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*Hofmannsthal and “die göttliche Briehl”**

Abstract

This article highlights the hitherto neglected significance of the small market town, and erstwhile spa resort, of Hinterbrühl in Lower Austria to Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s life and work. This discussion is set in a cultural-historical context of Hinterbrühl’s function as a place of encounter in the golden age of the spa resort. The article traces the lasting influence of Hinterbrühl in Hofmannsthal’s oeuvre, whether this be through the people he met there, as evidenced by the fragment *Silvia im “Stern”*, or in the sublimation of the Lower Austrian landscape in the enigmatic *Das Märchen der 672. Nacht*.

From the mid-19th century Hinterbrühl, a small market town in Mödling, Lower Austria, became a magnet for artists and a popular destination for day trippers. Ludwig van Beethoven termed it “die göttliche Briehl”, while Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller used the idyllic Hinterbrühl as backdrop for his paintings¹. The first public baths in Hinterbrühl opened in 1849, and in the course of the 19th century Hinterbrühl established itself as a popular health resort with more and more villas being built in the area². Especially through the opening of the Südbahn railway line in the 1840s, the places along the route were discovered by the Viennese seeking a summer getaway, the “Sommerfrische”. Hinterbrühl became particularly popular as a Sommerfrische destination because of its proximity to Vienna

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¹ See Senta Baumgartner and Othmar Pruckner, *Die Gegend hier herum ist herrlich: Reisen zu Dichtern, Denkern, Malern und Musikern in Niederösterreich* (Wien: Falter, 1996), 179.

² See Kurt Janetschek, *Hinterbrühl im Wandel der Zeit* (Hinterbrühl: Marktgemeinde Hinterbrühl, NÖ, 1983), 71.

(being only 20 kilometres away), with the Viennese longing to escape the heat and unsanitary conditions of the city in summer, its annual typhus and dysentery epidemics and the poor water quality, in search of fresh air, peace and quiet³.

Formerly a preserve of the aristocracy, in the 19th century the Sommerfrische became available to the upper bourgeoisie, to industrialists, bankers, high-ranking officials and doctors, following a new restructuring of work and leisure time. Eight months of the year were spent working and saving up in order to be able to afford to spend four months of the year in the Sommerfrische, either in one's own villa, in one of the many guest houses erected for the purpose, or even in the homes of farmers, who welcomed the opportunity for extra income by renting out their rooms, while themselves spending the summer in the attic⁴. Although this kind of prolonged sojourn in the countryside was extortionately expensive, it became absolutely *de rigueur* for the Viennese upper bourgeoisie in particular. In Hinterbrühl, the ever-growing number of coaches and carriages from visitors wanting to take the cure in the spa resort soon led to congestion on the Hauptstraße. A solution to the growing congestion in what was and continues to be a small market town was urgently needed, and in 1883 the first Austrian electric tram was built from the Bahnhof Mödling to Vorderbrühl (Klausen) and subsequently extended to Hinterbrühl in 1885 (this tram is also frequently mentioned in Hofmannsthal's correspondence)⁵. This further popularized Hinterbrühl as a tourist destination, with tram upon tram bringing day trippers to the Brühl on Sundays. From then on Hinterbrühl remained a popular Sommerfrische retreat until the First World War and the Depression of the 1920s led to a change of fortune for the place, as was the case for many such towns. Hofmannsthal's experiences of the place, however, are irrevocably interwoven with the grand age of the Sommerfrische. The following discussion will elucidate the significance of Hinterbrühl for Hofmannsthal's life and work, focusing on the people he met and the works he wrote there, as well as the lasting influence of the Lower Austrian town for the writer and dramatist.

³ See Hanns Haas, "Die Sommerfrische – Ort der Bürgerlichkeit", in *«Durch Arbeit, Besitz, Wissen, und Gerechtigkeit»: Bürgertum in der Habsburger Monarchie II*, ed. Hannes Steckl, Peter Urbanitsch, Ernst Bruckmüller, Hans Heiss (Vienna: Böhlau, 1992), 364-377, 366.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 366-367.

