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# Hermine Cloeter, Feuilletons, and Vienna: A Flaneuse and Urban Cultural Archaeologist Wandering Through Opaque Spaces, Bridging Past and Present to Reclaim What Could Be Lost

Kelli D. Barbour

*Brigham Young University - Provo*

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HERMINE CLOETER, FEUILLETONS, AND VIENNA: A FLANEUSE AND URBAN  
CULTURAL ARCHAEOLOGIST WANDERING THROUGH OPAQUE SPACES,  
BRIDGING PAST AND PRESENT TO RECLAIM WHAT COULD BE LOST

by

Kelli D. Barbour

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Kelli D. Barbour

This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert B. McFarland, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy P. Brewer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle S. James

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the thesis of Kelli D. Barbour in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographic style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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Date

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Robert B. McFarland, Chair

Accepted for the Department

---

Alan F. Keele  
Graduate Coordinator

Accepted for the College

---

Van C. Gessel  
Dean, College of Humanities

## ABSTRACT

HERMINE CLOETER, FEUILLETONS, AND VIENNA: A FLANEUSE AND URBAN  
CULTURAL ARCHAEOLOGIST WANDERING THROUGH OPAQUE SPACES,  
BRIDGING PAST AND PRESENT TO RECLAIM WHAT COULD BE LOST

Kelli D. Barbour

Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages

Masters of Arts in German Literature

Despite the authority that time holds in the discipline of studying events of the past, not all historians or writers analyzing the past use time to study history—some use space, including writers who write about and interact with an urban topography. The space used by these writers is built space, as well as inhabited and practiced “lived” space. Whereas time provides a transparent overview of history, the urban spaces tend to be opaque. Clarifying history through urban space is additionally troublesome, because built space and its attached memories are visibly forgotten and ignored as time advances. Despite the difficulties of working with and understanding urban space, some intellectuals specifically choose space as a tool of discernment of history. For these individuals, understanding history becomes an investigation of sensing, feeling, and

divining human activity out of the mass of artifacts and used spaces. Hermine Cloeter is one such urban forensic historian.

Cloeter's writings record and redeem a tangible history, one based on her physical movement through the city, experiencing and exploring built elements of the urban landscape. Recognizing that pieces of the city's spatial history are being lost, flaneuse Hermine Cloeter writes and records experiences of Vienna's past through her own explorations of space, preventing the essence and cultural richness of the city from being lost in the progression of time. To prove this hypothesis, I have broken down my argument into four chapters. In Chapter One, I use biographical and autobiographical sources to look at the development of Cloeter's use of urban forensics: her approach to Viennese history and the city's built environment. In Chapter Two, I tie Cloeter to the cultural figure of the flaneur by describing her methodology of reading the urban topography and by showing her own position as a flaneuse. In Chapter Three, I look at Cloeter's essay "Durch die engste Gasse von Wien" to illustrate her methods of urban hermeneutics. Finally, in Chapter Four, I analyze Cloeter's interaction with individual built and lived spaces and artifacts, showing that Cloeter reclaims Vienna's history by merging the current topography with the cultural richness of Vienna's past.

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## Chapter One

### The Stones of Vienna:

#### Hermine Cloeter and the Spatial Practice of History

*Es gibt ein Bild von Klee, das Angelus Novus heißt. Ein Engel ist darauf dargestellt... Er hat das Antlitz der Vergangenheit zugewendet. Wo eine Kette von Begebenheit von uns erscheint, da sieht er eine einzige Katastrophe, die unablässig Trümmer auf Trümmer häuft und sie ihm vor die Füße schleudert. Er möchte wohl verweilen, die Toten wecken und das Zerschlagene zusammenfügen. Aber ein Sturm weht vom Paradiese her, der sich in seinen Flügeln verfangen hat und so stark ist, daß er Engel sie nicht mehr schließen kann. Dieser Sturm treibt ihn unaufhaltsam in die Zukunft, der er den Rücken kehrt, während der Trümmerhaufen vor ihm zum Himmel wächst. Das, was wir den Fortschritt nennen, ist dieser Sturm.*

~Walter Benjamin, "Über den Begriff der Geschichte"~<sup>1</sup>

*Die Ruprechtskirche! In der Schule haben wir gelernt, daß sie die älteste Kirche von Wien ist, und haben das sehr ehrfürchtig angehört. Wer uns aber hat sie jemals aufgesucht, ihr die schuldige Respektvisite gemacht?... Vergessen und vernachlässigt steht sie da, nicht anders als eine alte Muhme im Ausgeding. Nun sieht sie verwundert und ängstlich zu, wie ein junges Jahrhundert im Begriff ist, neue Kulissen um sie herum aufzustellen. Schutt und Ziegel liegen vor dem sterbenden Haus zu ihrer Linken aufgetürmt.*

~Hermine Cloeter, "Vom ältesten Wien"~<sup>2</sup>

Like Benjamin's angel, Hermine Cloeter spent a lifetime puzzling through the rubble and remains that surrounded her as she wandered through the streets of Vienna. Cloeter is best known, however, for conducting a forensic and cultural archaeological investigation of the stones that marked the burial remains of Vienna's most famous composer. Within days after Mozart's death, no one knew where he was buried, only that it was in a common grave in Vienna's St. Marx cemetery. The exact location of Mozart's remains would remain a mystery for almost two centuries, until Hermine Cloeter

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<sup>1</sup> Benjamin, Walter. "Über den Begriff der Geschichte." *Gesammelte Schriften I Teil 2*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1992. 697-698.

ventured to “unearth” the truth about one of Vienna’s most beloved musicians. Using her powers of observation along with the still available accounts of the funeral proceedings and cemetery reports, she tracked down the exact location of Mozart’s grave, resulting in the subsequent unearthing of Mozart’s skeleton.<sup>3</sup>

Mozart’s skull now lies in the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Mozart’s birthplace, available for viewing to curious tourists, Mozart aficionados, and scholars alike. The finding of the skull and skeleton is more than a tourist attraction; it provided the means for elucidating the mystery of the musician’s death. Mozart died from a blunt-force trauma to the head from a fall, most likely a result of a drunken stupor. Cloeter’s forensic investigation helped clarify a century-old mystery, rekindling interest in Mozart and his works of music.

But why was it Hermine Cloeter who was able to find Mozart when so many others had failed? Cloeter’s approach to finding the musician was different than most: she recognized the mystery of Mozart’s burial place to be a problem of space, rather than a problem of time. Where other searchers had used the timelines that explained where Mozart had been days or hours prior to his death and when the body was moved, Cloeter used a history of spatial practices, made up of a mixture of the city’s topography and the culture of the time. Like the expert in biological forensics who uses biological and mathematical clues to solve or elucidate a criminal event, Cloeter, as an urban forensics expert/urban cultural archaeologist, collected *material* clues in the urban landscape in

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<sup>2</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. “Vom ältesten Wien.” *Zwischen Gestern und Heute*. Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., 1911: 126-137.

<sup>3</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. *Die Grabstätte W.A. Mozarts auf den St. Marxer Friedhof in Wien*. Wien: Deutscher Verlag für Jugend und Volk Wien, 1931.

order to illuminate and recreate an historical event.<sup>4</sup> The materiality of the clues coupled with Cloeter's sensitivity towards the inherent value of those clues, allowed her not only to find Mozart's skeleton, but also to elucidate an urban space. Clues of spatial history accomplished what clues of temporal history could not: the mystery of Mozart's burial place no longer plagues the St. Marx Friedhof.

History is ideally transparent, especially history illuminated by the clarity of time. According to Enlightenment-era philosophy, the application of time to history allows for a transparent and clear understanding of historical events.<sup>5</sup> Because of the hegemony and power of time, it has become the main tool of historians.<sup>6</sup> History books are filled with dates and other references to time, all used in the attempt to clarify what happened. Timelines are used throughout the disciplines to explain developments of theories, the movements of people, the rise and fall of cultures, or even the life of a single individual.

Despite the authority that time holds in the discipline of history, not all historians or writers analyzing the past use time to study events of the past—some use space instead. The use of space to investigate history is especially prevalent with those historians and writers who write about and interact with an urban topography.<sup>7</sup> The space used by these writers is built space, as well as an inhabited and practiced “lived” space. Tangible artifacts, buildings, streets, houses, the ground, and the very materials used to construct spatial arrangements all constitute built space. The worn spots in stairs and

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<sup>4</sup> By forensics, I mean the use of material clues to elucidate, clear up, or prove the facts or existence of an event. By urban cultural archaeology, I mean the study of past human culture directly related to the urban setting using material remnants of that culture.

<sup>5</sup> See Leventhal, Robert S. *The Disciplines of Interpretation: Lessing, Herder, Schlegel and Hermeneutics in Germany 1750-1800*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994. 35-68.

<sup>6</sup> See Voss, Dietmar. “Die Rückseite des Flanerie: Versuch über ein Schlüsselphänomen der Moderne” in Klaus R. Sherpe (Ed.) *Die Unwirklichkeit der Städte: Großstadtdarstellungen zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988. 37-60.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

walkways, legends, stories, and daily practices such as graffiti, short cuts and misappropriations constitute lived space.<sup>8</sup> For theorists, such as Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau, and Walter Benjamin, urban space is an incredibly powerful tool for understanding human history within the context of the city.<sup>9</sup>

Whereas time provides a transparent overview of history, the spaces of a city tend to be opaque. Where time allows for a clear understanding of events, space can confuse this temporal-based understanding. This opacity comes from the human occupation of space and from the progress of time. As humans live in and create urban space, they endow the topography with stories and anecdotes, with an impression of human personality and with multitudes of meaning and importance. Because built space is endowed with these elements, rather than physically inscribed with meaning, the use of space to understand events of the past tends to be difficult. Clarifying history through urban space is additionally troublesome, because built space and its attached stories and memories are visibly forgotten and ignored as time advances. Despite the difficulties of working with and understanding urban space, some intellectuals specifically choose space as a tool for discernment and clarification of history. For these individuals, understanding history becomes an investigation of sensing, feeling, and divining human activity out of the mass of artifacts and used spaces, rather than an activity of merely seeing human evolution through time. Hermine Cloeter is one such urban forensic historian.

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<sup>8</sup> See de Certeau, Michel. "Walking in the City" in Michel de Certeau *The Practices of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. 89-110.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, de Certeau's "Walking in the City," Benjamin's "Passagenwerk," or Foucault's "Of Other Space: Heterotopias and Utopias."

Unfortunately, contemporary literary scholars have ignored Cloeter's writings, neglecting her contribution to literature.<sup>10</sup> Margaret Friedrich has written a book on the correspondences between Cloeter, her cousin, and the writer, Otto von Swietenek, shying away from analyzing any of her many books and articles. A lecture given on June 6, 2000 at the University of Vienna discussed Cloeter's relationship to the Wiener Moderne. Other than these two examples, no scholarly work or discussion is available to or present in the scholarly community. The lack of scholarship about Cloeter's literary works would suggest that either scholars have not been aware of her works or scholars have not found merit in her works worth the attention of a larger audience: by ignoring her works, they have declared her writings to be arcane, anti-modern, and ???insubstantial. Her popularity during her long and prolific writing career of more than sixty years, her thirteen books and more than two hundred feuilleton articles, her Ebner-Eschenbach prize, and her honorary professor title, however, suggest that her writings have significant value—a value waiting to be discovered and discussed. This thesis is an effort to present an initial critical analysis of Hermine Cloeter's writings, an attempt to continue a dialogue about Cloeter in the scholarly community and, above all, an effort to show that Cloeter's works are of singular literary value.

Throughout her career as a journalist and writer, Cloeter wrote about the history and built space of Vienna. But it is not just space and not just history that Cloeter writes about, she uses the physical spaces of Vienna to expose and explore a tangible history of the Austrian capital. This explanation of Cloeter's works is not a mere matter of opinion, however. The journalist readily admits the reasoning behind her life's work. In an

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<sup>10</sup> There are no scholarly articles written on Hermine Cloeter, other than articles written by the author of this thesis and the publications mentioned here.

unpublished autobiography, *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*, Cloeter closes her story with an explanation of *why* she wrote. Having returned from several trips to other European countries in 1910, Cloeter desired to walk through her childhood city with a perspective enriched by her experiences abroad. In her stroll through Vienna's *Innere Stadt*, she encounters the *Dreilauferhaus* and is shocked by what lies before her:

Da hielt mich ein unerwarteter Anblick fest, wie gebannt blieb ich auf der Stelle: das 'Dreilauferhaus' war im Abbruch begriffen. Schon war das Haus eingerüstet, sein Dach und das oberste Stockwerk bereits abgetragen, während in den Verkaufsräumen zu ebener Erde...Ich kann's nicht anders sagen: ich war von dem Anblick erschüttert. *Ich spürte es heftig wie hier nicht einfach Stein- und Mauerwerk fühllos in Schutt aufging, sondern wie da etwas Lebendiges, Beseeltes starb. Und ich hatte meine Aufgabe gefunden.* Zu Weihnachten 1911 ist dann mein erstes Buch erschienen.<sup>11</sup>

It is not the shock of seeing a building fall into disarray that agitates Cloeter and lays a foundation for her long career of writing, but rather Cloeter's keen recognition of what this building is and means to Vienna. The *Dreilauferhaus* functions as a living, dynamic repository of Vienna's spatial history—to lose the building, to let it “die,” would mean losing an essential part of Vienna and its past. Hermine Cloeter, as a master of urban forensics in Vienna, is not willing to allow such a loss.

Cloeter's writings record and expose a tangible history, one based on her physical movement through the city, experiencing and exploring built elements of the urban landscape. Recognizing that pieces of the city's spatial history are at risk of being lost,

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<sup>11</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*. Unpublished essay. Carton 31 of the Archiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Vienna, n.d.. 15. Emphasis added.

Hermine Cloeter, as a flaneuse, writes and records experiences of Vienna's past through her own explorations of space, preventing the essence and cultural richness of the city from being lost in the progression of time. To prove this hypothesis, I have broken down my argument into four chapters. In Chapter One, I will use biographical and autobiographical sources to look at the development of Cloeter's use of urban forensics: her approach to Viennese history and the city's built environment. In Chapter Two, I will tie Cloeter to the cultural figure of the flaneur by describing her methodology of reading the urban topography and by showing her own position as a flaneuse with a unique relationship to the city. The first two chapters lay the foundation for Chapters Three and Four, in which I will show more specifically how Cloeter uses the urban landscape of Vienna to redeem and reclaim its past. In Chapter Three, I will look at Cloeter's essay "Durch die engste Gasse von Wien" to illustrate her methods of urban hermeneutics. Finally, in Chapter Four, I will analyze Cloeter's interaction with individual built and lived spaces and artifacts, showing that Cloeter reclaims Vienna's spacial history by merging the current topography of the city with the cultural richness of Vienna's past.

