationsströme innerhalb der Monarchie und Struktur der Zuwanderung nach Wien," *Demographische Informationen*, ed. Institut für Demographie an der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Wien: 1986), 22–36.

5. Monika Glettler, "The Acculturation of the Czechs in Vienna," in *Labor Migration in the Atlantic Economies: The European and North American Working Classes during the Period of Industrialization*, ed. Dirk Hoeder (Westpoint, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 297–320.
6. Ernő Deák, "Zuwanderung und Assimilation ethnischer Gruppen in Wien und Budapest während der franzisko-josephinischen Zeit," *Zentrale Städte und Ihr Umland: Wechselwirkungen während der Industrialisierungsperiode in Mitteleuropa*, eds. Monika Glettler, Heiko Haumann, and Gottfried Schramm (St. Katharinen: Scripta Mercaturae Verlag, 1985), 139–61.
7. Ibid.
8. René M. Dellanoy, "Die Ergebnisse der Volkszählung vom 31. Dezember 1910 in Wien," *Statistische Monatsschrift, Neue Folge*, vol. XVII, Brünn 1912, 1–68, here 50; cited in Deák, "Zuwanderung und Assimilation," 150.
9. Elias Canetti, *Die gerettete Zunge* (München: Hanser, 1977), 11.
10. Hermann Bahr, *Die Wiener Moderne: Literatur, Kunst und Musik zwischen 1890 und 1910* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1981), 206.
11. Jan Tabor, "Die Entdeckung einer merkwürdigen Gegend" in *Josef Hoffmann: Katalog*, ed. Museum für Angewandte Kunst (Wien: 1992), 28.

4

Weininger's Vienna: The Sex-Ridden Society

Allan Janik

"The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there."

—L. P. Hartley, *The Go-Between*

TO THE MEMORY OF EUGÈNE FLEISCHMANN

Hartley's assertion contains a truth whose importance for historians as well as for mere mortals can scarcely be overestimated, so difficult is it often to understand the ways of the past. And this does not merely apply to the remote past in the ways that it does to the more recent past: we are hardly surprised to find, say, ancient people radically different from ourselves whereas our differences from our grandfathers are frequently incomprehensible to us. This is because they are at once so close to us inasmuch as we can clearly identify their mores and values and at the same time so far away that we reject those very values with a particular vehemence. Think only of the venerable nineteenth-century institution of tobacco chewing and the concomitant spitting it involves for a simple but nonetheless trenchant example of how differently things have been done in the past. There are many reasons why what is close to us should often be difficult to understand. Some relate to that form of cultural politics we normally refer to as "good taste," which prompts repugnance at, say, spitting in public; others relate to the sorts of moral considerations that lead us to reject, say, gladiatorial combat to the death as a form of sport; and still others relate to the sort of differences in intellectual habits that Thomas Kuhn has referred to under the rubric "paradigm shifts," although the three are considerably more difficult to distinguish strictly than we often think, at least at first glance.¹

So it is with Otto Weininger. No figure in fin de siècle Vienna is farther removed from the taste, moral values, and intellectual orientations of contem-

porary American intellectuals than he, at least at a superficial level. If we need reminding of this, we need simply consider the following quotations from his work: "Woman has existence and meaning only inasmuch as man is sexual: her nature is bound to the phallus"² or "the Jew as well as the woman lacks personality" (411). The point of introducing Weininger this way is to emphasize how much our social attitudes and intellectual disciplines differ from his. The Holocaust causes us to read his alleged anti-Semitism and antifeminism in ways that differ wholly from his intentions. We are inclined to place emphases at points other than those which he did. More importantly with respect to our understanding of Vienna at the turn of the century, the disgust such remarks prompt in us tends to lead us in our well-intentioned desire to distance ourselves from them to ignore the context in which they were uttered and therefore their meaning.³ However repugnance at the Nazi slaughter of the Jews and other "inferior" peoples is not our only source of problems to understanding Weininger's work in a way that approximates his own understanding of it; for paradigm shifts in our conceptions of scientific social reform, psychology, psychoanalysis, biological theory, and sexology also stand between us and him.

It is, of course, possible to respond with the question as to why we should bother with his intentions in the first place when it is the reception of his work rather than its genesis that is really so problematical. Two sorts of considerations indicate that we pay an extremely high price for rejecting a Weiningerian perspective on Weininger. The first is that apart from the reception of his work by half-educated, cretinous racists and sexists his work had positive impact of significant proportions on the two most influential philosophers to emerge from Vienna in our time, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Sir Karl Popper,⁴ whose works have had anything but a malign effect upon our culture. It ought to be of some importance to establish just what it might have been in Weininger's thought that could have so impressed two such dazzling critical spirits. Second we have the paradox that Weininger fully anticipates Carl Schorske's view of fin de siècle Vienna as a sex-obsessed society whose very politics is thoroughly imbued with narcissism.⁵ This will be our point of departure for exploring Weininger's *Sex and Character*.

On Schorske's view Vienna at the turn of the century became a cultural "hothouse" when the (German) liberals, who came into power in the Monarchy and the city in 1860, lost it irrevocably in 1879 and 1895 respectively. They were unable to bring the spirit of constitutional politics to what was ostensibly a constitutional monarchy but anything but that in practice. Their failure opened the door to what Schorske terms "a politics of fantasy" whereby ideological wish-fulfillment thinking typical of modern mass movements such as Georg von Schönerer's German nationalism, Karl Lueger's Christian Social movement, and Theodor Herzl's Zionism came to replace the liberal moral and scientific approach to culture and society. The entry of the masses into the

political arena was accompanied by a concomitant withdrawal of the younger generation of liberals from public life into a parallel hedonist fantasy world. The cultural manifestation of this flight from society was the aestheticism that Schinitzler so lovingly and painstakingly diagnosed as pathological in his contemporaries, which also typified the works of Hofmannsthal from his early world-weary lyricism, from which his fairy-tale plays of social regeneration after the war seek refuge. The sensual antihistoricism of the secessionist painters, especially Klimt, also typified this narcissistic withdrawal from society into the self. At every turn in Schorske's narrative, Nietzsche emerges as the irrationalist thinker who legitimated the flight from reason and responsibility to a dream world permeated with obsessive concern for self-gratification rather than social commitment. Political manifestations of the new, self-centered irrationalism amounted to little less than a collective solipsism or somnambulism and ultimately paved the way for National Socialism.