⁵ See Janetschek, *Hinterbrühl im Wandel der Zeit*, 78. This tram route was, however, terminated in 1932, and today only the Bahnplatz in Hinterbrühl, where a plaque has been placed, serves as a melancholic reminder of the former route.

Although Hinterbrühl has lost its significance as a spa resort, numerous villas, particularly in the Parkstraße, are a reminder of the fact that, for the Viennese upper bourgeoisie in the 19th century, a prolonged sojourn in one of the town's numerous hotels or in one's own villa was a symbol of status and prestige. The Hofmannsthal family was no exception here. Hofmannsthal's earliest recorded visits to Hinterbrühl and Mödling may be dated back to his earliest childhood. Some of Hofmannsthal's earliest letters to his parents are written from Mödling where Hofmannsthal, aged eight, would stay with family friends. He reports to his parents of catching butterflies and spending the whole day playing outside with his friends Poldi and Anna⁶. Similarly, in his letters to his grandmother, Hofmannsthal describes walks and expeditions to Hinterbrühl, with one of the letters mentioning notable landmarks such as the "Holdrichsmühle" (the inn made famous through its association with Schubert who was allegedly inspired to write his Müllerlieder there)⁷. The newly opened electric tram particularly facilitated Hofmannsthal's day trips to the area. For longer sojourns Hofmannsthal would stay with the family of his friend Hans Schlesinger in the Gießhüblerstraße 2, and from 1910 in the Villa Friedmann. When they were able to find accommodation Hofmannsthal's parents also frequently stayed in various inns in Hinterbrühl or in Vorderbrühl during the summer. Hofmannsthal's correspondence with his parents in the summer of 1899 thematises the problematic search for accommodation in a spa resort that was fast becoming a victim of its own success⁸. However, Hinterbrühl remained a favoured destination for the Hofmannsthals. They even celebrated a family wedding here in October 1899, when Joseph Fohleutner (Onkel Pip), the youngest brother of Hofmannsthal's mother, married Edith Alexovits, one of the daughters of the Alexovits family in the Brühl, who were friends of the Hofmannsthals. Later, when Hofmannsthal moved to Rodaun, following his marriage to Gerty Schlesinger, he frequently met his parents in Hinterbrühl, as it was a convenient halfway point between Vienna and Hofmannsthal's Rodaun residence.

⁶ Hugo von Hofmannsthal to his mother 03.06.1880; Hugo von Hofmannsthal to his father, 04.06.1880, in BW ELTERN, FREIES DEUTSCHES HOCHSTIFT [FDH].

⁷ Hugo von Hofmannsthal to his grandmother 10.05.1886, in *Hugo von Hofmannsthal und Josephine Fohleutner: Briefe 1881-1902*, ed. Katja Kaluga, *Sonderdruck aus Hofmannsthal Jahrbuch zur europäischen Moderne* 14/2006, 52.

⁸ The father to Hugo von Hofmannsthal 31.07.1899, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

Hinterbrühl's significance to Hofmannsthal's life may be understood first and foremost as a place of encounter. Here Hofmannsthal met with friends and writer colleagues, among others: Arthur Schnitzler, Gustav Schwarzkopf, Karlweiß, Richard Beer-Hofmann, Lou Andreas-Salomé, the Schlesinger family, and the Friedmann family. The Hinterbrühl Kurlisten [lists of spa guests compiled by the mayor's office in Hinterbrühl] offer a rich picture of the visitors who have stayed in the spa resort at various points, and more importantly, of their accommodation and the duration of their stay. In the small and compact resort, one could easily meet one another at concrete locations such as the Hotel Radetzky, the inn "zum goldenen Stern" and the Villa Todesco, but one could also, and frequently did, meet spontaneously. For example, Arthur Schnitzler records in his diary entry of 2 June 1901 a chance encounter with Hofmannsthal while cycling⁹. The Hinterbrühl landscape can justifiably be termed a topography of friendship. A very important address for Hofmannsthal in the topography of Hinterbrühl was the Gießhüblerstraße 2, where the family Schlesinger resided, and where Hofmannsthal would stay during his visits to Hinterbrühl in the 1890s. From there, the Hotel Feldmarschall Radetzky in the Mannlichergasse, Arthur Schnitzler's preferred location when he was in Hinterbrühl, was just a short walk away¹⁰. Another of Hofmannsthal's friends, Karlweiß, resided at Hauptstraße 36, just around the corner from the Gießhüblerstraße¹¹. In the Kröpfelsteigstraße 42, Hofmannsthal would visit the salon of Sophie Todesco in her summer villa. Further, several of the spa guests took the cure in Dr. Samuely's Wasserheilanstalt [water spa institute] in the Gießhüblerstraße, such as, for example, Adolf Loos, who is recorded in the Kurliste of 15 May 1915, and numerous others.¹²