Hermine Cloeter had a prolific writing career. Her first publication took place in November 1902 with the appearance of an article titled "Chopin" and was followed three months later, with the publication of a second article, "Das fremde Glück." Both articles were published in the *Deutsche Zeitung* under the pseudonym Justine Lot.<sup>12</sup> After these first two publications, Cloeter did not publish for five years, taking time to hone her writing skills and gain courage to publish what she wrote under her own name.

Beginning in June 1907 with the publication of "Rosen," her first feuilleton in Vienna's

*Neue Freie Presse*, her real name accompanied each of her works. Over the next thirty-one years, she continued to write feuilleton articles, producing at least 236 articles for the *Neue Freie Presse* before the newspaper's publication was halted with the arrival of Hitler in Vienna in 1938. After 1938, Cloeter continued her scholarly work, writing feuilleton-like essays for a variety of journals and society publications. Many of her feuilletons were collected and republished as books; *Zwischen Gestern und Heute: Wanderung durch Wien und den Wienerwald* is just one example. Over ninety of her feuilletons were eventually published in book form.<sup>13</sup>

Cloeter's feuilletons explored such things as the architecture of Vienna, cultural and historical figures of Austria and the Austrian capital, cultural iconography, the Austrian countryside, and even fairy tales. Many of her essays, especially those dealing with Vienna as a urban landscape, take the form of a walking dialogue describing what could be seen and explored by walking Viennese passageways. Her books, as collections of her feuilletons, explore similar topics. The aforementioned *Zwischen Gestern und Heute: Wanderung durch Wien und den Wienerwald*, *Häuser und Menschen von Wien* (1915), *Geist und Geister aus dem alten Wien* (1922), and *Wiener Gedenkblätter* (1966) explore the cultural heritage of Vienna and the beauty of the Viennese countryside. Two of her books, *Donauromanik* (1923) and *Beglücktes Wandern* (1947), deal specifically with culture in the *Weißkirchen*, *Wachau*, and *Niederösterreich* regions of Austria. The rest of her books consist of a collection of poetry (*Die ferne Geige* [1919]) that appeared as feuilletons, books on historical figures (*Die Grabstätte W.A. Mozarts* [1931]),

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<sup>12</sup> Friedrich, Margret (Hrsg.). *Ideal und Wirklichkeiten: Aspekte der Geschlechtergeschichte: Briefwechsel zwischen Hermine Cloeter, Emma Cloeter, und Otto von Zwiedineck-Südenhorst, 1893-1957*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1995. 561.

<sup>13</sup> Friedrich 561-566.

*Johann Thomas Trattner* [1952]), and a collection of Hugo Wittman's feuilletons (Hugo Wittmann Feuilletons [1925]), which Cloeter editor.

The variety of Cloeter's works and the themes contained within them are manifestations of her declared purpose in writing: reclaiming forgotten space through exploring and writing about it. Cloeter, however, did not accidentally or unintentionally happen upon this *raison d'être* for writing literary compositions: it is a result of a variety of influences, both in her personal life and in her associations with other artists. In order to investigate more fully her modes of examining and exploring Vienna, I will first look at the personal influences that shaped Cloeter's interests and purpose as a writer, including her childhood and natural personality. Second, I will discuss the more external influences that helped formulate Cloeter's literary intentions, including her mentors and the feuilleton form.

Cloeter's childhood experiences served to awaken her to the world of Vienna to her and to engender a keen perception of the urban landscape. Hermine Rose Justine Cloeter was born 31 January 1879 in Munich to Vienna-native Bertha Krause and Nürnberg-native Christoph Cloeter. Just after their only daughter turned one, the family moved to Vienna. Her father founded a varnish and hardware factory with the support of her maternal grandfather.<sup>14</sup> Though not Viennese by birth, Cloeter's affirms: "ich kam also nach Wien noch vor der Zeit bewußten Denkens."<sup>15</sup> Her earliest memories and formative years of development all took place in Vienna—it was her home city and remained so until she moved to *Weißkirchen* in 1963, at the age of eighty-four.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Friedrich, *Ideale und Wirklichkeit*: 12.

<sup>15</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. *Hermine Cloeter: Eigenes zu meinem Lebenslauf*. Unpublished Essay. Carton 33 of the Archiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Vienna, n.d.. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Altmann, Eugenie. Niece of Hermine Cloeter. Personal Interview. 11 Jan. 2004.

In her childhood years, Vienna was an all-pervasive background for Cloeter. She attended church and her parents made sure that she was active in the many social activities available to young Viennese girls, including concerts, art exhibits, and outings to the parks and forests which surrounded the city. These activities provided a basis for her later enthrallment with and adventures into the rich heritage of Vienna. Watching everything that went on around her was a talent and habit Cloeter developed early and as she admits, “ich konnte studenlang nichts tun, im Gras liegen und den Blumen ins Angesicht schauen oder in Zimmer und Stube nur mir still die Dinge besehen, die mich umgaben.”<sup>17</sup> This talent of observation melded well with her relationship with Vienna. In his radio biography of Cloeter, Joseph Handl recognized: “die Liebe zu Wien und allem Wienerischen hat schon von kindauf die persönlichen Wesenszüge Hermine Cloeters beeinflußt und geprägt.” He quotes Cloeter as saying: “die Atmosphäre von Wiens ererbter Kultur und Kunst [bot] jene Möglichkeiten, die [meiner] musischen Begabung zur Entfaltung dienten.”<sup>18</sup> Vienna was not just a static location where Cloeter spent her childhood, but rather a dynamic mix of culture, education, and curiosities.

Cloeter’s childhood interests and activities were supplemented and reinforced with academic education. She attended private schools and as a teenager, she enrolled at the renowned “Lyzeum der Frida Liste.”<sup>19</sup> Of her private education, Cloeter writes that it stood “auf hoher Stufe” and offered “der weiblichen Jugend die besten Bildungsmöglichkeiten.”<sup>20</sup> It was in the last years of private schooling that Cloeter began

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<sup>17</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*: 1.

<sup>18</sup> “Hermine Cloeter”. Transcript written by Joseph Handl. [ORF, Vienna]. n.d. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Friedrich, *Ideale und Wirklichkeiten*: 13.

<sup>20</sup> Cloeter, *Hermine Cloeter: Eigenes zu meinem Lebenslauf*: 1.

studying subjects that interested her throughout her life and became an important subject of her feuilletons, history, music, and art history.<sup>21</sup>

Cloeter's natural tendency towards observation, her knowledge of and kinship to the essence of Viennese space, and her discovery of subjects that intensely interested her created a sensitivity to and appreciation for certain parts of Vienna: those important to Vienna's history and culture. In walking through the city, Cloeter used her powers of observation to look at parts of the city often forgotten by others. Her knowledge of the city combined with her deep interest in Vienna's cultural heritage and her natural curiosity of unfamiliar space led to the production of articles that are often centered on the explanation of the historical significance of a certain building, house, or street in Vienna.

The skills Cloeter had developed through her childhood and education were further refined through her interaction with other writers, thinkers, and artists. Mentors helped Cloeter to direct her toward a deeper level of cultural appreciation and helped cultivate her writing skills.

One of Cloeter's most important mentors was the master Viennese artist William Unger. Cloeter describes Unger's influence with deep gratitude and appreciation for the hours she spent under his tutelage, noting:

Wie erquicklich der Kreis von Jugend, der sich allsonntäglich um den verehrten Meister zu versammeln liebte, aber auch anmutete, das Beste blieb doch stets, wenn man im ruhig bewegten Gespräch mit Vater Unger beisammen sitzen und sich eines Privatissimum erfreuen durfte. Sein reiches, vielseitiges Wissen, sein hoher, geläuterter Kunstgeschmack

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<sup>21</sup> Friedrich, *Ideale und Wirklichkeiten*: 13.

erschlossen einem da in ungezwungener, lebendiger, vom Augenblick und seinem Inhalt eingegebener Rede und Gegenrede tiefere Kenntnis vom wahren, heiligen Wesen der Kunst, als pedantische Lehrhaftigkeit und tote Buch gelehrsamkeit jemals vermitteln können.<sup>22</sup>

Unger's society and his invitation of others like him into their circle helped refine Cloeter's knowledge, skills, and interest in history, literature, and the arts. This refinement then functioned to make her more sensitive to the stories and histories that explained not only the world at large, but especially Vienna.

As Cloeter entered adulthood and searched for an avenue through which to explore her interests, the writer, Edmund Hellmer, played a significant role in Cloeter's scholarly development. Were it not for Hellmer, Cloeter may never have even considered writing. Music was Hermine Cloeter's first love. Could she have chosen any profession, she would have been a singer. However, due to acute nearsightedness, reading the small musical notes was almost impossible.<sup>23</sup> Despite this hindrance, Cloeter, her dream of becoming a singer still alive, continued with her singing lessons. When her parents, disapproving her choice to continue singing because of the strain, withdrew their support, she decided to continue her passion by relying on her language skills for financial support by working as a translator.<sup>24</sup> Asking the advice of longtime friend and editor of *Die Deutsche Zeitung*, Edmund Hellmer, Cloeter was advised to avoid the translating business, because of its many difficulties. Hellmer's next words then changed Cloeter's career and life direction: "Schreiben Sie doch selber was!"<sup>25</sup> Writing her own

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 3-4.

<sup>23</sup> Altmann, Personal Interview.

<sup>24</sup> Cloeter, *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*: 6.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

texts was not something she had ever considered—she was shocked by such a suggestion: “Ich war so verblüfft, wie wenn man mir etwa zugemutet hätte, ich sollte Seiltänzerin werden, und sagte ganz erschrocken: ‘Ja, das muß man ja auch können!’ Worauf er kurz und bestimmt erwiderte: ‘Sie können es—ich weiß es.’”<sup>26</sup> Despite her disbelief in her own abilities, Cloeter took his suggestion seriously and spent several weeks writing in a forest retreat. As mentioned, her first article, “Chopin”, was published in 1902, when Cloeter was twenty-three years old.

Hellmer sparked Cloeter’s interest in writing, but the feuilletonist Hugo Wittmann refined that interest. She met Wittmann while on a group trip to München. Cloeter was astounded that “ein Mann wie Hugo Wittmann es der Mühe wert fand, sich mit mir jungem Ding über alle möglichen Kunst- und Lebensfragen zu unterhalten.”<sup>27</sup> Cloeter was all the more astonished by his attention and recognition, because he was one of the most well known Viennese feuilletonists of her time.<sup>28</sup> Cloeter treasured this friendship and recognized how much it improved her writing skills:

Und welche Fülle von Stoff drängte doch zum Gespräch! Ich war glücklich mich mitteilen zu dürfen und auf Verständnis zu stoßen, glücklich, aus so freigebig gebotenem Wissen schöpfen zu können, glücklich vor allem, in Zustimmung vielfach eine Bestätigung und Bekräftigung meiner Ansichten, ja meines Wesens zu erfahren.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Cloeter, Hermine, Ed. *Hugo Wittman Feuilletons*. Wien: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht-Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1925. 5.

<sup>29</sup> Cloeter, *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*: 9.

Her association with Wittman helped reaffirm her endeavors in writing. Upon their return to Vienna, the master feuilletonist encouraged the young writer, helped to develop her writing skills, and introduced her work to the editor of the *Neue Freie Presse*.

With the encouragement of Wittman, Cloeter spent five years (1908-1913) making “eindrucksvolle Reisen” to other European cultural centers, including Switzerland, Paris, Italy, London, the Netherlands, and Germany.<sup>30</sup> Her visit to Paris was an exceptionally important moment in her development as a writer of articles about urban history. In Paris, Cloeter met Georges Cain, curator of the unique Musée Carnavelet. More than a mere museum documenting the history of Paris, Musée Carnavelet was a collection of strange items that gave insight into the forgotten moments of Parisian life and history. It was not so much Cain’s profession as a museum curator that had such a great impact on Cloeter, but what his profession allowed him to do. Inspired by the collection in the museum, Cain would stroll through Paris, looking for strange places and artifacts that provided connections to the lost world of Paris’s dark history.<sup>31</sup> Cain wrote about his walks in a series of books, whose titles reveal their great influence on Cloeter’s own works: *Pions de Paris*, *A travers Paris*, *Anciens théâtres de Paris*, *Promenades dans Paris*, and *Coins de Paris*.<sup>32</sup> Cloeter describes his writings as works of small, delightful conversions “worin er seine Leser kreuz und quer durch Paris führt, die Geschichte seiner Stadt aufgeblättert.”<sup>33</sup> Cloeter’s experience with Cain and his museum helped her to develop a keen sensitivity to the historical weight of European cities, helping her to

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<sup>30</sup> Cloeter, *Hermine Cloeter: Eigenes zu meinem Lebenslauf*: 1.

<sup>31</sup> Cloeter, *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*: 15.

<sup>32</sup> These titles roughly translate to *The Stones of Paris*, *Crossing Paris*, *Ancient Temples of Paris*, *Walks through Paris*, and *Corners of Paris*, respectively.

<sup>33</sup> Cloeter, *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*: 15.

understand “wie beredt tote Dinge sein können.”<sup>34</sup> Cain was the master of urban forensics in Paris, using the urban space of Paris to explore the material history of the French capital. Cloeter’s association with him helped to create a similar approach to the city of Vienna. Having been awakened to the essence and eloquence of urbanity’s “tote Dinge” and to the possibility of approaching the urban landscape via spatial arrangements, Cloeter returned to Vienna and sought to search out historically-laden places and artifacts in of her own city.

Besides Cain and the other historians and writers who mentored Cloeter, the actual form of the feuilleton fostered Cloeter’s fascination with Vienna’s artifacts and built landscape. Historically, the feuilleton constitutes an entire section of a European newspaper, dedicated to the cultural happenings of the city. As the newspaper, as a method of writing, developed over the last few centuries, the feuilleton has generally been reduced to one article of the paper. The content, however, has stayed the same. As scholar Günther Petersen describes, the feuilleton is “ein Kind des Journalismus; seine Ahnenreihe läßt sich bis auf die Zeit der aufklärerischen Popularphilosophie zurückführen.”<sup>35</sup> Through Peterson’s explanation, we see that the feuilleton is a type of journalism that allows the reader to reflect on and to explore popular philosophies/philosophical ideas of the present and past, including music, well-known writers and musicians, and building styles and design. Additionally, flaneurs—a unique type of urban writer to be discussed in Chapter Two—often chose this particular section of the newspaper as their place of publication (Franz Hessel is one such example). Cloeter’s choice to write in this literary form allowed her the freedom to explore the city

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

as she chose and encouraged a unique analysis of the metropolis's cultural essence and heritage.