It is a most curious fact that Schorske does not even mention Weininger in developing his thesis; for Weininger anticipates his views at every turn, albeit in a way that requires paying just that close attention to his text that our post-Holocaust perspective makes so very difficult to attain. Once we have recognized this point, we shall be in a position to lay out Weininger's problem in *Sex and Character* in a way that makes his reasoning intelligible without forcing his conclusions upon us. To do that we must take a close look at the closing chapter of Part I on "The Emancipated Women," the last chapter but one of Part II on "Judaism" in *Sex and Character*, and at his estimate of politics in chapter 10 of Part II. The positions Weininger takes in all of these places identifies him as just the sort of liberal whose demise, on Schorske's view, accounts for both the emergence of narcissism and the "politics of fantasy" in fin de siècle Vienna.

A careful reading of Weininger's discussion of women's emancipation in the context of Vienna ca. 1903 yields a picture that is hardly that of a fanatical misogynist but a particular sort of liberal.⁶ The most revealing point here emerges quickly if we examine what Weininger is *affirming* at the same time that he opposes emancipation: the idea that wives should have a voice in the running of their households equal to that of their husbands, the idea that women should be allowed freedom of movement without male companions even in "dubious" parts of town at night, and the right of women to live alone, to receive male visitors, to discuss sexual themes, or even to attend institutions of higher learning (80). There is no question of Weininger wanting to subordinate women to men. In fact women ought to have the chance to develop whatever talents they possess even if, as Weininger thought, only a few were really intellectually equipped to do so. If it is unclear that these attitudes are in fact "enlightened," we need merely reflect a little upon the last two points on this list in the context of Vienna 1900. In regard to the discussion of sexual matters, Stefan

Zweig emphasizes that young women of the upper middle class were deliberately left completely in the dark until marriage with respect to their sexuality.⁷ The same is true of his attitude to higher education for women: we forget at our peril that this was a highly controversial, hotly debated topic in Old Vienna. Actually women entered Vienna University in the year before Weininger did, 1897, for the first time.⁸ So when Weininger wrote the number of female students was as small as general resentment against them was large, here again Weininger's position turns out to be radically "enlightened."

Why, then, should he be so opposed to women receiving the vote? Weininger's main argument against women's emancipation in matters political is that the participation in political life will have a corrupting effect upon them because it involves participating in a mass movement (87). Weininger's insistence that the underlying explanation for what he takes to be an unnatural desire on the part of women to possess the inner life of the male can only be explained in terms of genetic inferiority has tended to make "critical" readers consider him a strong advocate of patriarchy, which he in fact clearly and explicitly rejects along with the family as an ideal (457-59). Actually Weininger's reason for wanting to keep women out of politics is that he takes politics itself to be corrupting of all that is rational and worthwhile in human nature. In the best traditions of paternalistic progressivism, he wants to save women from themselves. Although this may not be very flattering to women, it is far from misogyny.

It is highly significant that Weininger's all too short discussion of politics in *Sex and Character* is embodied in his discussion of prostitution. "Every politician is somehow a tribune of the people and in the tribune there lurks an element of prostitution" (299-300). The power of the politician is fundamentally the seductive force of emotional rhetoric, in fact a kind of lying, which distinguishes the "man of action" from the true "genius" (to employ Weininger's expression), who is always a rational and moral figure. Politicians, for whom Napoleon remains exemplary, are speculators and actors, whose seductive rhetoric at once constitutes the mob and depends on it for his existence. Weininger's rejection of political emancipation for women is hardly what it seems to be, at least on his own view of the matter (whose relative merits, of course, are themselves debatable) for he is, in fact, arguing that involvement in this form of seduction can only further debase rather than liberate women. We shall need to spell out the contours of his whole theory to see why he makes this claim. In short politics is a disaster for human beings as such: it has only debased men and promises to be even more disastrous for women (and through them for society generally as we shall see).

It is for this reason that Weininger considers his epoch to be "Jewish": "The spirit of modernity is Jewish wherever you examine it. Sexuality is affirmed and contemporary species-ethics sings a hymn to sexual intercourse." (441) Society

has become thoroughly imbued with erotic drives. These drives have come to dominate culture and thought as well as politics as the spirit of conformity, the party mentality, replaces the critical spirit. "Judaism," as Weininger understands it, is above all a cast of mind, as opposed to a racial trait (406); although it is, Weininger thinks, a matter of sociological fact that this attitude is most widely spread among persons of Jewish extraction (something that makes his individual assertions often confusing), which is a possibility for any human being. It entails rejecting reason and all forms of delayed gratification, not on the basis of some sort of choice but simply by giving way to our instincts for pleasure and comfort in personal matters (hedonism, narcissism), social matters (mass politics, anarchism, symbolism, or "decadent" aestheticism), and intellectual matters (Machian positivism, capitalism, marxism, and a general fascination with technique). The primary political manifestation of this unhealthy mentality is to be found in the conformist anti-Semitism of the Christian Socials (418). Curiously Weininger never mentions German nationalism in this or any other context—another indication that he was hardly the racist fanatic that he is often portrayed to be; unlike Schorske, but curiously like Herzl, he takes Zionism as an idealistic challenge to which Jews must rise, although he doubts whether this is possible given the current state of the Jews. Be that as it may, however, the point here is that "Judaism," which the convinced assimilationist Weininger (419) finds so opprobrious, is a conformist mentality that is thoroughly imbued with eroticism and actually is an exact parallel to the narcissism of, say, the Secession artists. His demand for sexual restraint, to transcend the "coffeehouse concept of the Dionysian," the "coitus culture" (443) as he puts it, which is nothing other than his rejection of "Judaism," is in fact a plea for reason, which there is every reason to identify with liberal individualism and the liberal rationalist critique of the plight of man in mass society of the sort that we find with, say, Karl Jaspers or Gabriel Marcel in the interwar period.

Viewed from this perspective, Weininger the social critic and reformer finally comes into sight for we are now in a position to see why, say, he should be so committed both to reform of the laws against what we would today term "victimless" crime such as homosexuality and prostitution (59-61) and generally to developing a theory of human nature according to which these individual differences would be seen as "normal." Moreover taking the liberal view of Weininger, we also come to grasp why he could so enthusiastically endorse Binet's views about the differences in intelligence between children as the basis for a reform of educational practices (69).⁹ Indeed it is against the background of what were then taken to be liberal and enlightened programs for social reform that Weininger wrote *Sex and Character* as a generalization, articulation, sympathetic critique, and philosophical justification of programs like those of Cesare Lombroso and Magnus Hirschfeld for enlightened social reform through

the application of scientific principles to social problems.¹⁰ In fact *Sex and Character* is an ingenious, often insightful commentary synthesizing an enormous amount of material from several disparate literatures (i.e., biological, psychological, philosophical, literary, and, such as it was, sociological) relevant to the problem of sexual differences in all its aspects. If we want to understand, for example, why *Sex and Character* had to be a two-part inquiry with a biological and psychological preliminary part and a logical and philosophical second part, we must examine how Weininger sought critically to expand upon the programs for social reform of contemporary criminologists and sexologists.