At the Schlesingers' home in the Gießhüblerstraße Hofmannsthal was lovingly looked after by the family (several of Hofmannsthal's letters to his parents describe the affectionate, familial atmosphere at the Schlesingers'). In a letter to his parents, dated 8 October 1897, Hofmannsthal thanks his parents for a package of warm things, but asserts that he was

⁹ Arthur Schnitzler, *Tagebuch*, ed. Peter Michael Brainwarth et al, 10 vols (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981-2000), V: *Tagebuch 1893-1902*, 353.

¹⁰ *Verzeichnis der zu Hinterbrühl angekommenen und daselbst verweilenden Cur- und Sommergäste*, ed. Bürgermeisteramt Hinterbrühl (Mödling: Büsing, 1897-1916).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

"übrigens auch bisher dem Erfrieren nicht sehr nahe da ich einen Paletot vom Hans, einen Mantel von Onkel Emil und ein cape von der Gerty übereinander angehabt habe"¹³. The readiness of the whole family in lending their overcoats to Hofmannsthal serves as testimony to his acceptance in the Schlesinger family nest. The Schlesingers' home in the Gießhüblerstraße offered Hofmannsthal a peaceful atmosphere in which to work (he mostly worked in the Lusthaus on the property). There is no mention of taking the cure at the nearby spa in Hofmannsthal's letters. Instead, he used the diverse outdoor opportunities of the area for swimming, playing tennis, cycling, and walking. Hofmannsthal particularly enjoyed the alternation between writing and physical activity outdoors in Hinterbrühl. In his letters, he frequently praises Hinterbrühl because of the quality of its air¹⁴, because of its light green trees¹⁵, or "das prachtvolle Gelb- und Rothwerden des niederösterreichischen Waldes"¹⁶. During the summer, he enjoyed swimming and playing tennis in the Brühl, in the winter he would go for walks in the winter landscape. At the Schlesingers' Hofmannsthal was also able to become better acquainted with his future wife, Gertrud (Gerty) Schlesinger. Although Hofmannsthal had the opportunity to interact with Gerty on other occasions, given that the Schlesingers were family friends of the Hofmannsthals, the prolonged sojourns in Hinterbrühl in the home of his future wife's family undoubtedly contributed to their blossoming romance. In a letter from Galicia of 10 April 1896 to his friend and Gerty's brother, Hans Schlesinger, Hofmannsthal writes: "Im Juni werd ich dann von Wien viele Landparthien machen, wenn es nur schön ist! Auch öfter nach der Brühl fahren um mit Deiner kleinen Schwester Tennis zu spielen. Sie spielt viel besser als ich, aber ich werd in Galizien möglichst viel spielen. Deine Schwester gefällt mir von allen Frauen, die ich jetzt kenne am besten"¹⁷.

For all these reasons, Hofmannsthal viewed Hinterbrühl as an ideal place for his writing, also in relation to the town's distance from his pa-

¹³ Hofmannsthal to his mother 08.10.1897, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

¹⁴ Hofmannsthal to Richard Beer-Hofmann 27.04.1895, in *Brief-Chronik Regest-Ausgabe*, ed. Martin E. Schmid, with Regula Hauser and Severin Perrig, 3 vols (Heidelberg: Winter, 2003), I: 1874-1911, 246.