Cloeter's perspective of a city's culture, space, and history combined with her unique writing style cemented Cloeter's purpose in writing. Her first trip into Vienna's city center upon returning from Paris, during which she wandered, intent to explore and write about her explorations, shows just how significant these varied influences were. Returning to Cloeter's quote regarding her task in writing, we see that her associations with scholars and fellow writers, and her experiences engendered a love for what she considered to be a living past:

In Herbst dann, nach monatelanger Abwesenheit von Wien, führten mich allerlei Besorgungen zum erstenmal wieder in die Innere Stadt...Da hielt mich ein unerwarteter Anblick fest, wie gebannt blieb ich auf der Stelle...Ich kann's nicht anders sagen: ich war von dem Anblick erschüttert. Ich spürte es heftig wie hier nicht einfach Stein- und Mauerwerk fühllos in Schutt aufging, sondern wie da etwas Lebendiges, Beseeltes starb. Und ich hatte meine Aufgabe gefunden. Zu Weihnachten 1911 ist dann mein erstes Buch erschienen.<sup>36</sup>

Through Cloeter's adventure into the city, she realized that because of ignorance and/or forgetfulness on the part of the typical Viennese inhabitant, historically important space was dying and needed to be revived. The feuilleton form, whether a single entity or a collection, was the perfect forum for reclaiming Vienna's spatial history and for showing

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<sup>35</sup> Petersen, Günther. *Feuilleton und Öffentliche Meinung : zur Theorie einer Literaturgattung im Kontext mit Ihrem Resonanzfeld*. Wiesbaden : Verlag für deutsche Wirtschaftsbiographien Heinz Flieger, 1992. 11.

<sup>36</sup> Cloeter, *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*: 15.

that the space containing Vienna's history was as much a part of the urban landscape as the current "built space" and present inhabitants.

Influenced by both personal and societal influences, Hermine Cloeter developed a purpose in writing that allowed her to experience urban history through urban space. Sensitive to built space, Cloeter's relationship with the city of Vienna, allowed her to record and portray these explorations of spatial history for others and to reclaim forgotten and dying parts of Vienna. Looking at the abandoned stones and bricks of Viennese urbanity, Cloeter shows herself to be a master of urban cultural archaeology and forensics, who like Walter Benjamin's angel of history, tries to reassemble the pieces of the past while the furious winds of progress swirl about her.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Please see the first quote provided at the beginning of the chapter for a better feeling of Benjamin's description of the angel of history.

## Chapter Two

### A Flaneuse in Vienna:

#### Cloeter's Wanderings in the City

*In diesem Haus erleben wir Landschaft und Menschen, hier erfassen wir Defregger und seiner Kunst zur Gänze. Wir wollen Hermine Cloeter für diese Wanderung dankbar sein!*  
~1938 Newspaper summary of Cloeter's forthcoming *Lekturstunde*~<sup>38</sup>

*Unter den Lesern eines kürzlich erschienen Buches von Hermine Cloeter dürften nicht wenige sein, die dieses schöne Gefühl der Dankbarkeit empfunden haben. Es ist ein Buch aus Wien, ein Buch über Wien, und die so bekannte, so unbekannt Stadt erwacht da vor unseren Augen...Ihr (Cloeter) ist so ein altes Haus wirklich gleich einem lebendigen Wesen, in dessen Seele jede Erfahrung sichtbare Spuren zurückgelassen. Man braucht nur die Formel zu wissen, die es zum Sprechen bringt, und es erzählt uns mitteilhaft seine mannigfaltige Lebensgeschichte.*

~1911 Review of Hermine Cloeter's *Zwischen Gestern und Heute*~<sup>39</sup>

On a walk into the ancient center of Vienna, Hermine Cloeter finds herself on the small, narrow Wächtergasse. She follows the small passageway, finding a staircase that, as we soon learn, leads to the *Tiefe Graben* and provides a foundation for her subsequent experiences with the essence of the historic city center. Walking up the stairs, the reader notices something in her language that is absent in most representations of the city by the flaneur: she mentions her dress. In her description of the decrepit stone steps, Cloeter notes: “man tut gut, das Kleid sorgfältig zu rassen, steigt man über sie hinab.”<sup>40</sup> If she does not adjust her dress, she may trip on the narrow, old stone stairs. With this very short glance downward in her walk around Vienna, Cloeter provides a rare moment of

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<sup>38</sup> “Auf den Spuren eines Osttiroler Malers. Im Geburtshaus Defreggers: Hermine Cloeter erzählt am Donnerstag.” n.p. Carton 32 of the Archiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften: Vienna, 18 Aug. 1938.

<sup>39</sup> W. “Zwischen Gestern und Heute.” *Neue Freie Presse* 12 Dec. 1911: 1.

<sup>40</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. “Durch die engste Gasse von Wien.” *Zwischen Gestern und Heute*. Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co. 1911: 106.

female subjectivity. Her walk and her gaze are now gendered, and the reader is aware that he or she will be seeing Vienna through the eyes of a female walker.

In Chapter One, I identified Cloeter's self-proclaimed purpose for her writing—to investigate Vienna and its history by means of urban forensics and cultural archaeology. In this chapter, I will focus on one of the most significant elements of Cloeter's forensics: her methods of reading historical significance into the artifacts and built landscape of Vienna. I will show that as Cloeter walks through the city looking for material and spatial manifestations of history, her path intersects with the footsteps of the modern figure of the flaneur, that consummate urban wanderer and restless observer. By placing Cloeter's *Zwischen Gestern und Heute: Wanderungen durch Wien und den Wienerwald* into the context of the theories and texts associated with the flaneur, I will evaluate her importance as a flaneuse, a female urban walker whose very existence is currently at the center of an ideological controversy.

My connection of Cloeter to the art of flanerie is not only based on her obvious presence as a walking, writing subject in the city. I will show that her particular methods of seeing and interpreting the urban landscape resonate deeply with central theoretical texts that discuss the role of the flaneur in the twentieth century. I will first discuss the significance of the flaneur as a figure who reads and interprets the urban landscape. Second, I will explore the debate surrounding the figure of the flaneuse and discuss the importance of Cloeter's importance as a female walker and writer in Vienna. Third, I will discuss the flaneur's representation of the urban setting in regards to time and space. Finally, using parallel examples from Franz Hessel's *Spazieren in Berlin*, an acclaimed collection of flaneuristic feuilletons, I will prove that Cloeter's *Zwischen Gestern und*

*Heute* focuses on the central interest of the flaneur, which is to represent the urban landscape through spatial, as well as temporal means.

The literary and theoretical figure of the flaneur has been a part of urban literature for centuries. Literary texts such as E.T.A Hoffman's *Des Veters Eckfenster* and *Das öde Haus*, Charles Baudelaire's *Paris Spleen*, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Walter Benjamin's *Passagenwerk*, and Irmgard Keun's *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*, participate in the practical literary description and development of the flaneur. Theoretical texts, such as Michele de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Deborah Parson's *Streetwalking the Metropolis*, and Eckhardt Köhn's *Straßenrausch*, have further developed and redefined the characterization of the flaneur and his work.<sup>41</sup> The noun *flâneur* is derived from the French verb *flâner*, which translates in English as "to stroll, saunter; to hang about, lounge." Webster's dictionary defines a *flâneur* as "one who strolls about aimlessly; a lounge, loafer."<sup>42</sup>

The most important discussion of the flaneur and the significance of the art of flânerie are found in the writings of cultural critic and theorist Walter Benjamin. He sees the flaneur as a metaphorical manifestation of the aesthetic and economic forces of modernity, and his discussions of the flaneur have formed the basics of an important academic discourse. While single definitions can give a good general explanation of the person who performs the action of the verb, they do not represent the importance of the figure within the cultural and historical context. The flaneur's importance is best defined

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<sup>41</sup> Because literature regarding the flaneur has always described a male character, I will use "he", instead of representing both genders. When feminine pronouns are used, they will signify that that particular characteristic or quality is only to be found as part of the female's interaction with the city. I call for this exception to change in the future. My use of the term flâneuse, which I use in reference to Cloeter, is influenced by Deborah Parson's discourse model of the flâneuse as "a particular mode of female urban vision" (Parson, Deborah, *Streetwalking the metropolis: 6-7.*), though I am wary of possible sexist connotations that accompany the term.

by Charles Baudelaire, whom Walter Benjamin would later characterize as one of the last great flaneurs. Baudelaire defines this type of urban writer,<sup>43</sup> this “painter of modern life,” as “observer, philosopher” and explains that “sometimes he is a poet; more often he comes closer to the novelist or the moralist; he is the painter of the passing moment and of all the suggestions of eternity that it contains.”<sup>44</sup> The flaneur, by Baudelaire’s definition, is a philosopher and observer of the urban landscape. Through his interactions, he captures and presents the city as it is without time, appreciating everything—its past, present and modernity—as the essence of the city he experiences.

The flaneur’s activity in the city is quite unique—he walks without a locational goal in mind. He is the person who sees forces at work in the city, following his interests, being attracted from one spectacle of modernity to another. Walter Benjamin’s description of the narrator of E.T.A Hoffman’s “Das Öde Haus” as a prototype of the flaneur, explains this meandering quality:

Seine Leidenschaft ist es, allein durch die Straßen zu wandeln, die begegnenden Gestalten zu betrachten... Tagelang läuft er hinter ihm unbekanntem Personen her, die irgend etwas Verwunderliches im Gang, Kleidung, Ton und Blick haben. Er fühlt sich in beständiger Berührung mit dem Übersinnlichen, und mehr noch als er die Geisterwelt, verfolgt, die Geisterwelt Ihm.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> “Flaneur.” *Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*. 1998 ed.

<sup>43</sup> The urban writer is an individual, who writes about the urban landscape in a variety of capacities. The flaneur is a very specific type of urban writer. Having said this, however, unless otherwise noted, I will use urban writer synonymously with flaneur in order to avoid repetition. Hermine Cloeter is a flaneuse and not just a general writer of the city.

<sup>44</sup> Baudelaire, Charles. *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*. London: Phaidon Press. 1995. 4-5.

<sup>45</sup> Benjamin, Walter. “Das dämonische Berlin” in *Nachträge. Gesammelte Schriften VII Teil 1*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1992. 91.

The flaneur's roving eye is attracted to whatever interests him, rational or not, especially when it pertains to people. His quest is to sense and feel a world that cannot be seen; one created of invisible economic, cultural, and historical forces.

For the flaneur, nothing in the city is unconnected—his roving eye sees the connection between all facets of the city. The urban landscape is a “Welt der Bezüge”<sup>46</sup> in which the flaneur urban writer/poet sees:

the world not as an accumulation of categories, abstract concepts and general laws, but as an infinitely complex lattice of relationships... [He] falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.<sup>47</sup>

As the flaneur moves through the built, lived, and inhabited spaces, he connects seemingly unconnected parts to each other, seeing the eternal in the everyday and the everyday in the eternal. Everything in the urban environment can be related, joined and juxtaposed—any connection, whether rational or irrational is possible.<sup>48</sup>

Derived from a gendered language, the title of flaneur has a distinctively masculine connotation. The question, then, is raised as to whether or not a woman could be a flaneuse, a feminine version of the flaneur.<sup>49</sup> Today the presence of a woman on a city street is not necessarily questioned as she walks alone in her desire to follow her

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<sup>46</sup> McFarlane, James. “The Mind of Modernism” in Malcom Bradbury and James McFarlane (Eds.). *Modernism 1890-1930*. New York: Penguin Books, 1991. 83.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> For more information on the flaneur, please see Neumeyer, Harald. *Der Flaneur: Konzeptionen der Moderne*. Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, 1999.

curiosity and discover the many components of her city. However, such an activity has only become socially acceptable in the last few decades. The streets and public space were historically the domain of men—a man’s presence in the city was not questioned or deemed socially perverse. But for a woman to be out on the streets without the purpose of shopping or working (either traveling to work or selling goods at the market) was against the rules of society. As scholar Maria Kublitz-Kramer explains

soziale Positionen, zwischen denen ein Machtgefälle herrscht, haben sich in die Straßen eingeschrieben: Frauen dürfen zu bestimmten Zeiten Straßen nicht benutzen oder auf ihnen gesehen werden, es sei denn, sie bewegen sich auf ihnen in (männlicher) Begleitung, zielgerichtet (z.B. um Einkäufe zu erledigen) oder gewerbsmäßig (Händlerinnen und Prostituierte). Aufgrund des geschlechtsdifferenten Zugriffs auf den Raum der Straße erleben Frauen die Straße anders als Männer. Die Frau auf der Straße, deren Position einerseits eine Randständige, andererseits eine sexuell konnotierte und damit moralischen Kategorien unterworfen ist, kann weder als Opposition noch als Äquivalent zum Mann auf der Straße gelten.<sup>50</sup>

According to the societal order, women were not supposed to use the streets and other passageways, nor were they even supposed to be seen on them alone. If a woman was not being chaperoned by a man, she could be on the streets alone only if her activities had to do with shopping for herself or her household or with business. Certainly, a woman

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<sup>49</sup> For an interesting discussion of the flaneur, women in the city, and other topics having to do with the art of walking, please see: Solnit, Rebecca. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York: Penguin Books, 2000.

could never be on the streets for pleasure or leisure. To be seen on the street without purpose was to make one's self available to accusations of sexual misconduct or moral laxity.

This social non-acceptance worked to keep women from experiencing the city and has been the basis of conflicting arguments as to whether women could and did actually participate in analyzing the city as text and in the subsequent creation of urban literature. The entire debate on the possible existence of a flaneuse is centered on the very fact that women were not socially allowed to experience the city. According to scholar Janet Wolff, who argues that the flaneuse does not exist,

the public sphere...despite the presence of some women in certain contained areas of it, was a masculine domain. And insofar as the experience of 'the Modern' occurred mainly in the public sphere, it was primarily men's experience...there is no question of inventing the flaneuse: the essential point is that such a character was rendered impossible by the sexual divisions of the nineteenth century.<sup>51</sup>

Modernity, a critical part of the flaneur's experience, was to be experienced in public sphere of streets, which, as a masculine domain, conceivably kept women from contributing to the field of urban exegesis. Due to social pressures and restrictions, some critics insist that the female urban writer did not and could not have existed until societal expectations changed.