Let us begin with a consideration of the options open to the opponents of laws against homosexuality, often the premise for brutal discrimination and blackmail in the German-speaking world at the turn of the century.¹¹ How could one argue that these laws were unreasonable? The laws in question were based on assumptions about what is natural that ultimately were rooted in a moral theology; they condemned all sexual activity outside of marriage as, not simply impermissible, but "unnatural." If it could be demonstrated that homosexuality was a natural proclivity, then the force of arguments against it would dissolve. It was, therefore, to the nascent science of biology that social reformers turned in the hope of finding persuasive arguments for the natural character of homosexual instincts (as indeed defenders of gay rights still often do). What does biology offer that might help here? There are two possibilities for a "natural" account of homosexuality according to biological theory: either it is inherited or it is acquired from the environment. The latter, then as now, has not been a favorite candidate for the explanation of homosexuality by homosexuals themselves for reasons that are not hard to fathom. If homosexuality is an acquired trait, it ought to be possible to "deprogram" homosexuals by a radical change of environment. And this indeed was suggested in Weininger's Vienna by one doctor, who hypnotized homosexuals to suggest sexually "normal" behavior is what they really desired and then sent them off to brothels to induce "normal" sexual activity behaviorally (59–60). One can well imagine the reason why this solution was hardly welcomed by homosexuals (it was better, of course, than castrating them, which another German doctor suggested as a solution for the problem in 1900—to Weininger's shock).

The alternative biological account was much preferred for if homosexuality is inherited like, say, the color of our eyes or a disposition to gout, there can be no question either of changing a "natural" behavior pattern or of morally condemning it. So the hereditary explanation was very much favored by homosexual liberation groups such as Magnus Hirschfeld's "Scientific-Humanitarian Committee" in Berlin. However in the absence of the notion of dominant and recessive traits, any hereditary explanation of homosexuality would founder on the fact that homosexuals are seldom the children of homosexuals. The enlightened approach to the subject in Weininger's day took its cues from

Darwin in supposing that variation rather than uniformity is the rule in nature and challenged stereotyped notions of the sexual roles by suggesting that all creatures were in fact bisexual or "sexually intermediate". Weininger's infamous theory of plasm presented in chapter 2 of *Sex and Character* is a speculative attempt to specify that a scientific account of sexual differentiation would have to explain heredity differences on the basis of a *mixture* of masculine and feminine fluids, which can vary in all sorts of proportions.¹² Because gross anatomical differences from the start were ruled out as evidence of true sexual nature of an individual, vestiges of the opposites sex, such as female facial hair and male nipples, having provided the crucial anatomical evidence for bisexuality in the first place, the notion that sexual differentiation could be accounted for on such a biochemical basis was, however misguided, anything but implausible then as the author of the article on "Protoplasm" in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* noted, explicitly mentioning Weininger's conjecture.¹³

So we have an account of how Weininger came to the set of problems that preoccupied him in the first part of his study, which purports to account for the causes and consequences of sexual differentiation empirically. His opening chapter treats of the notion that individuals are intermediate forms. The second chapter sets forth his conjecture with respect to the two types of plasm. The third is an updating of Schopenhauer's account of sexual attraction in terms of a law of the attraction of opposites that the mother of American feminism, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, herself found overstated but by no means absurd.¹⁴ The fourth chapter explains homosexuality as the result of a plasmic imbalance, whose result is a person who is anatomically male but biochemically and also psychologically female (the opposite is not possible for reasons curiously not articulated in the text but crucial to Weininger's whole program). In the fifth chapter, Weininger draws the social consequences of bisexuality such as the legalization of homosexuality and educational reform and his characterological program for psychology generally. It is at this point that his speculations begin to transcend the limits of biology and psychology as we know them and to spill over into an account of character and a fortiori moral theory, a move that he will justify in Part II of the book. In the final chapter of Part I, we find Weininger's analysis of the fundamental error of the feminist movement, and we find ourselves squarely confronted with what, to say the very least, is a normative account of the perversity of woman's rights. We have clearly left the world of science, even speculative science, and have entered the moral sphere. Part II attempts to justify this move methodologically on the basis of a critique of contemporary accounts of psychology.

Before discussing the relationship of the two parts of Weininger's work, it will do well to look at the main source of his view of woman and indeed his very strategy for dealing with the problem of sexual differentiation and all that it implies, Cesare Lombroso's *The Female Offender*¹⁵ for nearly everything that

people have found objectionable in Weininger is to be found in the work of this then controversial scientist and liberal social reformer. Lombroso hoped to put criminology on a scientific footing with the help of ideas drawn from biology and mathematics. He wanted to establish a distinction between two types of criminality, one that was prompted by social inequalities and injustices and another that was the result of an inherited disposition to crime. His aim was prison reform. Lombroso was well aware that prisons have a way of becoming universities for the study of crime. Because he was a Lamarckian, he believed that acquired characteristics could become permanent and transmissible. For that reason he was anxious to separate criminals moved to transgress the law by their desperate situation in society (e.g., "anarchists") and therefore capable of being rehabilitated from those degenerates whose constitution predestined them for antisocial behavior. How could he make this distinction systematically? He took his cues in answering this question from Quételet, who had recently discovered that in any given group a given characteristic, let us say the height of males at Harvard, will be distributed along a bell-shaped curve.¹⁶ On this basis and interpreted according to the principle that there is a *rigorous* parallel between mind and body, Lombroso inferred that normality was to be determined on the basis of bodily dimensions, especially the size of the head. Further Lombroso's blind faith in the bell-shaped curve to illuminate every aspect of human nature led him to insist that great talent, like great depravity, was a deviant, because rare, phenomenon (an idea that would influence Freud's attitude to genius and ultimately determine many reactions to Weininger himself after his suicide but paradoxically one that Weininger himself roundly rejected). This is not the place to tell the story of the development of "criminal anthropology" and "anthropometry" and eugenics generally; suffice it to say that it was a concatenation of what we today can recognize as the most dubious ideas and assumptions of nineteenth-century science but, nonetheless, then taken to be a most "progressive," if highly controversial, program for social reform.¹⁷

One central problem with Lombroso (and indeed with much of nineteenth-century liberalism and science) is that in the end he ended up postulating that "normalcy" was principally a property of white, European, liberal males (typically *not* much discussed by Lombroso's critics). Not unsurprisingly given this assumption, women presented Lombroso with a number of problems. For example he could not understand how they could combine contradictory moral qualities such as pity and cruelty. Similarly women's tendency to lie was also a puzzle. In general women were more excitable, less inhibited, and more vain than men. Above all there was drastically less criminality among women than among men than there should be according to his canons of "normalcy" and that required an explanation. It came in the form of his study of the female offender. The explanation of the conundrums that woman had presented to

him was to be found in the fact that woman was nothing less than a male whose development was arrested. This "triumph of observation," as Lombroso was wont to refer to it, was derivable in purely phenomenal terms: woman was physically smaller in every respect than man so it followed that she was intellectually "smaller" as well.