¹⁵ Hofmannsthal to Leopold von Andrian 01.05.1895, in *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Brief-Chronik Regest-Ausgabe*, I, 248.

¹⁶ Hofmannsthal to his parents 30.09.1898, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

¹⁷ Hugo von Hofmannsthal to Hans Schlesinger 10.04.1896, in *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Brief-Chronik Regest-Ausgabe*, I, 319.

rental home in Vienna. In a letter to his father of 5 October 1897 Hofmannsthal writes:

Es ist mir ein sehr schöner Gedanke, meine liebste Form des Lebens ohne zu starke Trennung von Euch künftig dadurch realisieren zu können, dass ich z.B. für 2, 3 Wintermonate so wie jetzt in der Nähe von Wien bin. Es ist unglaublich wie froh ich bin, abends in der jetzt in den Winter übergehenden Landschaft spazieren zu gehen, anstatt in der Stadt, oder in der Nacht den Wind in den Bäumen zu hören. Das wird bei mir immer stärker.¹⁸

In a further letter to his parents of 22 October 1897, Hofmannsthal equates living in the countryside with literary creativity, stating: “ich begreife nicht, dass ein Dichter überhaupt in der Stadt wohnt”¹⁹. The place where Hofmannsthal eventually chose to realise his dream of living slightly outside the city, but still within easy reach of his parents, was Rodaun, where Hofmannsthal moved with Gerty following their marriage in June 1901. Here too he would work in a Lusthaus in the garden of the property, and would recreate the familial, domestic atmosphere of both his own and his wife’s family homes, with his day following a structured routine of writing in the Lusthaus, meals, walks, and answering correspondence.

Hinterbrühl was a place where Hofmannsthal felt at ease, and which never failed to provide him with the peace, comfort and pleasant surroundings that were so instrumental to his work and his emotional well-being. Here, for example, he could learn for his doctoral defense in June of 1898, with Hinterbrühl offering him an environment conducive to his studies and enabling him to work “ohne irgend welche Nervosität”²⁰. In many letters to his parents, the restorative effect of the Brühl is foregrounded: “meine Zappeligkeit, mein nicht ganz regelmäßiger Appetit, alles verwandelt sich hier in 3, 4 Tagen und ich fühle mich physisch so großartig, als anderswo mittelmäßig”²¹. It is this restorative effect of Hinterbrühl’s landscape that prompts Hofmannsthal to convalesce in the Brühl when he is taken ill in April 1895 during his military service. When he is in Venice in October 1898, he looks forward to coming home and particularly to being back the Brühl, given that he has spent “3 Monate in

¹⁸ Hofmannsthal to his father 05.10.1897, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

¹⁹ Hofmannsthal to his parents 22.10.1897, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

²⁰ Hofmannsthal to his mother 02.06.1898, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

²¹ Hofmannsthal to his father 16.10.1898, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

keinem Zuhause"²². The Brühl is thereby stylized into a home from home for Hofmannsthal, "wo ich ja auch wie zuhaus bin"²³.

In later years, Hofmannsthal's "home" in Hinterbrühl would be the Villa Friedmann, built for the politician Max Friedmann in 1898 by the star-architect Joseph Maria Olbrich, co-founder of the Secession and architect of the Secession building. Friedmann wished to have his villa built according to the principles of the new art deco movement, and as Marie-Theres Arnbom describes, Olbrich happily took up the opportunity to design a villa for a wealthy patron²⁴. The villa was designed with painstaking attention to detail, from the door handles to the crockery, tablecloths and dog kennel²⁵. The house, which still exists today²⁶, boasts an extravagant interior, with birch trees painted onto the white walls of the bedroom and field flowers painted on the banisters of the terrace²⁷. Hofmannsthal, a friend of both Max and his brother, the Alpinist Louis Friedmann, would frequently stay in this unique and inspirational domicile during his visits to Hinterbrühl from 1910 onwards.