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<sup>50</sup> Kublitz-Kramer, Maria. *Frauen auf Straßen: Topographien des Begehrens in Erzähltexten von Gegenwartautorinnen*. München: Fink Verlag, 1995. 10.

<sup>51</sup> Wolff, Janet. "The Invisible Flaneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity." *Theory, Culture, and Society* 2 (1985): 37.

On the other side of the flaneuse debate, Anke Gleber argues that the flaneuse's existence was possible. Gleber is quite aware of the social limitations placed on women, conceding that "if women have been considered absent or 'invisible,' it is partially because they have been removed from the street."<sup>52</sup> She follows this concession, however, with the declaration that "a few critics, however, have taken steps to redress this assumed absence of the female flaneur, finding a tentative presence of women in the street."<sup>53</sup> One of these critics, who has found evidence for the existence of the female flaneur, or at least a forerunner to such a figure, is Griselda Pollock. Like Gleber, Pollock recognizes the social restrictions placed on women, but sees the chance for an exception to the general rule. For Pollock, the argument is not that "there is not and could not be a female flaneur," but that "there was not supposed to be a female flaneur, and that not many women managed or dared to exceed this prevailing prohibition."<sup>54</sup> As Anke Gleber and others have shown, although many women did not risk being socially condemned for indulging their curiosities in the spectacles of the urban landscape, there were a few women who ignored prevailing ideological restrictions and ventured into the city.

As can be seen in the titles of her books and articles, Hermine Cloeter was one of these women who stepped out into the streets of modernity. Cloeter, as part of the flaneur community, wrote about the same city, with which flaneurs such as Peter Altenberg and Otto Friedlander interacted and described. Cloeter was different than most daring women of her time. Where most women who did venture out onto the streets did

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<sup>52</sup> Gleber, Anke. *The Art of Taking a Walk: Flanerie, Literature, and Film in Weimar*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1999. 175.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

so for political reasons, Cloeter's wanderings through Vienna had nothing to do with the politics of the women's movement.<sup>55</sup> Instead, her love for nature and the city drew her out to the streets of Vienna and the surrounding forest.<sup>56</sup> Her walks through the Viennese landscape, whether an urban walk or a hike in the countryside, were not simply leisure activities. Cloeter's walks were the basis and foundation for her writings. As she strolled along a street or path, various sights, people, and memories piqued her curiosity and led to her subsequent research and articles.<sup>57</sup> Occasionally Cloeter walked with others (i.e. Hugo Wittman) to talk about her writing.<sup>58</sup> More importantly, she preferred to walk **alone**. Though none of her works directly address her isolation in walking, an interview with her niece revealed that she walked "am meistens allein."<sup>59</sup> Cloeter's mere presence on the streets of Vienna was marked by her gender. Figure 2.1 shows a young Cloeter as she heads out on one of her walks.<sup>60</sup> As shown in this picture and in the passage at the beginning of the chapter, Cloeter did not join the famous Parisian walker George Sands in her flamboyant cross-dressing that freed her from the restrictive gazes of her fellow citizens. Cloeter always dressed in the appropriate female apparel. She did not change her clothes to hide the fact that she was a woman who had to raise her skirt to continue climbing the stairs of the Wächtergasse. Though her visible femininity, at times, may have proved an annoyance, it did not keep her from walking through the streets of Vienna and then writing about her experiences.

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<sup>55</sup> Friedrich, *Ideale und Wirklichkeit*: 14.

<sup>56</sup> Altmann, Personal Interview.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Cloeter, *Wie ich Schriftstellerin wurde*: 13.

<sup>59</sup> Altmann, Personal Interview.

<sup>60</sup> Untitled Photograph of Hermine Cloeter. Carton #35 of the Archiv der Oesterreichischen Academie der Wissenschaften.



Figure 2.1 Picture of Hermine Cloeter Before a Walk

Cloeter's viewpoint as a walker, a historian and as a woman gave her unique insight into the urban landscape around her. She used her walks to perform her own kind of urban forensics—historical readings of the artifacts and built spaces around her. The walking, self-conscious flaneur has a unique relationship to the city and its history; one different from other writers. Where other urban historians tend to focus on a comprehensive representation of a time period, with a set of chronological events that take place in the space of the city, the flaneur is much more deeply rooted in the material and corporeal experience of the city. As a walking viewer, a flaneur is ultra sensitive to the material traces of the past, and the tenuous existence of these traces. The flaneur sees the inseparable connection between past events and the spaces where he is walking. The flaneur brings to light all of the hidden stories, practices and symbolic resonances that are attached to the solid material arrangements in the city's landscape. A look at a door might bring to mind an event or a person far distant in the forgotten past. In the very next footsteps, after having strolled a little farther along the street, the flaneur might see a person, a children's game or a broken stone which reveals some force at work in the present. For a flaneur such as Walter Benjamin, the past is, as Eckhard Köhn phrases it

‘ganz und gar nicht was einmal war; sie ist nur was von dem, was einmal war, übrigblieb. Das sind Spuren und Erinnerungen.’...Für Benjamin aber bezeichnet die Äußerung den Sachverhalt, daß das vergangene Erleben damit potentiell zum Gegenstand einer neuen Erfahrung werden kann.<sup>61</sup>

The past with which the flaneur interacts is the remnant of what remains behind as the city has changed, embraced innovations, and been modernized. Through his stroll

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<sup>61</sup> Köhn, Eckhardt. *Straßenrausch: Flanerie und Kleine Form. Versuch zur Literaturgeschichte des Flaneurs von 1830-1933*. Berlin: Arsenal, 1989. 213.

through the city, the flaneur, like Benjamin's angel of history quoted in Chapter One, encounters these remnants, experiencing and treating them as obscure passages in the constantly changing urban text.

Since he knows that remnants of the past are to be encountered in the urban space, the flaneur's movements through the city take on the role of preservation. Strolling through the city becomes, according to Köhn, an act of determinedly remembering and preserving the past:

Wie er die letzte Pappel zum Anlaß nimmt, und die Beschaffenheit der früheren Landstraße zu erinnern und sie mit dem gegenwärtigen Zustand zu vergleichen, tritt der Spaziergänger auf allen seinen Wegen durch die Stadt nicht nur beobachtend, sondern ebenso memorierend auf, sichert archäologisch die Spuren der alten Residenzstadt und greift auf historische Quellen und eigene Erinnerungen zurück.<sup>62</sup>

As the flaneur strolls, he observes, but also serves as a documenting witness of the city's past, recognizing traces of the past apparent in the present city, explaining their origins and insuring that the influences that created the city will be fully appreciated in the future.

Cloeter is very much concerned with the documentation and preservation of the urban past. I will cite several examples of this type of documentation from Cloeter's collection *Zwischen Gestern und Heute*. I will then compare *Zwischen Gestern und Heute* with a few parallel examples from Franz Hessel's collection of feuilletons titled *Spazieren in Berlin*. I have chosen Hessel's text as a tool to approach Cloeter's works, because this text plays a central role in the discussion of the flaneur in the twentieth

century. Walter Benjamin saw *Spazieren in Berlin* as a sign of a new avatar of the lost figure of the nineteenth-century Parisian flaneur. During his lifetime, Benjamin did much to solidify and define the nature of the flaneur and his relationship to the city. For Benjamin, the last great flaneur was to be found in the nineteenth century in the French poet Charles Baudelaire, whose walks through Paris condemned and simultaneously celebrated the ever-changing light of modernity.<sup>63</sup> During Germany's Weimar period, however, Benjamin discovered Hessel, a fellow Berlin native, whom he hailed, critiqued, and analyzed as the returned embodiment of the flaneur.

In his essay titled "Die Wiederkehr des Flaneurs," Benjamin described Hessel as a distinctly modern flaneur, whose work is important for two reasons. First, Benjamin shows that the flaneur could indeed exist even in the hyper-modern world of the 20<sup>th</sup> century city. In Benjamin's eyes, Hessel was able to do what earlier flaneurs had succeeded in doing—walking through a bustling city, sensing a hidden layer of a city's essence. For the flaneur of the twentieth century, this hidden layer was the interaction between the past and present. The flaneur became someone who could see past the material reality of the city and conjure up the lost world of the past: "Im Asphalt, über den er hingeht, wecken seine Schritte eine erstaunliche Resonanz. Das Gaslicht, das auf das Pflaster herunterscheint, wirft ein zweideutiges Licht über diesen doppelten Boden."<sup>64</sup> As a 20<sup>th</sup> century flaneur, Hessel's very movement in the city awakens a hidden resonance beneath the asphalt. The gas lamp that lights the streets along which the flaneur strolls, casts an ambiguous light onto the streets, detracting from the exactness

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 109.

<sup>63</sup> Benjamin, Walter. "Charles Baudelaire. Ein Lyriker im Zeitalter des Hochkapitalismus." *Gesammelte Schriften I Teil 2*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1992. 509-690.

of the street as it was meant to be and allowing the flaneur to detect the ambiguity and sense what lies hidden in the urban landscape. Theorist Michel Foucault has called this type of layered space heterotopic. Heterotopic places reveal a multivalent capability of urban space, simultaneously full of multiple meanings, including contradictory or altered meanings.<sup>65</sup>

The second reason why Hessel's *Spazieren in Berlin* is important for a discussion of Cloeter's works can be found in its significant similarity to Hermine Cloeter's text *Zwischen Gestern und Heute*. Hessel's text represents the metropolis of Berlin by forging links in the urban landscape between Berlin's past and its overwhelming present. Benjamin describes the Berlin native's approach as being motivated by more than just describing the city's sights: "Als Einheimischer zum Bild einer Stadt zu kommen, erfordert andere, tiefere Motive. Motive dessen, der ins Vergangene statt ins Ferne reist."<sup>66</sup> Instead of traveling through far distances in the city and its surrounding areas, Hessel is sensitive to the multitudes of time that run through the single space of Berlin.

If the footsteps in Hessel's *Spazieren in Berlin* awaken a deep-lying resonance in Germany's capital, then Cloeter's *Wanderungen durch Wien* contains a similar kind of footstep, although a *Wanderung* is certainly different than a *Spaziergang*. As a flaneuse, Cloeter also possesses a sensitivity to hidden manifestations of the past: it is a part of her purpose in writing and is apparent throughout this collection of feuilleton articles. Like Hessel's *Spazieren in Berlin*, Cloeter's *Zwischen Gestern und Heute* is a collection of feuilletons written for the newspaper. Among the fifteen feuilletons, roughly half deal

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<sup>64</sup> Benjamin, Walter. "Die Wiederkehr des Flaneurs" in *Gesammelte Schriften III*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981. 194.

<sup>65</sup> The concept of heterotopias will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Four.

<sup>66</sup> Benjamin, Walter. "Die Wiederkehr des Flaneurs." 194.

with the city, from the perspective of Cloeter's walking presence. The other half focus on her walks through the forests and mountains surrounding Vienna. The compositions pertinent to this discussion are investigations into such places as the *Trattnerhof* and its surrounding area, the *Museum der Stadt Wien*, the *Apolloaal*, the area of the historic city center around the *Dreilaufferhaus*, the *Hohemarkt* and *Ruprechtskirche* areas, the *Brentano-Haus*, and the *Karlsplatz* area. In discussing these many built and lived spaces of Vienna's first district, Cloeter senses a world of past practices, legends, and personalities.

The sensitivity that Cloeter demonstrates in these writings is apparent first and foremost through her attention to ignored and dying areas of the city. In her feuilleton entitled "Das Dreilaufferhaus," Cloeter describes the Viennese's interaction with this dying piece of urban architecture:

Einer hat lange mitten unter uns gelebt, ohne daß wir seiner sonderlich geachtet hätten. Er stand neben uns, tat im stillen seine Pflicht, wir sind oft an ihm vorübergegangen...Wir haben auch gar nicht viel über ihn nachgedacht. Da holt ihn plötzlich der Tod hinweg...Wir hatten nur nicht genügend hingesehen.<sup>67</sup>

The *Dreilaufferhaus*, though completely visible and accessible to the strolling members of Viennese culture, has been wantonly ignored—so much so that it has fallen into disarray.

Hessel's feuilleton "Nachwort an die Berliner" expresses a similar sentiment.

Referring to the city as a whole, rather than focusing on a particular part, Hessel admonishes: "Wir Berliner müssen unserer Stadt noch viel mehr—bewohnen. Es ist gar

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<sup>67</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. "Das Dreilaufferhaus." *Zwischen Gestern und Heute: Wanderungen durch Wien und den Wienerwald*. Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., 1911: 80.

nicht so leicht, das Ansehen sowohl wie das Bewohnen bei einer Stadt, die immerzu unterwegs, immer im Begriff ist, anders zu werden und nie in ihrem Gestern ausruht.”<sup>68</sup>

For both Hessel and Cloeter, certain areas of the urban landscape have been ignored and “disinhabited” as the city constantly changes. The *Dreilaufferhaus*, having been overlooked by the Viennese, who find it no longer useful to them, will soon be replaced with newer, more modern buildings. Cloeter is trying to draw the attention of the Viennese toward built space, before it and its attached memories are destroyed, just as Hessel is calling for the Berliners to come and inhabit parts of the city, which are disappearing as the city transforms itself.

Another example of Cloeter’s awareness of the ignored, dying parts of the city is in her feuilleton “Im Trattnerhof.” Referring to the forthcoming replacement of the old houses lining the *Graben*, Cloeter notes “auch möge man uns nicht mitleidig belächeln, wenn wurd uns an dem anderen alten Grabenhaus, Ecke der Dorotheergasse, nur bangen Herzens, wie in Abschiedsstimmung, erfreuen können und den Augenblick fürchten, da auch seiner vornehmen und doch behaglichen Schönheit das Todesurteil gesprochen wird....”<sup>69</sup> Here is another piece of Vienna’s spatial arrangement that is about to be replaced and as Cloeter continues in her feuilleton, reciting the history of these houses, it is again apparent that she is sensitive to these particular areas of the city. Through her writings, she offers the Viennese a chance to come, walk, and appreciate the areas of the city that will soon be forgotten.

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<sup>68</sup> Hessel, Franz. “Spazieren in Berlin” in *Sämtliche Werke III*. Oldenburg: Igel Verlag, 1999. 192.