Woman's smaller sense organs explained her intellectual inferiority according to the sound empiricist principle that there is nothing in the intellect that was not first in the senses. Inferior sense perception accounted for a defective capacity to universalize and therefore for women's incapacity to perform basic logical functions. The concomitant inconsistency, on the basis of which one could easily reconcile her contradictory characteristics such as mercy and cruelty, resulted in an atrophied sense of self. Weakness of intellect explained weakness of character. In this context, for example, Lombroso listed eight reasons why women lie. All of this recurs in Weininger, who did not have to invent the idea that woman was basically irrational but found it in a program for social reform, whose scientific credentials were increasingly under fire from the midnineties, but whose liberal credentials were impeccable. But Lombroso's importance for Weininger does not end there.

Among the reasons why women lie are sexual factors such as menstruation, competition for male attention, and the obligation to conceal "the facts of life" from her offspring. This served as a reminder that in one respect the female was larger than the male: her sex organs. Her larger sex organs determined (that favorite word of nineteenth-century popularizers of science) that woman was dominated by her sexuality in a way that man was not. Further if intelligence varied inversely with reproductive fecundity, as Lombroso thought it did, woman's larger sex organs also explained why she was less prone to crime, that is, because female crime was a halfhearted affair, "victimless crime" as we would call it, namely, prostitution, which was thus "natural" to women. In the end women cannot control their own sexuality and turn by nature to prostitution. If prostitution was indeed a social problem only the customers, *men*, could solve it. Woman's decadence was a product of masculine exploitation of her maternal instincts. Woman's deprivation was a function of man's character or lack of it—and with that we have arrived at the point of departure for a study of sex and character. Males were the villains of the piece in more than one sense: first they take advantage of women; second they build up a myth around woman's saintliness to attain yet more pleasure in possessing her. Men were the real criminals because they could amend their conduct in ways that women could not. The only rational way of coping with prostitution was prohibition and, indeed, the moral stamina required to quit was precisely that required by the temperance movement for alcohol was then seen to be the causal agent, weakening the male will. The argument for abstinence was identical in each case.

We are now in a position to return to Weininger. On the basis of Weininger's Manichean interpretation of Kant's ethics all sexual intercourse, indeed, all sexual activity, is irrational and immoral: for personality is "used as a means and not as an end (even though we cannot hope ever to achieve total chastity given the dualistic constitution of human individuals—as discombobulating as it may seem, Weininger's position here seems to anticipate the views of radical feminists such as Andrea Dworkin and Catherine MacKinnon who consider intercourse intrinsically rapine). Weininger's problem was to criticize Lombroso by constructively providing an updated theoretical account of the nature of male and female sexuality, which would explain both woman's determined behavior, not as that of an inferior male but as differently natural from the male, and the moral cowardice of the males that hold women in subjugation by copulating with them, as well as providing a rigorous account of the foundations of moral obligation, which would anchor Lombroso's liberalism in a critical theory of rationality. Weininger's mentor, Friedrich Jodl, rightly drew attention to the ingenuity with which Weininger mustered the most varied literary, scientific, and philosophical sources in illuminating his problem.¹⁸

We can now appreciate Weininger's *problems* in Part II of *Sex and Character* without endorsing his conclusions. He saw, as contemporary sexologists did not, that the notion of universal bisexuality presented as well as solved problems. True it could in good Darwinian fashion explain the broad variation in human personality, but it also implied that "male" and "female" required defining anew, that is, if *everybody* is really an "intermediate stage," we must ask, between what? In short the efforts of Havelock Ellis and Hirschfeld to overcome clichéd notions of masculinity and femininity by insisting that male and female do not refer to individuals whose characteristics are universally and necessarily fixed landed them with the problem of how these terms *should* actually be understood. In this they—and Weininger following them—were consciously rejecting Lombroso's notion of "normalcy." But if there are no males and females in the strict sense, what can it mean to assert that individuals are *bisexual*? That term would in fact be meaningless until an abstract theoretical account of "male" and "female" was provided. This is the goal of Weininger's characterology. His vehicle for attaining it was the Ideal Type, which does not refer to a Platonic essence, but to what he termed idealized limiting cases that establish a spectrum along which the significance of empirical data can be evaluated for their cultural significance, that is, to what we would today call "models."¹⁹ He was convinced as all critical theorists before and after him that only an idealized account of human behavior could possess a genuine critical potential, that is, would be capable of determining what is wrong with current mores on the basis of a universal and necessary account of rational behavior. Thus there is every reason to believe that the tragedy in Weininger's work was that in combating one set of stereotypes, that is, the virile male and the devoted wife,

he created another, that is, the omniscient male and the irrational female. In any case the construction of such ideal types of rational masculinity (which rejects sexuality in all its forms) and of a-rational (because wholly sexual) femininity and irrational (because incapable of rejecting sexuality) masculinity (i.e., "Judaism") was the program for Part II of *Sex and Character*.

Part II of *Sex and Character* articulates the normative ideal types (different in content from but definitely related to Max Weber's methods for dealing with social phenomena) with which he will redefine masculinity and femininity in such a way as to have context but permit of the wide variations that the empirical science of sexology have turned up. It would require too much space here to describe the program of Part II in detail but a sketch of its contents is in order. It is important to point out here that, if the account we have given of the origins of Weininger's program in Lombroso is correct, he is, in fact, trying to explain how a critical version of Lombroso would look so he is less arguing to conclusions as trying to establish how the Lombrosan picture of social reform fits in with science, philosophy, and social critique. The opening chapters deal with the relationship between masculine and feminine sexuality as they relate to the typically masculine and feminine forms of consciousness (distinct and indistinct forms of perception). This is followed by a discussion of the nature of talent and genius that has the force of driving a wedge between rootless aestheticism and true genius, which is always a form of *moral* creativity. Weininger then articulates the extreme types within the ideal type Woman: the Mother and the Prostitute, with the ironic (and Krausian) emphasis on the notion that the latter is nobler because it is more natural. The final chapters of Part II present the cosmic conclusions of the work, that is, they set out a view of the ways in which the sexual elements in human nature account for good and evil as well as mediocrity in society. This view can only be termed gnostic for its utter rejection of sensuality.

If Lombroso gave him his cues about the basic character of male and female from which he would generalize, Nietzsche, H. S. Chamberlain, Freud, and Kant provided him with the conceptual apparatus he needed to provide the philosophical foundation for Lombroso's program for social reform.