In this topography of friendship, an innkeeper's daughter, Christine "Tini" Schönberger, although not a personality of the artistic and literary scene, became a significant figure for Hofmannsthal and his literary colleagues, Karlweiß, Arthur Schnitzler and Felix Salten. The inn "zum goldenen Stern" in Vorderbrühl, owned by the Schönberger family, became a beloved haunt for the literary quartet, not for its food, however, but due to the charm of the eldest daughter of the innkeeper. Christine's beauty and charm were legendary: the lyricist Paul Wilhelm had written verses to her as had his friend Wolfgang Madjera, as a result of which many other writers and poets were prompted to make the pilgrimage to the "Goldene Stern" in Vorderbrühl²⁸. One such visitor was Hofmannsthal's friend, Karlweiß, who later set a monument to Christine in the eponymous heroine of his folk play, *Das grobe Hemd* (1897). In the play, now largely forgotten and even more rarely performed, the figure of Christine Winkler "ne-

²² Hofmannsthal to his parents 4.10.1898, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Marie-Theres Arnbom, *Friedmann, Gutmann, Lieben, Mandl, Strakosch: Fünf Familienporträts aus Wien* (Wien: Böhlau, 1987), 162.

²⁵ Ibid., 163.

²⁶ Today the villa is occupied by a veterinary practice.

²⁷ Arnbom, 164.

²⁸ Valerie Reichert-Heidt, "Das Urbild der Christine", *Neues Österreich*, 13. Nov. 1955, 17-18, 17.

unzehn Jahre alt, katholisch, ledig, bürgerliche Erbin”²⁹, is the daughter of a deceased mining magnate. She falls in love with the son of a factory owner, Max Schöllhofer, a revolutionary who despises his inherited wealth. Max soon has a chance to experience what the poverty that he so idealises is really like, as his father announces that he has lost his fortune through speculation on the stock market (a topical reference to the Vienna stock market crash of 1873). As the family are forced to sell their flat, and Max has to take up work copying drawings for an architect, he finds that wearing the “rough shirt” is very far from the idealised image that he nurtured in his mind. In the course of all this, Christine and Max, the central figures of the play, engage in several dialogues. Christine, having had her eyes opened by Max’s socialist ideas, decides that she wants to give her inherited wealth away and support herself with her own work. In her mixture of naiveté and idealism, she offers some of the most memorable lines of the play. Christine decides to marry Max, despite the fact that he is now impoverished, thus going against the mores of her social class, which dictated that she should marry someone of similar wealth and social standing. However, in the dénouement of the play, Max’s father reveals that wearing the “rough shirt” was in fact a didactic experiment to teach his children a lesson about the true meaning of poverty, and that, in fact, he has not lost all his wealth through speculation. The didactic comedy ends with the marriage of two young couples, including Max and Christine.

Christine Schönberger was also the acknowledged model for the figures of both Christine and Mizi in Schnitzler’s *Liebelei* (1895), with the two contrasting figures reflecting different sides of Schönberger’s personality. Schnitzler is reported to have explained his intentions for the play to Schönberger as follows: “Fräulein Tinerl, passen S’ jetzt gut auf! Ich schreib nämlich an einem neuen Stück. [...] es kommt ein Mädels drin vor, nicht älter als Sie jetzt sind. Und eine zweite ist dabei, grad so jung. Und beide zusammen – das sind Sie!”³⁰. Meanwhile, the significance of Tini Schönberger for Hofmannsthal may be best gleaned from the following newspaper portrait of her on her 80th birthday in *Neues Österreich*, which recalls one particular visit of Schnitzler, Schwarzkopf and Hofmannsthal to the “Goldene Stern”³¹:

²⁹ Karlweiß, *Das grobe Hemd: Volkstück in vier Acten* (Vienna and Berlin: Ch. Reißer & M. Werthner, 1897), 6.