<sup>69</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. “Der Trattnerhof.” *Zwischen Gestern und Heute: Wanderungen durch Wien und den Wienerwald*. Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., 1911: 6.

Awareness of disregarded areas of the city is crucially important, because it allows Cloeter to use space to understand the events of the past. In walking through the city, Cloeter is interacting with spatial clues in the form of passageways and buildings. As she describes the space, her descriptions become avenues for sensing, feeling, and divining the human activity that has made Vienna what it is. But why does space allow itself to be used as a tool to understanding human activity of the past? Hessel, in his feuilleton “Zeitungsviertel” proclaims that spaces are actually places which preserve the human touch, in the form of intellect, spirit, and even actual ghosts: “In den südlicheren Friedrichstadt stehen ein paar großmächtige Häuser, alte Festungen des Geistes.”<sup>70</sup> It becomes possible to use space to elucidate historical periods of time because the spirit and intellect of people, as well as physical ghosts, which are artifacts from past events and people, remain attached to buildings and houses.

For an example of spatially-clarified history in Cloeter’s works, let us return to her feuilleton concerning the “Dreilaufferhaus.” Having noted that this particular house has been overlooked and will soon be destroyed, Cloeter tells her readers why this *space* is so important: “Da wir sein Ende vor uns sehen, fragen wir unwillkürlich nach dem Anfang. Alte Geschichten werden laut...wohlbekannte Gestalten huschen wie Schatten an uns vorüber.”<sup>71</sup> The Dreilaufferhaus, like the houses in the Friedrichstadt, functions as a repository for stories and figures that have inhabited the lived space of the house since it was built.

Urban space becomes a fortress for the remnants of time. Flaneurs, as seen in the examples of both Hessel and Cloeter, recognizes their role in protecting the material and

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<sup>70</sup> Hessel, Franz, “Spazieren in Berlin:” 177.

<sup>71</sup> Cloeter, Hermine “Das Dreilaufferhaus:” 80.

spatial manifestations of history. But that is not all that flaneur does: recognition of built and lived space leads to a clearer understanding and an increased appreciation of the human history dwelling therein. Cloeter's feuilletons are rich with examples of descriptions of space that lead to the elucidation of history. For example, in the quote in the previous paragraph, we notice that the inhabiting stories, names and figures appear as shadows or faint audible remnants. Through her feuilletons, however, the darker shadows are illuminated and made readily visible. We are left with a clear understanding of the people, names, and stories. One of the shadowy figures inhabiting the *Dreilaufferhaus*, for example, Cloeter tells us, is of Beaumarchais: "Wahrlich, an dieser Straßenecke drängten sich die interessantesten Persönlichkeiten der Wiener Kunstgeschichte, eine Größe reichte der anderen die Hand. Auch ein interessanter, hochberühmter Fremdling guckt dort oben in unserm Eckhaus zum Fenster heraus: Beaumarchais, der während seines Wiener Aufenthalts hier wohnte."<sup>72</sup> Because she has explored this space, one of the house's historic and shadowy figures is recalled to life. The house was a place of habitation for Viennese and non-Viennese alike, Beaumarchais being one of them.

Cloeter's feuilleton "Wo man gestern tanzte..." provides an excellent example of the way the author clarifies a historical story through the use of space. In this case, the story is that of the dances that had taken place in the *Apolloaal*. Through Cloeter's attention to the room, we learn that the *Apolloaal* was not just a room where the Viennese danced. It was also the room in which the many politicians, royalty, and other illustrious persons who constituted the Congress of Vienna, had danced Vienna's famous waltzes, socialized, and eaten Viennese delicacies. The exploration of the space of the

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid. 85.

ballroom allows Cloeter's readers to appreciate the incredible time of the Congress of Vienna, which, in Cloeter's words, bequeathed "unserer Kindheit so viel Wunder."<sup>73</sup> Despite the more than half-a-century difference between the children of Cloeter's generation and the *Wiener Kongress*, the stories remain tied to the space of the *Apolloaal*, still capable of inspiring awe.

Each of the two examples above demonstrates how Cloeter uses space as a means to explore the history of Vienna, whether it be the time of the Congress of Vienna, or even the events of the twentieth century. The exploration of history through space could even go back as far as two thousand years, as evidenced in Cloeter's exploration of the area surrounding the Ruprechtskirche in "Vom ältesten Wien," in which she tells of the activity of the Romans within the city. Visiting one of the last remnants of the city wall that had protected the city of Vienna until 1850, Cloeter recounts that this piece of the wall, which functioned as an access point into the city, was actually the second of its type there: "denn dieses Stadttor, das letzte Überbleibsel der babenbergischen Stadtbefestigung, hatte bereits einen Vorgänger: hier soll eines der Ausgangstore des römischen Lagers gestanden haben."<sup>74</sup> This example, besides showing the incredible range of historical time inhabiting a space, also demonstrates that one single space can be inhabited by artifacts of many different historical periods. In visiting the remaining piece of the wall, Cloeter illuminates stories and people separated by centuries, even millennia: the Romans and the people who lived in the Biedermeierzeit/Vormärz culture.

Cloeter's many adventures through Vienna's spatial landscape have led to a retelling of Vienna's many temporal/historical landscapes. In doing so, artifacts of the

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<sup>73</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. "Wo man gestern tanzte." *Zwischen Gestern und Heute: Wanderungen durch Wien und den Wienerwald*. Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., 1911: 39.

Viennese past have become clearer: they are no longer shadowy. Cloeter's own words reinforce the way that attention to the space of a city allows for the elucidation of history. Additionally, her words show how this flaneuristic type of exploration of the urban landscape is a part of her stated purpose in writing: to save living, inhabited spaces of the city from oblivion and nothingness. In the very last feuilleton of the collection, "Aus der Vergangenheit des Karlsplatzes," Cloeter declares: "die anmutigsten Geister der Wienerstadt werden lebendig beim Andenken."<sup>75</sup> Temporal artifacts, like ghosts, are endowed with a redemptive living quality as we remember them. Cloeter's walks into space have led to encounters with history and as her writings remember these various temporal relics, urban history is re-endowed with a living quality. Forgotten and dying space and the shadowy history tightly connected with that space that has been salvaged from nonexistence—Cloeter has succeeded in her task.

In walking through the city dressed unabashedly as a woman and in describing the various spatial pieces of architecture, rooms, or stone walls; and in exploring and interacting with the shadowy stories and figures tied to a place, Hermine Cloeter exhibits qualities indicative of the flaneuse. Through her collection of feuilletons, she has revealed herself to be dedicated to focusing on and analyzing the material and spatial manifestations of historical Vienna, regardless of their visibility or clarity in the modern urban setting.

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<sup>74</sup> Cloeter, Hermine, "Vom ältesten Wien:" 135.

<sup>75</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. "Aus der Vergangenheit des Karlplatzes." *Zwischen Gestern und Heute: Wanderungen durch Wien und den Wienerwald*. Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., 1911: 172.

## Chapter Three

### Hermeneutics, Obscurity, and Redeeming Memories of the Past: Hermine Cloeter's Wanderungen through Vienna in "Durch die engste Gasse von Wien"

*Gebt der Stadt ein bißchen ab von eurer Liebe zur Landschaft! Von dieser Landschaft habe ich hier nichts gesagt, habe die Grenzen der Stadt nur flüchtig mit ein paar Worten überschritten. Sie ist ja schon viel beschrieben und gemalt, die merkwürdige Gegend, in der unsere Stadt wohnt, die märkische Landschaft, die bis auf den heutigen Tag etwas Vorgeschichtliches behalten hat.*

~Franz Hessel, "Nachwort an die Berliner"~<sup>76</sup>

*Geister seien hier ins Buch gebannt,/ Die uns heute noch vertraut und wahlverwandt,/ Die für alles Hohe entzündet,/ Die uns, bodenecht, des Volkes Seele künden—/Geist vom Geist, der uns gebildet hat,/ Der von je bestimmt den Herzschlag dieser Stadt./ Ungebrochen wirkt er in uns allen,/ Wird aus alten Zeiten stets in neuen hallen,/ Nicht als Echo bloß, nein, als ein Hort der Kraft,/ Der aufs neue stets—das alte Wien sich schafft.*

~Hermine Cloeter, Vorwort von "Geist und Geistern aus dem alten Wien"~<sup>77</sup>

The urban landscape is made for living and walking. Human interactions with people, buildings, streets, and events occur every minute, easily forgotten as time marches on and the metropolis changes. And while there are many pedestrians in the city helping to create these daily occurrences, only a few are truly cognizant of the obscurity and illegibility caused by the multidimensionality of the city the masses claim to know. In Chapter Two, I examined a significant element of Cloeter's method of urban cultural archaeology and forensics: her technique, as a flaneuse of reading historical significance into the artifacts and built landscape of Vienna. Like Hessel's Berlin, Vienna lends itself

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<sup>76</sup> Hessel, Franz, "Spazieren in Berlin:" 192.

as an urban text, waiting to be read, interpreted, and analyzed by those individuals willing to give the built and lived space of Austria's capital more than a perfunctory and temporal-based surface look. Part of this spatial and material reading, however, includes interacting with and working through the illegibilities and obscurities of space the city presents to the would-be reader. Walking the streets and lanes of the metropolis of Vienna allows feuilletonist, Hermine Cloeter, to appreciate and redeem the illegible and obscure space and history of her city, including the space and memories forgotten over Vienna's evolution into modernity.

In this chapter, I will argue that Hermine Cloeter's feuilleton "Durch die engste Gasse von Wien" is a hermeneutic experience of urban forensics and cultural archaeology in Vienna. During her experience, Cloeter senses the obscurity of the city's *Innere Stadt* region, explores and analyzes it, creating a means by which historical memories that exist as a part of the spatial opacity of Vienna may be redeemed. I will do this, first by discussing hermeneutics in relationship to the urban landscape and the phenomenon of obscurity/illegibility in the urban literary setting. Second, I will examine Cloeter's experience with and recognition of the obscure and illegible material and spatial arrangements of Vienna. Finally, I will analyze the effects of Cloeter's attention to interpreting the obscurity before her.

The urban landscape is a composite mixture of lifeless matter and human interaction. If we subtract the human factor from the city, we are left with a landscape filled with brick, stone, cement, and glass, poured over an immense span of land and piled high into the sky. The objective observer, with a bird's eye view of the city, clearly

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<sup>77</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. *Geist und Geister aus dem alten Wien*. Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., 1922.

sees the complete layout of the city, how one portion of the city interacts with another. Using this method of observation in looking at the city of Vienna, for example, we would see that Vienna's *Ringstrasse* functions as a boundary that separates the First District from the Second through Ninth Districts. We could also see that *Stephansdom*, designed with gothic architecture, is taller than any other edifice in the first district. From this perspective, there is no obscurity, no illegibility, because every structure and passageway is blatantly visible and merely portrayed as space. This type of observation, which merely looks at the material layout of the city, however clear and translucent to analysis and classification it may be, completely neglects the true supremacy of what the city is and does.

A closer view of the city, one which acknowledges the human element, is therefore needed to appreciate the value of a metropolis. Through acknowledgement of the human forces and factors, of the urban citizen or "ordinary practitioner" within the city, comes an awareness of a city's opacity. Obscurity and illegibility in the urban topography arise from the fact that the city is a "lived-in" space, where people interact with each other and their surroundings daily. According to theorist, Michel de Certeau,

The ordinary practitioners of the city live 'down below,' below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk—an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers, *Wandersmänner*, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' they write without being able to read it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be seen...The paths that correspond in this intertwining, unrecognized poems in which each body is an element signed by many others elude

legibility. It is as though the practices organizing a bustling city were characterized by their blindness. The networks of these moving, intersecting writings compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces: in relation to representation, it remains daily and indefinitely other.<sup>78</sup>

The everyday pedestrian, in the very action of walking along the streets, entering and exiting buildings, and communicating with other walkers in the city, uses what is visible (passageways and edifices) to unknowingly create what is not visible: an *otherness* of story that fills the city space. These created stories, however, are not simple fairytales; they are records of what has transpired within a localizable space during the constant change in time. Turning again to de Certeau, we see that actual locations in the city, that places “are fragmentary and inward-turning histories, pasts that others are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded.”<sup>79</sup> No longer can a building or street be considered to be merely a locale—it houses stories, histories, and memories within its very existence, making parts of it hidden and illegible, but not completely undiscoverable.

While an “ordinary practitioner” does not understand, comprehend, or appreciate these stories, the flaneur/flaneuse, equipped with hermeneutic sensibilities, finds the city to be a rich text waiting to be explored and experienced. Hidden memories, stories, and histories are there to be discovered, through the use of hermeneutics, which “must determine the centers of fate by ridding history of its conjunctive temporal tissue, which

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<sup>78</sup> de Certeau, Michel. “Walking in the City” in Michel de Certeau *The Practices of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. 93.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 109.

has no action in our fates.”<sup>80</sup> For the flaneur, performing urban exegesis allows for the localization of memories to space, but at the same time dismisses and separates the importance of time from those stories. Time is not important, space and history are. Over time, space has changed and the people who walk within a space have changed. It is their stories that the urban writer senses through space and elucidates. De Certeau mirrors this sentiment in his realization that “privileging progress (i.e. time)...causes the condition of its own possibility—space itself—to be forgotten; space thus becomes the blind spot in a scientific and political technology.”<sup>81</sup> Time has created lost and forgotten space, which constitutes obscurity, illegibility, and opacity in the urban landscape. The task and pleasure of the flaneur, then, is not simply to look at a building or street and see how it is; s/he must dismiss what s/he is looking at from the present time, must follow Franz Hessel’s admonition: “man muß sich in der ältern Stadt zwischen den einst auf königlichen Befehl geradeanglegten Straßen die paar krummen herausschälen,” and strip back the temporal surface of space to really discover the urban text filled with forgotten space and memory.<sup>82</sup>

The urban landscape of Vienna is rich in illegible and obscure forgotten space and memory. Evidence of obscurity within the Viennese streets is readily apparent in “Durch die engste Gasse von Wien.” Cloeter’s very mention of the differences in the lighting of the area is a figurative metaphor for the illegibility filling the old city center. After commenting on the nondescript, mundane buildings she observes at the beginning of her wandering, Cloeter quickly notes: “rechts davon öffnet sich eine schmale, *dämmerige* Gasse, wie *eingezwängt zwischen* dem vornehmen Bau der geistlichen Herren und dem

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<sup>80</sup> Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. Boston: Beacon Press. 1994. 9.