From Nietzsche, Weininger took the notion that conventional mores merely reflect the self-interests of the mediocre majority (what Nietzsche terms a "slave morality").²⁰ They therefore are irrational despite their claim to the contrary. As such they stand in desperate need of critique. The corollary of this view for psychology and sociology is that no empirical study of society could ever be of much help in normative questions, that is, because social relations as they exist stand in need of a radical critique. In short, Weininger accepted both Nietzsche's critique of conventional values and his challenge to develop a science of psychology with genuine depth, capable of grasping "life" in its tragic dimension, but, like Jürgen Habermas and Lawrence Kohlberg later, he was convinced

that only the Kantian account of rationality, a critical theory, was equal to the task of providing the foundations for a genuinely moral psychology.²¹

From Chamberlain he took the view that the cast of mind that thrives on the pseudomorality of conformism and social role-playing, accepting sexual stereotypes and tolerant of the double standard, should be termed "Jewish" (405-7)—a move that was clearly intended to be provocative but in fact has turned out to be a great cause of confusion about what he was actually claiming, as we shall see.

From Freud, whose work he was the first to praise outside of the inner circle of adepts (358),²² he took over the notion that rigidly held conventional values, which stipulated the suppression of sexual instinct, caused mental illness. Weininger went on to stipulate that hysteria was the typical fate of women in a society that required that she suppress her instincts and conform to a set of social values that destroy her.

From (a less than profound understanding of) Kant's moral philosophy, Weininger took the conceptual scheme that identified instinct (the ideal type Woman) as irrational, conformism as pseudomorality (i.e., what Kant terms *heteronomy*, acting out of duty, say, under some form of compulsion, as opposed to being motivated by duty, which Weininger terms *Jewish*), and rigorous logical self-examination and respect for personality as an end in itself and never a mere means ("genius"—234) as the criterion of rationality (210-11). In the end the whole of *Sex and Character* is an effort to provide a critical theory of sexuality by giving Kantian foundations to Lombroso's view of actual and ideal relationship between the sexes.

This is not to say that Weininger accepted Lombroso uncritically: his theory of plasms, for example, would show that deviance from conventionally accepted standards was by no means "unnatural" as it was for Lombroso. His aim in all of this, which first becomes clear when one follows the intricacies of his elaborate commentary on the extant literature concerning sexual differentiation in all its aspects, was less to produce armchair speculation than an heuristic, a model, which would help to orient social reformers, medical researchers, psychiatrists, and other social scientists. It is a model that in the end was of no use because the Lombrosan "paradigm" of social reform with its emphasis on mechanism and determinism with respect to female behavior, like the pre-Mendelian view of genetics that Weininger worked with, as well as the pre-Freudian view of psychodynamics have all been rejected as a result of subsequent developments in those disciplines whose current sophistication make Weininger look unspeakably crude when he is in fact a cut above the run of the mill figures of his time. To see this we need to reflect on his reasons for being so enthusiastic about Freud.

It was not mere chance that led him to assert that the future of psychology lay with Freud (358). He understood on the basis of insights drawn from such

figures as William James (a "Modern Master" in Weininger's Vienna—518), Wilhelm Dilthey (512-14), and Edmund Husserl (whose revolutionary *Logical Investigations* were hot off the press at the time that Weininger wrote—522) that the future task of psychology was tied to the project of providing a fuller and richer account of our "inner lives." One need merely page through Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis* and Freud's *Studies in Hysteria* to appreciate the sorts of "paradigm shift" that were taking place within psychiatry: what Krafft-Ebing could describe on the basis of a brief interview and external observation in a few paragraphs, Freud would spin into a complex, lengthy narrative, which could only be written after an equally complex, lengthy period of intense dialogue between doctor and patient. In fact Freud was doing little less than wresting psychiatry from the hands of the lawyers and judges to give it a firm footing among the healing arts. That Freud would win the day was far from clear in 1903, but it was clear to Weininger on the basis of a deep understanding of the *problems* that any putative candidate for the title "science of the mind" would have to face that Freud's contribution was of monumental significance.

Indeed the more one reads Weininger with sensitivity to the contexts in which he wrote the more astonished one becomes at the ways his erudition and ingenuity are mingled with crude, clichéd pictures of women and Jews. Had he not identified a rationality with Woman and Conformity with Judaism, there would scarcely be grounds for rejecting his views. Why was he so intent upon being provocative in this way? In the end there is no answer to this question that is not speculative. One form of speculation proceeds from the view that he was simply a self-hating Jew and a fanatical misogynist whose very fanaticism drove him mad.²³ This view contradicts the picture of him that we have from his family and at least some of his friends. Indeed if Weininger had wanted to write a diatribe against Jews, it is very strange that he should have confined his remarks to one relatively brief chapter toward the end of the book. The case against his having had misogynist intentions is more complex but would run similarly: the whole business could all be much more simple and straightforward if that was all that Weininger wanted to assert. Moreover if derangement led him to conceive his book the way he did, why is it that the parts of the book that are not "tainted," to borrow a phrase from Krafft-Ebing, are so lucid? It does not add up.

A more profitable line of inquiry would proceed from concentrating on what his theory of ideal types enables him to *do*. As soon as we pose this question, we find ourselves very much in Schorske's Vienna of narcissism and demagoguery for the sense of his theory of bisexuality is to insist with Lombroso that the male is responsible for the degraded state of womanhood but that, ironically, it is the female, that is, irrational element, *in men*, that creates this situation. The more that men try to live up to the conventional image of masculinity as essentially being a "lady killer" or Don Juan the more they

surrender their true masculinity. Indeed the closing chapters of *Sex and Character* contain a very primitive but nonetheless recognizable account of the social construction of conventional morality and its stereotypes of "lady killer," innocent maid and the like through the interaction of the feminine elements in males and females.²⁴ This ironically provokes the masculine element in the woman to want to exercise the same sort of power that the conventional male does in society. In short the triumph of the female principle within the male is the triumph of an extremely complex sort of unreflective behavior in which clichés replace concepts. (The sheer number of words Weininger designated as clichés in *Sex and Character* by putting them between quotation marks is as astonishing as the fact that nobody since Karl Kraus seems to have noticed them.)