³⁰ Arthur Schnitzler, as cited in Valerie Reichert-Heidt, “Das Urbild der Christine”, 18.

³¹ Schnitzler also records this episode in his diary entry of 4.6.1893, in *Tagebuch 1893-1902*, 36: “4/6 Sonntag. – Mit Schwarzkopf in die Brühl. – Wirtstochterlein. Sie dictirt

An einem schönen Oktobertag saß Christine einmal in der Gaststube und schrieb genau und wunderschön die Speisekarten für den elterlichen Betrieb aus. Hingebungsvoll malte sie ihre Buchstaben und hörte nicht, was um sie vorging. Da fand sie plötzlich unverhoffte Helfer bei ihrem schwierigen Werk. Es waren zwei junge Männer, die vor wenigen Tagen einen Ausflug in die Brühl gemacht und am Abend im "Stern" eingekehrt waren. Jetzt kamen sie wieder und suchten Christine, deren ungewöhnlicher Liebreiz natürlich auch ihnen aufgefallen war: Arthur Schnitzler und Hugo von Hofmannsthal. [...] Hofmannsthal, damals noch fast ein Knabe, wurde rot und heiß, wenn ihn Christine nur ansah, und die Worte, in die er seine ganze Bewunderung für sie legte, waren ein beredtes Zeugnis seiner großen Jugend. Er stammelte: «Fräulein Tinerl, mein Gott! Fräulein Tinerl, ich wär' so froh, wenn Sie ein Bub wären!» – Christine riß verwundert die Augen auf: «Ja, warum denn?» – «Weil, Fräulein Tinerl, weil ich dann mit Ihnen eine Reise machen könnte!» Und scheu, etwas linkisch, drückte er ihr die Hand. Christine lachte nur und beugte sich wieder über die Speisekarten. Schnitzler aber wurde energisch: «Geb'n S' her, Fräulein Tini! Wir schreiben das jetzt zusammen, der Hugo und ich, aber ich glaub' beinah', Sie sollten sich eine von den Karten, wenn's dann glücklich fertig sind, aufheben! Zum ewigen Angedenken an uns! [...]»³²

Hofmannsthal's perceptive assessment of contemporary gender relations, which would prevent Tini Schönberger from going on a journey with him, finds its expression in Karlweiß's *Das grobe Hemd* through the desire of the heroine (who is admittedly of a different social standing than the real-life model) to support herself with her own work: "Sie können sich bethätigen! Sie dürfen aufgehen in Ihrem Berufe, indem Sie gewiß Großes schaffen werden. Mir sind die Hände gebunden! Ein reiches Mädchen darf ja nicht arbeiten"³³.

While being an acknowledged poetic inspiration for Karlweiß and Schnitzler, Tini Schönberger may also have been the unacknowledged muse for Hofmannsthal's dramatic fragment, the comedy *Silvia im "Stern"* (1907)³⁴. Like many of Hofmannsthal's comedies, the plot centres upon the unrav-

die Speisekarte; Loris kommt eben, schreibt auch". Either Christine Schönberger's dating of this event to a "schönen Oktobertag" is inaccurate, or this was a regular occurrence rather than a singular event.

³² Reichert-Heidt, "Das Urbild der Christine", 17.

³³ Karlweiß, *Das grobe Hemd*, 84.

³⁴ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Silvia im "Stern"*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Heinz Rölleke et al, 42 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1975-), XX: *Dramen 18*, 7-38.