<sup>81</sup> de Certeau, “Walking in the City:” 95.

nächsten hohen, altersgrauen Haus. Zum erstenmal lese ich ihren Namen: Wächtergasse.”<sup>83</sup> Squeezed in between the uninteresting high buildings along the *Hohenstaufengasse* lies a previously-unknown darkness. As her attention is drawn towards the shadowy lane, her experience of urban realization begins. Drawn into the dim *Wächtergasse*, Cloeter’s descriptions of the scene soon acknowledge the appearance of physical light upon the *Stockwerkshöhe*, far above where she is walking and subjectively experiencing the streets: “Just fällt die volle Sonne darauf, und ich bin froh, bald selbst wieder in der Sonnenhelle zu stehen.”<sup>84</sup> Although she expresses the desire to once again be in the sunlight that is shining on the high-trafficked streets of Vienna, never once does Cloeter mention actually coming out into the sunlight: the rest of her experience is an exploration the dimness surrounding her.

It is not the physical lighting itself, however, that constitutes the obscurity she experiences. The obscurity lies in what the lighting leads to and symbolizes: the illegibility of the historic city center. In stepping into the darkened streets, Cloeter is entering a space of the city that itself is obscured due to the memories and figurative ghosts that inhabit the pavement and buildings. The metaphoric nature of the lighting is evident in that the words referring to light and darkness give way to detailed descriptions of the memories lurking about her. The use of lighting as a metaphor is also apparent in the mental change Cloeter acknowledges in the very next sentence when she returns: “Wo bin ich aber nun? Das ist ja der Tiefe Graben! Mir war das, offen gestanden, sehr überraschend, und gerade so, als ob ich zum erstenmal die Hohe Brücke gesehen hätte,

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<sup>82</sup> Hessel, Franz. “Das andere Berlin:” 273.

<sup>83</sup> Cloeter, Hermine, “Durch die engste Gasse von Wien:” 105. Emphasis added.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* 106.

die so befremdlich sich über die Straße spannt.“<sup>85</sup> Although she has been here before, this trip into inner-city Vienna is a totally new experience for her: she has lost her bird’s eye view form of spatial orientation. Once she realizes that she is in the *Tiefe Graben*, however, her reaction is one of seeing a known space in a completely different manner, of being surprised that she is where she is. The spatial meaning once assigned to this locale is no longer valid. There is another spatial meaning living here, resisting discovery, but at the same time obscuring the official spatial assignments.

It is not just spatial orientation and appropriation that has been obscured. Cloeter confesses, just a few sentences later, that her sense of temporal orientation, in addition to the spatial orientation, has become obscured. Spontaneously turning herself around to see from whence she has just come, she questions herself: “Wo ist die moderne Großstadt mit ihrem echten und falschen Prunk und Glanz, mit ihren breiten, lichten Straßenzügen, mit ihrem Verkehr und Menschengewühl? Es ist schwer, an sie zu glauben, blickt man diese enge, engste Gasse, diese finstere Stiege hinauf.”<sup>86</sup> Cloeter knows she is geographically still in the heart of Vienna, but her temporal connections to the city have changed. Her Vienna is a modern Vienna, but in descending into the *Tiefe Graben*, she can no longer sense where the modernity of Vienna. The city landscape and the time period in which it exists are no longer permanently cemented together. Like the existence of multiple spatial meanings, here multiple temporal assignments exist: plural historical time periods loiter among the stones and pavement.

While we, as analysts of Cloeter’s text, can comprehend and appreciate this illegibility of time and space that the author experiences, we are not the only ones to

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. 106-107.

understand what is happening. Cloeter herself recognizes what she is experiencing: “Da gehen wir so und so oft achtlos an einer Gasse vorüber und eines schönen Tages erst ,entdecken‘ wir sie. So wie wir jahrelang an einem Menschen gleichmütig vorübergehen, und einmal fällt ein besonderes Licht auf ihn, ein bedeutsames Wort zeigt ihn von einer ungewohnten Seite, und er wird uns merkwürdig. Wir werden neugierig, horchen in seine Seele hinein...”<sup>87</sup> Like people, whom we overlook daily until occasion changes the way in which we see them, we carelessly walk over the streets, until one day, when our perspective is changed, we **really** discover the passageways. Cloeter’s experience has been just that: the metaphoric and figurative dimness, which drew her into the *Wächtergasse*, is the “besonderes Licht” that has revealed to Cloeter an unusual perspective into these lanes and their surrounding architecture.

What is this unique perspective that Cloeter now sees? What in this part of the city is so illegible and obscure? Our answer lies in Cloeter’s next movements. Having realized the lack of spatial and temporal solidification, Cloeter’s curiosity is drawn to an old house. Exploring and describing the physical structure of the house that would never have been accessible if she had not ventured into the house, she realizes “eine eigentümlich, lauschige Verträumtheit nistet zwischen diesen Mauern.”<sup>88</sup> No words are wasted on a physical description. Cloeter focuses rather on the curious, eavesdropping dreaminess nesting here. This architectural structure is not static, but is, instead, a space of urban cultivation for what goes on or has gone on in it and around it. The perspective Cloeter has gained then, is one that realizes the memories associated with every location

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid. 106.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. 107.

through which she walks, and that sees the multiple spatial and temporal appropriations that are inherently connected to these memories.

Where Cloeter would before have been inclined to pass over this seemingly ordinary location, she is drawn into the illegibility of the *Wächtergasse* and *Tiefe Graben* and their accompanying streets. This area is not so easily written-off as just another example of the average Viennese architecture acting out its appropriate spatial role in Viennese modernity. Instead, Cloeter spends the majority of the rest of her article writing of the illegibilities she encounters as she continues her journey.

One of the first obscure memories that Cloeter tries to read and elucidate is that of the *Tiefe Graben*. Walking along the street, Cloeter begins to truly understand why the street is named as it is: it is an old waterway from the medieval period. But at the same time she begins to explain that the street actually used to be a streambed through which the Ottakringerbach once flowed, building “die natürliche Grenze der Stadt Wien,” she admits the mysteriousness about it.<sup>89</sup> This mysteriousness has kept the everyday Viennese citizen from appreciating the name and the location: “Das klingt uns heute fast nur noch wie eine Märchen ins Ohr. Was für alte, alte Erinnerungen unser Wien doch hat.”<sup>90</sup> Cloeter, in her exploration, is able to move beyond the fairytale effect, which the name has on the casual passerby. She can appreciate not only the history of the name, but also this fact: “dieser längst verschwunde Wasserlauf bestimmt noch heute hier das Straßenbild.”<sup>91</sup> Just because the Ottakringerbach has disappeared and allowed the *Tiefe Graben* to take its place spatially, this does not mean that the forgotten stream does not still have an effect on the physical layout of Vienna.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 107.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. 107.

Cloeter devotes a similar attentiveness to the history behind the *Renngasse*. No longer is the name of the lane just a passive label. Like the *Tiefe Graben*, there is an obscure mystery surrounding the name. In just looking at the name, Cloeter observes: “deutlich scheint der Name der benachbarten Renngasse zu sprechen. Scheint! Denn man fragt sich doch, ob die Tradition recht hat, die hartnäckig behauptet, diese Gasse habe ihren Namen von den sogenannten Scharlachrennen, die hier abgehalten worden sein.”<sup>92</sup> While many Viennese, especially the stubborn ones unwillingly to look beyond the usual meaning ascribed to the street, believe the name to derive from the days of the festive *Sharlachrennen*, Cloeter senses the obscurity in the name. The use of the word “scheint,” as opposed to the word “sein”, distinctly indicates the presence of illegibility—what the name actually means is not known, leaving the Viennese to wonder about it.<sup>93</sup> Through her own exploration and research into the obscure name, she reveals the derivation to be from a completely different source: it was a *Probelauf* used by the horse handlers for the animals they were trying to sell at the nearby *Roßmarkt* during the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>94</sup>

Dismissing the surface meaning and appearance and digging deeper into the myriad stories of forgotten space, Cloeter turns back to the *Tiefe Graben*, and recounts how the street, in addition to determining the spatial layout of the city, also participated in Vienna’s musical development. This memory, however, is a comical one, rarely included in a history of Viennese music. In the *Tiefe Graben* area, there existed a police-type force, the *Rumorwache*, that had the duty “vor allem für die Ruhe und Sicherheit in

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid. 108.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. 108-109.

<sup>93</sup> For the flaneur, what a city appears to be (“scheint”) is more important than what it really is (“sein”)—what something seems to be is his very passion.

den Straßen während der Nacht zu sorgen.”<sup>95</sup> Officially, this street and its *Gebiet* were safe and peaceful during the night, but behind this formal statement lies an obscurity, which Cloeter perceives (notice again the appearance of “scheint”): “Damit *scheint* es nicht immer am besten bestellt gewesen zu sein in der guten, alten Zeit. Raufszenen, Schlägereien waren auch in der Mitte der Stadt durchaus nichts Seltenes, und mit der Rumorwache Schabernack zu treiben, harmlosen oder bäsens, *scheint* eine beliebte Sache gewesen zu sein.”<sup>96</sup> Many attempts, both harmless and malicious, were made to disturb the stillness of the night, including a rather comical effort by “der würdige Vater Haydn.”<sup>97</sup> His musical performance was never meant to be a typical masterpiece, but rather a cacophonous symphony:

Haydn wies seinen Genossen, jedem in geraumer Entfernung von dem andern, ihre Standorte an; die Pauke wurde gar oben auf der (112) Hohen Brücke aufgefplant, und auf ein gegebenes Zeichen sollte jeder ein beliebiges Musikstück beginnen, jeder ein anderes. Das gab denn freilich ein ganz höllisches Konzert. In schauerhaftem Mißklang winselten die Geigen, ächtzen die Oboen, schrillten die Querpfeifen, und von oben herab dröhnte mächtig der Paukenwirbel, alles in unmittelbarer Nähe des Rumorhauses, hart vor der Nase des Gesetzes. Türen und Fenster der umliegenden Häuser flogen auf und, aus dem ersten Schläfe geschreckt,

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid. 109.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. 111.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. 111.

machten Hinz und Kunz ihrem Zorne durch Schimpfen und Fluken  
weidlich Lust.<sup>98</sup>

Haydn and his accomplices managed, through meshing a variety of beloved songs together, to upset the traditional expectations for guarded silence and safety.

Here is a memory associated with a famous Viennese visitor and the forerunner to the revered *Polizeiwache*, which completely upsets the expectations of an historical event/time we might have had only given the dry facts that the *Tiefe Graben* was frequented by Haydn and that nocturnal safety and silence were insured by a police force.

Realization of the illegible does not stop with the sheer acknowledgement that ghosts and memories inhabit the city center: Cloeter digs deeper and presents specific memories for her readers, of which those detailed here are merely a sampling. While the memories she discerns are interesting in their own right, a deeper analysis of what effect such an elucidation generates is needed to completely understand the importance of reviving these memories into the space they occupy. In rejecting the functional and traditional view of these pathways and domiciles as a means to an end and instead sensing the vivacious nature of the very places her feet are treading, Cloeter's is a journey of making the illegible legible and the obscure clear.

One consequence of Cloeter's acknowledgment of obscure memories is evident in her own response to the change that has battered the streets since these scenes were played out—Cloeter is not only aware of the stories, but can see them played out directly in front of her. In the same moment in which she concedes: “so gut wie gar nichts ist von

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid. 111-112.

diesem Stück Altwien übrig geblieben,<sup>99</sup>” she counters this fading away, this tendency of the city to be obscure as time progresses, with the assurance: “ich aber sehe noch immer die spitzbübische Musikantenschar des jungen Haydn vor mir, die große Pauke im nächtlichen Schatten der zierlichen Nepomuk-Kapelle auf der hohen Brücke geborgen.”<sup>100</sup> While the described pieces of old Vienna no longer present physically, Cloeter still sees them. The obscure has become legible and its reality is manifested in Cloeter’s review. Readers of her feuilletons can have similar experiences in venturing to this part of the city. Having been made aware of memories that swarm around them, they can also see the memories live again.

Similarly, in making herself and her readers aware of what the *Tiefe Graben* was in the past, Cloeter now understands that traces of history continue inhabiting urban space. Despite this fact: “was Menschenhände schufen, konnten Menschenhände verwischen und willkürlich neu gestalten,” the memories and essence of the events and human movements live on.<sup>101</sup> The old *Ottakringerbach*, “der vor so und so viel Jahrhunderten sich hier eigenwillig zur Donau hin seinen Weg gebahnt, herrscht hier unsichtbar noch immer über Menschenwerk. Im Tiefen Graben zeichnet sich unverrückt sein Lauf.”<sup>102</sup> Though newer generations of humanity have taken down and built over what past generations created and experienced, the memories of the past are still perceivable for those willing to look beyond the spatial layout of 1910 Vienna.

However, once an obscurity has become legible, it is neither secure nor permanent. Cloeter realizes this fact. Reading and interpreting the city is never easy and

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid. 115.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

often times, never enduring, and Cloeter's interpretations of memories are no exception. After having walked through the various *Gassen*, relating the obscure memories she has discovered there, her disillusionment with the *Tiefe Graben* reveals just how fragile it is. The city, in its tendency to be forever unreadable, and modernity, in its propensity to leave behind the intangible items more resistant to unfettered and carefree modernization, symbolized in the passing of a car, threaten and disperse the memories' tenuous legibility: "Da saust im vollen Lauf ein elegantes Automobil an mir vorüber, und der ganze Spuk ist in nichts zerstorben."<sup>103</sup> The automobile, a sign of modernity, has scattered the apparition of the past that Cloeter has been able to elucidate. The legibility that she has created is lost once again and she only now realizes how these small streets look in a modern reality:

Jetzt erst merke ich so recht, daß die Hohe Brücke ja gar nicht mehr ihren gotischen Spitzbogen hat, daß auf ihrem von der modernsten Technik gespannten Gewölbe ein schnurgerades Geländer aufgesetzt ist, ohne jegliche Bildsäule, ohne Kapellchen. Ich rette mich in meine engste Gasse, steige ihre Stufen empor. Ihre Romantik will mir aber auf einmal recht muffig vorkommen.<sup>104</sup>

The high bridges have lost the historical architectural and pictorial qualities in modern time and it is from this stifling reality that Cloeter must rescue herself.