This is what Weininger takes to be "Jewish" about culture generally. It remains to be shown that this attitude to things Jewish was something that was as Jewish as it was Viennese. Weininger was very much a product of Viennese assimilated Jewry. From the days of Mendelssohn, assimilation meant turning away from Jewish traditions, that is, of the sort that had developed in the ghetto, and accepting Enlightenment, which amounted to adopting a "religious" attitude to science and culture.²⁵ In Vienna this was very much an assimilation to German culture. Thus Protestantism, idealism, and the German classics played an inordinately large role in assimilated Jewish life there. Weininger's attitudes and interests in *Sex and Character* mirror this entirely. His anti-semitism can and should be seen as transferring assimilated attitudes to the preemancipation Jewish life to the aestheticized (i.e., "Viennese") form of "Jewish" culture that was replacing liberal idealism. It is well known that the style associated with one prominent manifestation of Viennese aestheticism, the Secession, was known as "the Jewish style."²⁶ Bearing this in mind, as well as the fact that Weininger shared Jodl's antipathy to the aesthetic ideals of the Secession, and granting with Schorske that Viennese aestheticism reached its zenith with the Secession's 1902 Beethoven Exhibition,²⁷ that is, at just the time that Weininger was rewriting his dissertation for publication as *Sex and Character*, it becomes clear that Weininger's attack on his age as the most Jewish and feminine, as well as his insistence on the moral and intellectual character of true art as opposed the self-indulgence of Secessionist aestheticism, is an extension of the enlightened (i.e., assimilated liberal) Jew's self-criticism. Briefly what had been a critique of unreflective adherence to tradition in preemancipated Jewish life became a critique of an aesthetics divorced from ethics and science. If all of this is true, Weininger is anything but the crackpot whom we encounter in discussions of decadence in fin de siècle Vienna but a figure worthy of the admiration of a Popper, a Wittgenstein, and a Kraus.

Yet if this is so, why was this fact ever lost sight of? A full answer to that question would require a lengthy study in itself, but we can get a better handle

on the question if we look to the reception of Weininger's ideas in the years immediately following the publication of *Sex and Character* late May 1903 and his suicide a scant three months later. From its publication *Sex and Character* was a controversial book. That was Weininger's intention.²⁸ He seems to have been well aware that, despite the liberal position the book in fact takes on social problems, it could well be misunderstood, and he took pains to distance himself from those who might see him as justifying less than humane treatment of the mentally or morally inferior (449–50; cf. ix). Sadly this part of his work has often been completely ignored. In any case the attention that was drawn to his work by the praise of the likes of Kraus and Strindberg,²⁹ the plagiarism charges of Paul Moebius and Wilhelm Fliess,³⁰ and the publication of his literary remains, along with a memoir of Weininger by his friend Moritz Rappaport that alleged that Weininger was mentally unbalanced, all soon made the dead youth into a cause célèbre.³¹

However the early reviews in Austria, Germany, and even New York were much more positive, and indeed insightful, than one might expect today.³² For example one Viennese medical journal recommended *Sex and Character* enthusiastically to all doctors concerned with sexual matters on the basis of Weininger's complete mastery of the literature on sexual differentiation. Like a number of other reviews, it remarked positively on the way in which Weininger put Tolstoi's argument for universal chastity on a sound philosophical footing.³³ A number of authors remark that one strong point in Weininger's work is that the argument is well developed to the point that even readers who do not agree with Weininger can read the book profitably. Weininger's moral earnestness was even praised as Jewish. One of the most interesting reviews insists that the book could well serve as enlightening for the general public were it not so difficult to understand.³⁴ The same reviewer was careful to praise Weininger's critique of politicians. He concluded with a remark whose poignancy has not been diminished in the least with the years, namely, that the book should be read without prejudice but self-critically and reflectively with courage.

There were also from the start charges that the author was insane or schizophrenic. These charges troubled Weininger's father very much. When Rappaport added his voice to these in his very introduction to Weininger's posthumous writings charging that Weininger was mentally disturbed, Leopold Weininger turned to a Munich psychiatrist for an objective judgment in the hope of exonerating his son. The result was Ferdinand Probst's study, *The Case of Otto Weininger*, which judged Weininger ironically to be hysterical and degenerate (*entartet*) to his father's dismay.³⁵ What is interesting about this document is the hesitance with which Probst came to that judgment. His hesitance stemmed from nothing other than his respect for Leopold Weininger's intelligence and integrity.³⁶ Probst found it difficult to accept the views of an "exquisite pathological character"³⁷ such as Rappaport over Leopold Weininger's insistence that

there was indeed nothing whatsoever pathological about his brilliant son. Nevertheless, he did grudgingly accept Rappaport's position in a decision that was to have monumental importance for our understanding of Weininger.

From that time on, readers could hardly approach Weininger with a critical spirit. Instead they were confronted with a debate in which they were expected to take a position: Was he a madman or a genius? Paradigm changes in all of the areas in which Weininger wrote, as well as the dogmatic assertion of the position that Probst in fact advanced with clear reluctance, have made it considerably easier over the years to assume that this is in fact the alternative with which Weininger and his work presents us. The result of concentrating on this question rather than examining Weininger's arguments in the context in which he advanced them is that the literature on Weininger has gotten worse and worse down to our own time: here, indeed, what occurred as tragedy has been repeated as farce, something which has had consequences, not only for our subsequent understanding of Weininger but also for *fin de siècle* Vienna as well.

A crucial aspect of that farce has been the result that Weininger's work has been discussed on the basis of his assertions rather than on the basis of the arguments and principles upon which they rest in the context of the state of philosophy, science, and society circa 1903 as is necessary for the evaluation of any work in the history of science.³⁸ In short it is not necessary to come to Probst's conclusion. But if that is true, the standard account of Weininger's thought—and with it our picture of Old Vienna—stands in drastic need of revision along the lines sketched here. As for Weininger's intentions, if the view presented here is correct, like the doctor played so magnificently by Jack McGowran in Polanski's *The Fearless Vampire Killers*, in his efforts to be provocative, he ended up perpetuating the scourge he would have eliminated.

Notes

1. On "paradigm shifts" see Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), especially chaps. 2–5, 21–53. For some of the problems surrounding the concept of paradigm, see Martin Brody and Allan Janik, "Paradigms, Politics and Persuasion: Sociological Aspects of Musical Controversy" in Allan Janik, *Style, Politics and the Future of Philosophy*, "Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Vol. 114 (Dordrecht, Boston, and London: Kluwer, 1989), 227–29. I have used the term here principally for want of a better and in view of its widespread employment in discussing the development of disciplines across radical conceptual change. Ludwik Fleck's *Entstehung und Entwicklung einer wissenschaftlichen Tatsache* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1980) presents an account of such changes in terms of the development of alternative "thought styles," which emphasizes precisely the sort of difficulties to which I have here drawn attention. Fleck further emphasizes how the most difficult problems of understanding within science arise at the point where distinct disciplines study the same

phenomenon such that their very closeness prevents rather than facilitates understanding (144–145). The transitions referred to with respect to Weininger include the Mendel-Morgan concept of the gene, the Freudian concept of psychodynamics, and the behavioral revolution in psychology, which brought in its wake the notion that psychology must somehow be a theoretical (as opposed to hermeneutic), methodologically monistic "hard science" among others.

