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~38

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 unbekannte 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 mitteilens seine mannigfalte Lebensgeschichte.
~1911 Review of Hermine Cloeter’s Zwischen Gestern und Heute~39

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 Tiefes 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.”40 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 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

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*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 Hoffmann’s *Des Vetters 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.\(^4^1\) 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 lounger, loafer.”\(^4^2\)

The most important discussion of the flaneur and the significance of the art of flanerie 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

\(^4^1\) 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 flaneuse, which I use in reference to Cloeter, is influenced by Deborah Parson’s discourse model of the flaneuse 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,\textsuperscript{43} 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.”\textsuperscript{44} 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
unbekannten 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.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{43} 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.
\textsuperscript{44} Baudelaire, Charles. \textit{The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays}. London: Phaidon Press. 1995. 4-5.
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"\( ^{46} \) 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.\( ^{47} \)

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.\( ^{48} \)

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.\( ^{49} \) 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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\( ^{47} \) Ibid.

\( ^{48} \) 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 gewerblich (Händlerinnen und Prostituierte). Aufgrund des geschlechtsdifferennten 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.  

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

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.\(^{51}\)

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.


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.”\textsuperscript{52} 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.”\textsuperscript{53} 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.”\textsuperscript{54} 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

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
so for political reasons, Cloeter’s wanderings through Vienna had nothing to do with the politics of the women’s movement. Instead, her love for nature and the city drew her out to the streets of Vienna and the surrounding forest. 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. Occasionally Cloeter walked with others (i.e. Hugo Wittman) to talk about her writing. 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.” 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. 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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56 Altmann, Personal Interview.
57 Ibid.
59 Altmann, Personal Interview.
60 Untitled Photograph of Hermine Cloeter. Carton #35 of the Archiv der Oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
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 war 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.\(^6\)

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

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.62

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. 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 20th 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 Asphalts, über den er hingehn, wecken seine Schritte eine erstaunliche Resonanz. Das Gaslicht, das auf das Pflaster herunterscheint, wirft ein zweideutiges Licht über diesen doppelten Boden.” As a 20th 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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63 Ibid. 109.
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.\textsuperscript{65}

The second reason why Hessel’s \textit{Spazieren in Berlin} is important for a discussion of Cloeter’s works can be found in its significant similarity to Hermine Cloeter’s text \textit{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.”\textsuperscript{66} 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 Hessels \textit{Spazieren in Berlin} awaken a deep-lying resonance in Germany’s capital, then Cloeter’s \textit{Wanderungen durch Wien} contains a similar kind of footstep, although a \textit{Wanderung} is certainly different than a \textit{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 \textit{Spazieren in Berlin}, Cloeter’s \textit{Zwischen Gestern und Heute} is a collection of feuilletons written for the newspaper. Among the fifteen feuilletons, roughly half deal

\textsuperscript{65} The concept of heterotopias will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Four.
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 Apollosaal, the area of the historic city center around the Dreilaufkerhaus, 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 Dreilaufkerhaus," 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."

The Dreilaufkerhaus, 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

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.”

For both Hessel and Cloeter, certain areas of the urban landscape have been ignored and “disinhabited” as the city constantly changes. The Dreilaufenhaus, 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 würden 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…” 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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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.”

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 “Dreilaufhaus.” 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.” The Dreilaufhaus, 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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71 Cloeter, Hermine “Das Dreilaufhaus:” 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 Dreilaufenhaus, 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.”72 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 Apollosaal. Through Cloeter’s attention to the room, we learn that the Apollosaal 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

72 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.” 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 *Apollosaal*, 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.” 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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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.” 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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