Cloeter's walking narrative, "Durch die engste Gassen von Wien," describes not only how the illegible space of Vienna is discovered and understood, but also demonstrates how the illegible is redeemed (even if temporarily) and the impact of such

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid. 115.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. 115-116.

redemption. As she forensically perceives the illegibilities—the stories, histories, and forgotten space—filling the streets and lanes that constitute the *Innere Stadt*, Cloeter salvages history in the form of memories and by retelling them to her readers, tentatively redeems them to become a part of the visible world. What was once ignored, forgotten, and unseen, is no longer so defined—instead, historical memories have once again become a part of the urban experience of Vienna, regardless of their original temporal foundation.

## Chapter Four

### Hybridity and Reclaiming What Could Be Lost:

#### Hermine Cloeter's Vision of Vienna

*Wien—dieser angenehm lautende Einsilber—ist nun mehr als verheißungsvoller Klang und beäunstigender Begriff, es ist wirklich da. Ich bin hingekommen, bin mitten drin.*

~Franz Hessel, "Versuch mit Wien"~<sup>105</sup>

*In dessem Sammelband werden 'Bilder' vorgelegt, die in ihrer Gestaltung den früheren Tagen angehören, aber doch wohl darüber hinaus dem Wesen nach auch heute noch Geltung haben.*

~Hermine Cloeter, *Wiener Gedenkblätter*~<sup>106</sup>

A s/he opens the morning edition of the Viennese *Neue Freie Presse*, the reader's eyes are drawn to the bottom right of the page, where the daily feuilleton articles recount the happenings of the metropolis of Vienna. Possibly captivated by the title, the reader examines the two or three page articles about society, music, politics, art, literature, and the city, all allowing the readers to relive the city through the eyes of the author. Hermine Cloeter is one such author. Through her feuilleton articles in the Viennese *Neue Freie Presse*, Cloeter portrays her city as a mixture of the past and present and uses music, people, and streets to bridge between the two time periods—Vienna's present time and Vienna's history. Cloeter's articles are not simply reports of the happenings of her city, but rather a developed portrayal that connects the past to the present.

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<sup>105</sup> Hessel, Franz. "Versuch mit Wien" in *Sämtliche Werke III*. Oldenburg: Igel Verlag, 1999. 248.

<sup>106</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. *Wiener Gedenkblätter*. Wien: Österreichische Verlagsanstalt, 1966. 3.

In Chapter Three, I analyzed Cloeter's "Durch die engste Gasse von Wien" in the context of Cloeter's interaction with the illegible nature of Vienna and her ability to redeem, at least temporarily, the historical memories of the urban landscape and make them accessible to the inhabitants of the Austrian capital. In this final chapter, I will analyze Cloeter's interaction with individual built and lived spaces and artifacts, showing that, achieving the purpose of urban forensics/cultural archaeology, Cloeter reclaims Vienna's living history by merging the cultural richness of Vienna's past into the current topography of the city. I will show that the parts of Vienna, which Cloeter chooses to portray—music, people, and architecture—create, as spatial and material clues, traces of Vienna's city culture, a hybrid perspective of Vienna that accurately and appropriately reintegrates the glory of Vienna's history with the present Vienna. First, I will show this hybrid perspective by reviewing the multidimensionality of the urban landscape and the urban writer's relationship to the multiple layers of the city. Second, I will analyze two of Cloeter's articles ("Einer aus dem musikalischen Wien" and "Wiener Hausmusik") for specific portrayals of the city in music, people, and houses. I will analyze how these three specific material and spatial parts of Viennese heritage act as bridges between the city's past and the city itself. Finally, I will analyze how these three bridges—music, people, and houses—create a hybrid landscape in Cloeter's representation of Vienna.

To understand Cloeter's creation of a hybrid Viennese landscape, we must first examine the phenomenon of hybridity as it applies to the urban space. The hybrid space of a city is a place where seemingly unconnected parts of the city are brought together and juxtaposed. The hybrid nature of the urban landscape is the subject of Michel

Foucault's writings about "heterotopic spaces," which he defines as "real and effective spaces which are outlined in the very institution of society" and which are embodied as "all the *other* real arrangements that can be found within society;... a sort of place that lies outside all places."<sup>107</sup> Heterotopic spaces are real spaces, but not in the traditional sense that they are labeled on a map or described in a traditional city lexicon. These spaces are outlined through the structure of a society of living people—the society makes the existence of heterotopic spaces possible through its values and behaviors. This real heterotopic space, though it is invisible, lies outside of the official functions of the city and can also be defined as "other." The "other" space is a real part of the city, even though it is intangible. This "otherness" also allows space to take on multiple meanings—the official meaning and *other* meanings. These alternative meanings of space need not be related—many times they are antagonistic and subversive. A religious shrine, for example, can become a political icon or even a locale for drug deals. It is this other space where less defined, outlying components of society (places, for example) can be arranged or bridged together. Another inherent ability of this other space is the creation of a unique perspective on the city, in which "men find themselves in a sort of total breach of their traditional time."<sup>108</sup> The heterotopic space, therefore, can cross spaces layered through time and meld different time periods together.

Because heterotopias are inherent to the urban landscape, the urban writer, especially the flaneur, is particularly adept at perceiving multivalent/revolutionary dimensions and practices. Sensing the multiplicitous nature of a city and adding to it, the

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<sup>107</sup> Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Space: Utopias and Heterotopias" in Neil Leach (Ed.). *Rethinking Architecture*. London: Routledge, 1997. 352. Emphasis added.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. 354.

urban reader and writer makes those dimensions a part of that varied perspective. In his analysis of the relationship between urban literature and the multifaceted character of the metropolis, Karl Riha observes: “in diesen Städteschilderingen werden die ersten und entscheidenden Dispositionen des Stoffes getroffen, wird ein Fundus an Beschreibungsmöglichkeiten gelegt.”<sup>109</sup> As the city writer encounters the urban environment, his/her descriptions of the city become a mix of the more familiar urban descriptors and of a pool of new possibilities of meaning. Urban writers are no longer bound to portray the city in a two-dimensional manner. With the new possibilities of extra perspectives, they could add multiple dimensions to the city matrix—the possibilities for description allow for a plethora of debates over what the city really is and how it is to be portrayed.

A writer of urban literature, therefore, has a distinct role in the portrayal of the city. As contemporary theorist Deborah Parsons explains, the urban writer “adds other maps to the city atlas; those of social interaction but also of myth, memory, fantasy, and desire.”<sup>110</sup> The urban writer, as seen by Parsons, serves as a diviner who perceives the existence of an extrasensory version of the city. This extrasensory version integrates the atlas of the physical reality of the city with “other” maps of cultural ideas, memory, and space. The urban writer is as much part of the extrasensory version as these cultural phenomena—it is the urban writer’s ability to reveal previously unseen connections between the physical city and the cultural city that allows the metropolis to come alive. The ability to sense these extra dimensions comes as the writer, as well as the reader,

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<sup>109</sup> Riha, Karl. *Die Beschreibung der ‘Grossen Stadt’; zur Entstehung des Grosstadtmotivs in der deutschen Literatur (ca. 1750-ca. 1850)*. Bad Homburg: Bad Homburg v.d.H., 1970. 27.

<sup>110</sup> Parsons, *Streetwalking the Metropolis*: 1.

recognizes that “cities have aggregate and multiplicitous identities, made up of their many selves, and geographical, sociological, literary, and art historical analysis.”<sup>111</sup> Cities are multipart—they are an aggregate of geography, society, literature, and art. Every city is multi-dimensional, going beyond the pavement, cement, and stones, to include the culture, location, art, and history. Cloeter’s writings not only grasp the opportunity to discuss these cultural philosophies, but also portray the multidimensional aspect of the urban landscape, an aspect which has the effect of adding an invisible, but very forceful level of urban experience in Vienna to the stone of Vienna.

Cloeter’s “Wiener Hausmusik” discusses the phenomenon of Viennese house music in the nineteenth century. She focuses on famous musicians and the groups in which they played and by which they were influenced. Cloeter recounts the changes in Viennese music, including the opening of the opera house, the influx of famous musicians, and most importantly, the trend toward families and friends playing music in each others’ homes. In this article, Cloeter emphasizes the importance of music in the depiction of the city. Music constitutes a social icon, a material remnant of Vienna’s past, which brought family members and friends together and influenced the permanent position of music within Vienna.

The music from a hundred years prior to Cloeter persists in the form of sheet music available to the modern musician of Cloeter’s time and as a symbol. In Vienna, a city renowned for this quality, music functions as a bridge infusing the present music circles with an aura of the musical past. In other words, music as a component of Viennese society functions as the bridge or connection between Vienna past and Vienna

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid. 1.

present. As to the importance of symbols of music in a city, Lewis Fried, a critic of urban literature, recounts that “city life is the state of affairs within the city (the kinds of behavior, language, shared activities) as well as the urban form itself...the city and its region stand for how and what people choose for themselves.”<sup>112</sup> Cities reflect the attitudes of their inhabitants. City life is shaped by what members of the society choose to do with their time, the behaviors in which they choose to engage. Human life is reflected as city life and city life is reflected in viewing the metropolis.

Because the people of Vienna chose music as a symbol for their city, music can be considered a behavior of sorts. As a behavior, music constitutes a component of Viennese city life. Cloeter, then, uses this chosen component to connect musical behaviors from two different time periods, a technique which is best illustrated in “Wiener Hausmusik.” In discussing the developments in music of past years through the many musicians and unique Viennese *Hausmusik* culture, Cloeter recalls: “in der Mitte des Wiener Bürgertums ist das Lied geboren worden, das Lied in seiner Kunstform, das Lied, wie es die Welt eroberte.”<sup>113</sup> Viennese society served as the birthplace of the art song, a genre which eventually won over the world, placing Vienna on the forefront of music and changing the way music was played. Cloeter continues that although Schubert began the *Lieder* genre, he could not have created the *Lied* “ohne den Hintergrund des Wiener Bürgertums.”<sup>114</sup> This acknowledgement emphasizes, that even though one or two musicians, such as Schubert, may have been responsible for the actual creation of the art

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<sup>112</sup> Fried, Lewis. *Makers of the city*. Amherst : University of Massachusetts Press, 1990. 164.

<sup>113</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. “Wiener Hausmusik.” *Neue Freie Presse* 7 June 1922: 2.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

song, they could not have done so without the Viennese music society. Not only is the music important to the city, but the city is important to the music.

Cloeter provides further evidence of the importance of music to Vienna, which music is then directly responsible for a multi-dimensional hybrid city. Delving further into the musical singularity surrounding the city, Cloeter describes Viennese *Hausmusik* as the bridge between current musical circles of friends and the beautiful, enchanting music of the past:

Wiener Hausmusik! Was für ein verführerischer Lockruf! Ihre Uebung im alten Geist und Sinn des Wortes dürfte überdies gar nie und auch heute nicht ganz außer Brauch gekommen sein bei uns, und auch in unseren Tagen mag es in Wien gar manche Familie geben, wo in alter Treue und Beharrlichkeit Musik im engsten Freundeskreis betreiben wird.<sup>115</sup>

Viennese house music, as described here by Cloeter as a social practice, mixes the ghosts of the musical past into the closest of friendships. Important in this text is the fact that Cloeter focuses on the music of the past and its role in musical enjoyment by many family circles. Music, to many Viennese, is not just something to be heard in the concert house, it is something to be brought into the home. Music allows families to be bound together and infuses the present with the past. Contemporary society can enjoy and integrate the music of the past into its city life.

“Einer aus dem musikalischen Wien” centers on Vienna in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, focusing on one individual musician in Vienna, rather than music as a whole. Describing the memory of an opening night of the “Barbier

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid. 3.

vom Bagdad,” Cloeter introduces Meister Franz Häbock to her readers. Häbock was a passionate teacher of music, whom Cloeter describes as spending his life giving to others. His feelings concerning foreign art and his understanding of art were highly respected and sought. When Häbock died, a piece of Viennese history and music went with him. In this article, Cloeter emphasizes the importance of the human being within the portrait of the city. By doing so, she gives her readers a sense of the importance of this historical figure, whose essence now exists in his music and pictures.

As in the case of music, Cloeter again focuses on historical, but significant, figures in her feuillets, as a bridge between Vienna’s past and present cultures. Music is only one part of the city—the individual behind the music is another part. As to the importance of human beings in the city, Fried explains that urban writers focused on the fact that “the city can be recalled to its idea: human nature can be enlarged, a ‘true’ self can be rescued.”<sup>116</sup> The city is a human idea and is built by human nature. By focusing on the *human aspect* in the image of the city, the urban writer not only broadens the capacity of human nature, but also rescues the true self, the human self in the city from disappearing into time and numerous crowds.

Cloeter emphasizes the importance of the human in the city in “Einer aus dem musikalischen Wien,” in which she talks about Franz Häbock’s influence on the city. His life provides an additional human dimension to the city—one of a diligent musician. Among his many musical accomplishments is the personal contribution he brought to Vienna, the loss of which Cloeter laments on behalf of the city as a whole:

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<sup>116</sup> Fried, *Makers of the City*: 4.

Für uns aber, die wir ihm trauernd und in Freundschaft ins Dunkel nachblicken, ist das Dasein ärmer und leerer geworden mit seinem Heimgang, und uns will bedünken, nicht nur für uns, sondern für Wien selber, an dessen kultur- und kunstgeschichtliche Sendung er mit dem ganzen Feuerbrand seines ewig jungen Herzens inbrünstig und unerschütterlich glaubte und festhielt.<sup>117</sup>

The loss of Häbock has created a hole in Viennese culture—not only have his friends lost a true companion, but Vienna has lost his eternally youthful presence and influence. Häbock’s absence is not only saddening to the friends in his social circle, but also to the Vienna, because of the loss of his cultural and artistic influence, the loss of a needed dimensionality. By rescuing Häbock’s legacy from a past Vienna and presenting it to the Vienna of the 1920s, Cloeter provides a human link between the two time periods, creating an amalgamated Vienna. The Vienna of Cloeter’s text glories in its elders when they are gone and memorializes their undying contribution on the city itself.

Like music and people, architecture, in the form of streets and rooms, perpetuates Cloeter’s use of bridges to illustrate the past-present Vienna heterotopia. Through the societal importance placed on a street or building, the city becomes multi-dimensional. The design of a street is not the important part of the city, especially in Cloeter’s Vienna, but rather, the aura or significance that surrounds it and gives the street or building meaning. Michel de Certeau, realized the importance of this quality in his “Walking in the City,” emphasizing that “memories tie us to that place...but after all that’s what gives a neighborhood its character.’ There is no place that is not haunted by many different

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<sup>117</sup> Cloeter, Hermine. “Einer aus dem musikalischen Wien.” *Neue Freie Presse* 12 Jan. 1922: 3.

spirits hidden there in silence, spirits one can “invoke” or not. Haunted places are the only ones people can live in.”<sup>118</sup> Buildings become livable, memorable, and multi-dimensional when memories surround the dwelling. Memories and ghosts infiltrate the building structure and allow city inhabitants to live there. It is only in the lived-in, ethereally physical parts of the city that people can presently live and they can do so because these places are silently filled with ghosts, memories, and wonders of the past.