2. Otto Weininger, *Geschlecht und Charakter: eine prinzipielle Untersuchung* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1903), 400. I cite Weininger according to the reprint (München: Matthes & Seitz; 1980), which is an exact replica of the first edition (as other editions, all disclaimers to the contrary notwithstanding, are not). All translations are my own. I shall refer to Weininger's book parenthetically in the body of this article. Because I am concerned with Weininger and not with the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of his text, I only treat of *Geschlecht und Charakter* here, that is because it is the only work prepared for publication by Weininger himself. There is no more reason for believing that the publications from his *Nachlaß* contain his final and definitive thoughts, as is often maintained, than for believing that he would have thrown them away had he lived (though, for the most part, I am inclined to the latter opinion, if forced to take a stand).
3. One well-meaning study that has fully missed Weininger's intentions in writing is Jacques LeRider's *Le cas Otto Weininger: Racines de l'anti-semitisme et l'anti-féminisme*, Perspectives Critiques (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982). For a critique of LeRider, see my "Writing about Weininger," *Essays on Wittgenstein and Weininger*, Studien zur österreichischen Philosophie (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1985), 96–115. When I speak of Weininger's "intentions," I am not concerned with the subjective motivation that led him to write but of the intentions that are built into his book, that is, as shown by the way he structures his argument by appealing to certain grounds and principles of reasoning, all of which are relatively easy to reconstruct from the extensive notes at the end of his book. Tore Nordenstam has made the crucial distinction between the intention of the artist and the intentions built into the work of art upon which I model my own approach to Weininger. See his "Intention in Art," *Wittgenstein: Aesthetics and Transcendental Philosophy*, ed. K. S. Johannessen and Tore Nordenstam (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1981), 127–135.
4. For Wittgenstein's view of Weininger, see my "Wittgenstein and Weininger" and "Philosophical Sources of Wittgenstein's Ethics" in *Essays on Wittgenstein and Weininger* (n. 3), 64–95. Although distancing himself from what he takes to be Weininger's excess with respect to women and Jews, Popper is reported to have a most favorable view of Weininger. At least this is what he has said to Reinhard Merkel (personal communication from Dr. Merkel). It is clear why this should be so if we merely glance at Weininger's notes and references where he clearly indicates who supports and who rejects the view that he maintains in good Popperian fashion. Perhaps Weininger was in fact the first Popperian! When he discusses "psychologism," for example, he makes copious references to both sides of the debate (522).
5. Carl E. Schorske, *Fin de siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Knopf, 1981). For a critique of Schorske, see my "Schorske's Vienna," *European Journal of Sociology* XXII (1981), 354–64.
6. Liberal here must be understood in the European sense, that is, "Manchester Liberal," rather than in the American sense. Liberalism is the view that the individual should be free to achieve whatever goals his or her talents and energy allow. It also embraces a free market attitude to economic life, an emphasis on individualism

- and a critical attitude to all forms of authoritarianism, especially political and religious. This includes a very critical view of democracy. Steven Beller was the first to call attention to Weininger's liberalism. I am deeply indebted to him for many stimulating conversations on the topics discussed in his article.
7. Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1962), 94–95.
 8. Albert Fuchs, *Geistige Strömungen in Österreich 1867–1918* (Vienna: Löcker, 1984), 144.
 9. Weininger's reference to Binet is oblique, that is, without mentioning him explicitly. Such oblique references help us to determine what Weininger expected his readers to know. On Binet see Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasurement of Man* (New York: Norton, 1981), 146–54.
 10. On Lombroso, see Stephen Jay Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), 120–25. On Hirschfeld see his programmatic statement in the first number of his *Jahrbuch für sexuelle Zwischenstufen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Homosexualität I* (1899).
 11. Frank Field, *The Last Days of Mankind: Karl Kraus and His Vienna* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 56.
 12. On the theory of plasms, see my "How Not to Write Austrian Intellectual History," in *Structure and Gestalt*, ed. Barry Smith (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1981), 263–92.
 13. Edward A. Minchin, "Protozoa," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed. (London, 1911), XXII, 486.
 14. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Dr. Weininger's Sex and Character," *The Critic* XLVIII (1906), 416.
 15. Cesare Lombroso, *The Female Offender*, (New York: Appleton, 1899). I have used the French translation, Cesare Lombroso and Guillelmo Ferrero, *La femme criminelle et la prostituée*, trans. L. Meille (Paris: Alcan, 1896) because the English edition was expurgated of all explicit references to sexual acts. The same is the case with the English edition of Weininger's book.
 16. On the significance of the bell-shaped curve for nineteenth-century science and intellectual life generally, see Georges Canguilhem, *Le normal et le pathologique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), 196 *et passim*.
 17. Various estimates of Lombroso can be found in F. Ward Denys, "Lombroso's Theory of Crime," a paper read before the "Clericus" in New York, 13 April 1896, and published privately, Nyack on Hudson, 1896; M. Bourault, "Des récents critiques du système de Lombroso," discours prononcé à l'ouverture de la conférence des avocats le 2 décembre 1895; the comments concerning Lombroso in Hans Gross, *Criminal Psychology: A Manual for Judges, Practitioners and Students*, trans. H. M. Kallen (Boston: Little, Brown & Co, 1918) are probably a fair estimate of Lombroso's status in 1897 when the book was written. They are interesting for two reasons: Gross was a leading Austrian jurist, who considered that Lombroso's "criminal anthropology" was no longer a viable position; yet it is clear from his presentation that the issues Lombroso raised were very much at the center of debate in contemporary jurisprudence. More recent evaluations of the Lombrosian program, the motivations of its proponents, and its scientific status can be found in Robert Nye, "Heredity of Milieu: The Foundations of Modern Criminological Theory," *Isis* 67 (1976) 335–55 and Gould (n. 10).
 18. See Friedrich Jodl's "Bericht" on Weininger's dissertation in Otto Weininger, *Eros und Psyche: Studien und Briefe 1899–1902*, ed. Hannelore Rodlauer (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), 212. The texts and the