Cloeter, in “Wiener Hausmusik” and “Einer aus dem musikalischen Wien,” recalls the significance derived from the city's architecture. For example, in “Wiener Hausmusik,” Cloeter lauds the streets as being the basis of Viennese music: “Glückliche Stadt, Glückliche Zeit, wo in Straßenaufwurf in der Musik in der Musikbegeisterung seine Ursache haben konnte!”<sup>119</sup>. Vienna is fortunate to have music born from the crowded streets of the city. What Cloeter effectively does is unquestionably connect the past Vienna, through its streets, to 1920s Vienna, by reminding her readers that Vienna’s timeless music (another bridge between past and present) developed not in a single person’s mind, but on the streets of Vienna that are still present today.

As a second example of the importance of Viennese architecture in the city, Cloeter states in “Einer aus dem musikalischen Wien” that Häböck’s studio was arranged such that those who wished, could sit in the waiting room and listen “wie er mit der Vorgängerin arbeitete.”<sup>120</sup> Here again, Cloeter illustrates the way the city permits and stimulates the enjoyment of itself; this time, specifically, she refers to the enjoyment of the social interaction between the people of Vienna. As depicted through Cloeter’s texts,

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<sup>118</sup> de Certeau, “Walking in the City:” 108.

<sup>119</sup> Cloeter, “Wiener Hausmusik:” 3.

<sup>120</sup> Cloeter, “Einer aus dem musikalischen Wien:” 2.

these still existent and busy streets and buildings were and are integral to Viennese culture—first as a birth place for music and second as a more modern route of transportation. This connection allows these pieces of metropolitan architecture to bridge between the two time periods and again creates a merged Vienna, made multivalent by architecture filled with meaning and people, rather than just tables and chairs.

The analysis of each of these urban elements—music, persons, and architecture—from Cloeter’s feuilletons, results in an appropriate fusing of the past Vienna to that of Cloeter’s time. Made multivalent by these aspects of the city which are not a part of the Vienna described through a blueprint, but rather part of the city’s *other* space, Cloeter brings a sense of multidimensional oneness to her city of Vienna in that she portrays the culture of the past as being inseparably connected with the culture of the present. She presents the behaviors, people, and places of the past, the very origins of the city that have worked to create everything that Vienna is, to the present generation, making a solid bridge between the two. Vienna is not just formed out of its present society—the legacy of the past shapes the city as well. By combining parts of the city together, Cloeter shows that “the city is not simply its location, describable in quantifiable terms. Rather, its cultural as well as its physical legacies must be accounted for. The city not only preserves but also generates those intangible values giving it a context as well as a direction.”<sup>121</sup> Culture (intangible values) mix with time (direction) and account for the uniqueness of a city. As the metropolis endures through time, it continues to preserve old values and to create new ones. Likewise, Vienna goes forward directionally through

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<sup>121</sup> Fried, *Makers of the city*: 207.

time, but is defined by its material and spatial remnants—music, people, and buildings—from the past mixed with the Viennese culture of the present.

A well-known analyst of Viennese feuilletons, David Spitzer, evaluated the Viennese feuilletons as memorializing the “Unsterblichkeiten des Tages.”<sup>122</sup> Cloeter’s bridges of music, of people, and of architecture, which infuse Vienna’s history into the modern Vienna, serve as an ever present reminder of Vienna’s unique and multi-dimensional cultural heritage that has affected contemporary Viennese culture and continues to affect it. Vienna is, therefore, a hybrid of its past and present, as the past continues to infuse itself with the present culture. How fortunate is Vienna, in Cloeter’s eyes, to be the birthplace and childhood environment of a unique metropolitan spirit that includes material and spatial reminders of a variety of fine arts, visual arts, human masterpieces, and architectural uniqueness that synergize with the modern Viennese landscape to create a better whole, a better Vienna.

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<sup>122</sup> Fontana, Oskar. *Wiener Unsterblichkeiten*. Vienna: Langen-Müller, 1970. 9.

## **Conclusion**

### ***Bilanz* and Suggestions for Further Research**

Hermine Cloeter's writings record and expose a tangible history, one based on her physical movement through the city, experiencing and exploring built elements of the urban landscape. Recognizing that pieces of the city's spatial history are at risk of being lost, Hermine Cloeter writes and records, using her skills of urban forensics and urban cultural anthropology, experiences of Vienna's past through her own explorations of space, preventing the essence and cultural richness of the city from being lost in the progression of time. This drive, developed through her natural interests, her education, her mentors, and her choice of literary genre, allows Cloeter to explore and write about forgotten spaces in the modern Vienna of the 1910s and 1920s with the intensity and sensitivity of the flaneuse. Her very feminine presence in the city and her flaneuristic writing style combine to show not only that a female urban writer was possible in the early part of the twentieth century, but also demonstrate the possibility for a feminine perspective of the urban landscape. Cloeter did not see Vienna as a man—dressed as a woman, she interacted with and saw the city as a woman. Cloeter's discernment of the living essence of lived and built space allowed her to reclaim, redeem, and salvage facets of Viennese history. She is able to elucidate illegibilities and mysteries of the past, salvaging the dying and vanishing spaces and history for the Viennese to cherish. As she discerns and explains the lived spaces and material remnants of Vienna, she succeeds in creating a hybrid perspective of Vienna that combines together, the glory and splendor of

Vienna's past with the excitement, promise, and potential of the modern Vienna of Cloeter's time.

My analysis of Cloeter's writings is, I hope, just the beginning of an intense investigation and scrutiny of Cloeter and her writings by the scholarly community. In this thesis, I have been able to present only a small number of Cloeter's writings—there is much more that can and should be done. While I have looked at Cloeter's writings through the theories of urban cultural studies, there are many more facets of Cloeter's works waiting to be discovered. Cloeter's love for nature enticed her to walk through and write about Vienna's and Austria's forests and countryside—the large number of “nature-based” writings is an untouched area of Cloeter's writings. What will we find when writings such as *Beglücktes Wandern* and *Donauromantik* are analyzed? Where do Cloeter's writings as woman fit in with the development of Austrian female authors? Do her writings allow new insight into this important literary advancement?

It would very interesting to look at what effects Cloeter's writings had physically and mentally on her fellow Viennese and Austrians—did they go, wander, and explore their own city's streets and forest more? I have presented only a small handful of Cloeter's feuilletons; I would like to see more analysis of all of publications subsequent to *Zwischen Gestern und Heute*. I am especially interested in how Cloeter's interaction and perspective of the urban topography may have changed as she matured and as the Austrian nation and world adjusted and altered with time. More information on Cloeter's friends and connections in other European city's would provide an provocative insight into Cloeter's development as a flaneuse. She was aware of Charles Baudelaire, but had she ever met or known of Walter Benjamin, Franz Hessel, or other flaneurs of the time?

Cloeter wrote about several European cities—how was her interaction with Berlin, London, Florence, Paris, similar or different from her interaction with Vienna? Do those writings show the development of the qualities of the flaneur? Her collection of poetry would be incredibly fascinating to read, especially considering the underlying tones of Cloeter’s life experiences in everything she writes. Were her poems written to express her life? Are they on the same level as the remainder of her writings? Where do Cloeter’s feuilletons that broach the topics of fairytales and legends fit in with her writing style as a whole?

It is obvious that there is much room for exploring Cloeter and her prolific writings—her feuilletons and books, her poems, and other literature pieces will offer years of analysis for those interested in urban hermeneutics, the flaneuse/flaneur, history, art history, the representation of a city over an incredibly dynamic period of world history, and in many other subjects, fields, and themes. As Cloeter’s text become more accessible (i.e. through Brigham Young University’s Sophie Project or the Archiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Vienna) and as this thesis is submitted to the scholarly community, I call for increased analysis and attention to the variety of Cloeter’s writings—this thesis is but a stepping block to a greater appreciation of Cloeter as an author and of Cloeter’s text as scholastically significant pieces of literature.

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## **Appendix**

## Appendix A

### Summary of Cloeter's Writing Career and Works

As mentioned in Chapter One, Cloeter's professional writing career began in the first decade of the twentieth century. Her first two publications—"Chopin" in November 1902 and "Das fremde Glück" in February 1903—were published under the pseudonym Justine Lot, which has no apparent significance, other than that Justine is one of Cloeter's middle names (Cloeter's niece, Eugenia Altmann, was unsure to the derivation of the pseudonym).<sup>123</sup> Beginning in 1907, Cloeter began writing feuilletons for the *Neue Freie Presse* (NFP) under her own name. Over the next thirty-two years, not only wrote more than two hundred feuilletons, but also wrote small articles of fiction for the literature section (*Literaturblatt*), book reviews, and occasional social commentaries for NFP. Cloeter looked at a variety of topics in her feuilletons, including many historical persons, who enriched Vienna through their art, writings, and music; various aspects of human relationships; Austrian and Viennese legends; historical buildings and streets; and social commentaries on the present situation in Vienna. When publication of the NFP ceased in late 1938/early 1939, Cloeter continued writing articles and poetry in newspapers, such as the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, *Völkischer Beobachter*, and the *Kölnische Zeitung*; in journals and specialized publications, such as *Mitteilungen der Wiener Akademischer Mozartgemeinde*, *Adalbert Stifter*, *Jahrbuch der Grillparzer Gesellschaft*, and *Reformiertes Kirchenblatt*; and in lecture materials for school children.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Altmann, Personal Interview.

<sup>124</sup> Friedrich, Margret, Ed. *Ideal und Wirklichkeiten: Aspekte der*

Cloeter's book publications began with *Zwischen Gestern und Heute* (published in Vienna in 1911 and in Berlin in 1912). *Häuser und Menschen von Wien* was published in Vienna in 1915—the sixth edition was published in 1920. A collection of poetry, *Die Ferne Geige*, was published in Vienna in 1919 and again in 1921. *Geist und Geistern aus dem alten Wien* was published in 1922. A year later, *Donauromantik* was published. Thirty-nine years later, it was expanded and revised. *Die Grabstätte W. A. Mozarts* went through four editions in Vienna—1931, 1941, 1956, and 1964. *Beglücktes Wandern*, published in 1947, *Johann Thomas Trattner*, published in 1952, as well as *Wiener Gedenkblätter*, published in 1966, were all published in Vienna as well. *Verklungenes Leben: Die Geschichten einer Familie im Spiegel der Zeiten* was published in Neustadt/Aisch in 1960. Her first, second, fourth, and fifth books were published by Anton Schroll und Co. GmbH, while the rest were published through a variety of publishing companies.

With the exception of the *Verklungenes Leben*, *Die Ferne Geige*, *Die Grabstätte W. A. Mozarts*, and *Johann Thomas Trattner*, Cloeter's books were actually collections of feuilletons written anytime from 1907 to 1936, with occasional selections of never-before-published material. *Wiener Gedenkblätter* is a collection of 15 feuilleton articles, including NFP articles from 1917, 1927, 1928, 1931, and 1936. Cloeter's approach to presenting the history of Viennese culture is to look at various historical figures as William Unger, Beethoven, Brahms, Raimund, von Hellmer, etc., as well as to look at Vienna's Prater and the surrounding forest area. *Beglücktes Wandern* is a presentation of Cloeter's experiences in the mountains and countryside of Niederösterreich and is

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*Geschlechtergeschichte: Briefwechsel zwischen Hermine Cloter, Emma Cloeter, und Otto von Zwiedineck-Südenhorst, 1893-1957.* Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1995.

comprised of ten feuillets, seven of which appear in the NFP in 1922, 1926, 1927, 1931, 1935, and 1936. *Donauromantik* also focuses on the countryside of Austria, particularly the “goldene Wachau.” This book is made up of fourteen articles, all taken from the NFP and all published between 1913 and 1922. Themes include literary sketches of various villages, convents, towers, and people, as well as reflective depictions of the cultural richness of the *Wachau* area. *Geist und Geistern aus dem alten Wien*, *Häuser und Menschen von Wien*, and *Zwischen Gestern und Heute* are all depictions of Vienna, each consisting of fifteen articles, which (except for three) had appeared as feuillets in the NFP from 1915 to 1921, 1908 to 1915, and 1907 to 1911, respectively.

*Zwischen Gestern und Heute* is an account of Cloeter’s walks through Vienna’s *Innere Stadt*, *Brentanohaus*, *Museum der Stadt Wien*, *Dreilaufferhaus*, and *Karlplatz*; and through various areas of the *Wienerwald*, including *Kaunitzbergl*, *Heiligenkreuz*, and *die Kartause*. *Häuser und Menschen von Wien* includes cultural and historical sketches of *Das Freihaus*, *Mozart*, *Hubertsdam*, *Palais Geymüller*, actress Sophie Miller, the setting of Weimar-Vienna, the Thersianum and Favorita districts, nearby Hameau, and a Viennese cemetery. *Geist und Geistern* investigates M. M. and Marie Daffinger, Viennese coach drivers, Goethe, Adalbert Stifter, Ferdinand Sauter, Ferdinand Grillparzer, the *Schönborn* palace and garden, the *Naschmarkt*, the Lainzer Tiergarten, and streets and lanes that have disappeared, focusing on their historical significance in Viennese culture. Each of these three books are simply dry descriptions, but seek to offer a lively portrayal of the history and culture that created Vienna and to entice the reader to come out and explore Vienna for his/herself.

## Appendix B

### Sources of Cloeter's Texts

I found the following sources to be extremely helpful in finding Cloeter's texts. The *Nachlaß* details the numerous holdings of Cloeter's feuilletons, unpublished works, pictures, etc., by the *Archiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. The Sophie website provides (or will be providing in the near future) online copies of a few of Cloeter's book, several of her feuilletons, pictures, a recording of an interview between myself and Frau Professor Eugenie Altmann, etc.

***Nachlaß Hermine Cloeter. Archiv der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.***

<http://www.oeaw.ac.at/biblio/Archiv/Cloeter/cloeter.html>

***Sophie: A Digital Library of Works by German-Speaking Women. Brigham Young University.***

<http://sophie.byu.edu>

<http://sophie.byu.edu/journalists/index.html>