- meticulous commentaries in this volume make it far and away the most important addition to the literature on Weininger in many a year.
19. See Guy Oakes *Weber and Rickert: Concept Formation in the Cultural Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 30–31. The idea that Weininger "stole" the notion of bisexuality from Fliess is absurd, even if his heirs lost a plagiarism suit to him. For the best account of this truly bizarre affair, see Frank Sulloway, *Freud: Biologist of the Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 222–32.
 20. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, "Was bedeutet asketische Ideale?" Section 10 (identical in all editions). Weininger's relationship to Nietzsche is complex and requires lengthy study. He was prepared to accept Nietzsche's critique of conventional morality but not his affirmation of sensuality. For that reason he praises the Wagner of *Parisfal* as rejecting sensuality and thus overcoming "Jewishness" in himself (408–9). For the same reason, rejects Schnitzler and Wedekind(!), Rodlauer (n. 18), 124, that is, because they fail to transcend sensuality. Nevertheless Weininger sees, as Carl Schorske does not, that Nietzsche is not to be identified with the coffeehouse intellectuals who speak in his name (441). I have discussed the problems of identifying Nietzsche with the "Nietzscheanism" of the Secession in "Ebner Contra Wagner: Erkenntnistheorie, Ästhetik und Erlösung um die Jahrhundertwende" in E. Brix and A. Janik, *Wien Um 1900: das Kreative Milieu* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1993). Georg Gimpl has shown that Weininger's discussion of the question "what is ugly?" involves taking exactly the position of his mentor, Friedrich Jodl, against Klimt and the secession. Gimpl, *Vernetzungen: Friedrich Jodl und der Kampf um die Aufklärung*, vol. 2 (Oulu, Finland, Veröffentlichungen des historischen Instituts der Universität Oulu, 1990), 185.
 21. On Habermas, see Thomas McCarthy, *The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978); cf. Lawrence Kohlberg, "The Claim to Moral Adequacy of a Highest Stage of Moral Judgment," *Journal of Philosophy* 70 (1973), 630–46.
 22. It is thus highly distorting to term Weininger an "anti-Freud" as LeRider does. See his "Weininger als Anti-Freud" appended to the text of Joshua Sobol's *Weininger's Nacht* (Vienna: Paulus Manker, 1988), 135–40.
 23. I have criticized the explanatory power of the concept of "self-hatred" as well as its application to Weininger in my "Viennese Culture and the Jewish Self-Hatred Hypothesis: A Critique" in Oxaal, Pollack, and Botz, *Jews, Anti-Semitism and Culture in Vienna* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), 75–88.
 24. It is seldom recognized that Weininger anticipates the notion of "the social construction of reality"—and therefore in a most curious way the sort of approach to anti-Semitism later taken by Jean-Paul Sartre—later developed by such sociologists as Alfred Schutz and Peter Berger. This is hardly surprising when we consider that his Greek teacher and mentor at the Piaristen Gymnasium was none other than Wilhelm Jerusalem, who first explored the notion. See John Torrance, "The Emergence of Sociology in Austria," *European Journal of Sociology* XVII (1976), 185–219.
 25. Steven Beller's *Vienna and the Jews 1867–1938: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) eloquently and learnedly explores this theme. I take it that Hans Tietze and Stefan Zweig's positive attitudes to Weininger are to be accounted for on the basis of their recognition that he was very much part of Vienna's liberal Jewish culture. Tietze, *Die Juden Wiens* (Vienna: Atleier, 1987), 268ff; Stefan Zweig, "Vorbeigehen an einem unauffälligen Menschen—Otto Weininger" in *Weininger's Nacht* (n. 22).
 26. *Ibid.*, 29.

27. Schorske, *Fin de Siecle Vienna*, 263; cf. n. 20.
28. This is what I infer from Swoboda's letter to Weininger of 25.X.1902 (in Rodlauer n. 18).
29. On Kraus and Strindberg as admirers of Weininger, see Erich Unglaub, "Strindberg, Weininger und Karl Kraus," *Recherches Germaniques* XVIII (1988), 121-50. To appreciate the common concerns of Strindberg and Weininger, one must read not only Strindberg's letters to Artur Gerber but also his Preface to *Miss Julie*.
30. See n. 19.
31. See Moritz Rappaport's preface to the second edition of Otto Weininger, *Über die letzten Dinge* (Vienna; Braumüller, 1907), v-xxiii.
32. A pamphlet (presumably promotional) of some forty seven pages, containing more than two dozen reviews of *Geschlecht und Charakter*, was published under that name by Braumüller in 1905 (the cover of the publication is simply a reprint of the cover of the fourth printing of the book: the publication, which I found in the *Nachlaß* of the philosopher Ferdinand Ebner in Innsbruck's Brenner Archive, contains no publication data at all). The materials contained within give us what is probably a representative sampling of the earliest reactions to Weininger. It is possible that the publisher slanted the perspective on Weininger positively, but having checked about eighteen contemporary American psychological journals containing reviews of the work in the Wellesley College Library myself, I am convinced that there is not much distortion in Braumüller's selections. I shall refer to it simply as "Braumüller."
33. *Allgemeine Wiener Medizinische Zeitung* no. 8 (1904), Braumüller, 33-34. On Weininger as a Tolstoian advocate of chastity, *ibid.*, 38, 43.
34. *Westen und Daheim* 3 August 1903, Braumüller, 41.
35. Ferdinand Probst, *Der Fall Otto Weininger: eine psychiatrische Studie* (Wiesbaden: Bergmann. 1904), 39.
36. *Ibid.*, 3.
37. *loc. cit.*
38. For the best statement of this view of the evaluation of scientific research, which is held by philosophers as different as Quine, Toulmin, Kuhn, and Feyerabend (appearances to the contrary notwithstanding), see Imre Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Research Programs," *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 91-196.

5

Escape from the Treadmill: Education, Politics, and the Mainsprings of Child Analysis

Kurt Jacobsen

"What the teacher digests, the students ingest."

—Karl Kraus (1911)

In Stefan Zweig's *The World of Yesterday* only the Nazis stir more of his scorn than do the imperious instructors in his *gymnasium*—one of many privileged yet oppressive sites of "monotonous, heartless, lifeless schooling" in Vienna.¹ In these pedagogical purgatories, the teachers, who in a status-mad society fancied themselves the equal of university professors, acted as the arch-enemies of intellectual curiosity, healthy instincts, and all forms of vitality. "We entered gymnasium at 10, and learned everything in 4 of the 8 years," Zweig bemoans. "[T]hen boredom struck." Herein swaggered a multitude of models for Heinrich Mann's *Professor Unrath*, the pathetic martinet better known in the film version *The Blue Angel*. In *fin de siècle* Austria-Hungary, it is virtually impossible to find a single "positive literary image" of secondary school experiences.²

Even after the 1908 Marchet reforms created the *realgymnasium* and the *reformrealgymnasium* to stress science and modern languages over the traditional regimen of Greek and Latin, these institutions, too, became purveyors of "parrot learning and terribly cruel teaching unrelated to the modern world" as much so as a classical *gymnasium*.³ (This caustic appraisal must apply all the more to the military schools excoriated in Musil's novel *Young Torless*, where blithering teachers preside over the extinction of any intellectual spark or moral qualm.) So Zweig, like many in his age and class cohort, dreamt only of "escape from the treadmill."

Such bitter complaints should not imply that graduates found absolutely nothing of merit in their educations. Wilhelm Reich was proud of his gymnasium