eling of origin and the interpretation of signs, in this case that of genealogical provenance³⁵. Inspired by the comedies of Goldoni, Robert Chasles's *Les illustres Françaises* and the figure of Julie de Lespinasse³⁶, the plot focuses on Silvia, who resides with her protectoress, the innkeeper Madame Laroche, in the "Blaue Stern". However, the plot of *Silvia im "Stern"* is much darker than that of Karlweiß's or even Schnitzler's literary immortalisations of Schönberger, and the central female protagonist is also much more ambivalent. Silvia is attacked from all sides, accused of being a thief and a coquette. The reasons for these attacks lie in the secret surrounding her parentage. It emerges in the course of the fragment that Silvia is not, as she claimed, the mistress of Graf Wessenberg, but rather his daughter (Silvia's mother having been a duchess). Silvia's fortune depends on whether or not her lover, the wealthy Rudolf von Raithenau, stays firm in his intention to marry her, or whether he chooses to lend an ear to the intrigues concocted by his family and Sertos (who wishes to marry Silvia against her will). All of the conflicts and intrigues in the fragment are played out in the foyer, stairs, balcony and rooms of the "Blaue Stern".

Hans-Georg Dewitz suggests the "Blaue Stern" could be based on the Hotel "Blauer Stern" in Prague, where Hofmannsthal resided during his visit to the city in January 1906³⁷. Hofmannsthal himself, in a preparatory note, situates the guest house in *Silvia im "Stern"* in Vienna's Landstraße³⁸. However, as is often the case, this may be a case of literary sublimation, with the original stimulus or experience transposed to another time and place. The affinity of the hotel's name to another inn which also has "Stern" in its name, and an inn that Hofmannsthal was certainly more familiar with than with the "Blaue Stern" in Prague, cannot be overlooked. The hotel or inn here, as in Hofmannsthal's other works, takes on a central function, bringing together and interweaving different fates of "Menschen in einem Gasthause"³⁹. Martin Stern has described hotels in Hof-

³⁵ See Mathias Meyer, *Hugo von Hofmannsthal* (Stuttgart und Weimar: Metzler, 1993), for a discussion of the way in which Hofmannsthal's comedies continually centre on the motif of "die Schwierigkeit der Zeichendeutung", 83-84.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

³⁷ See Hans-Georg Dewitz's "Erläuterungen" to *Silvia im "Stern"*, in Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Sämtliche Werke XX: Dramen 18*, 245-284, 245.

³⁸ "Spielt in einem kleinen Gast u Speisehaus zum blauen Stern in Wien, auf der Landstraße", Note N 156 "2^{ter} XI^{ter} 11. nachts", in Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Sämtliche Werke XX: Dramen 18*, 206.

³⁹ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "21. Oktober 1907, an Eberhard von Bodenhausen", in Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Sämtliche Werke XX: Dramen 18*, 231.

mannsthal's work as places "des Übergangs und der Prüfung"⁴⁰, and it is certainly the case that it is in this traditionally transitory space that different kinds of trials and tribulations take place, be they mistaken identity or unwanted suitors, before these conflicts can be resolved, frequently through marriage.

While the name of the inn in Hofmannsthal's play bears obvious similarities to the name of the inn "zum goldenen Stern" in Vorderbrühl, the central figure, who may similarly be described as an innkeeper's daughter, also resonates with the portrait of Tini Schönberger that emerges from Karlweiß's and Schnitzler's portrayals. The focus for Hofmannsthal in this comedy dealing with the discrepancy between "Schein und Sein" is the multiple ways in which Silvia, "unsere Tugend, der Engel im Stern" is misperceived by various people, becoming an object of hearsay, in a similar manner that Tini Schönberger perhaps became the product of the myths that began to surround her⁴¹. In Hofmannsthal's play, Silvia is described by Rudolf's servant Johann as "eine zweideutige Person [...], eine gefährliche Person, um so gefährlicher, je schöner sie ist"⁴². Here, Hofmannsthal seems to follow Schnitzler in rendering Christine-as-Silvia as an ambiguous personality (in the same manner that Schnitzler created two figures to represent Christine in *Liebelel*), according to the classic trope of a dangerous and disarming beauty. The personality of his literary creation is described by Hofmannsthal as follows: "Silvia ist dumm, aber weise. Intuitiv beurteilt sie die Leute ganz richtig [...]. Für sie ist das Eingehen auf diese Leute eine Art Entzückung. Sie weiß dass sie sie verliebt in sich macht"⁴³. Here, as elsewhere in Hofmannsthal's work (notably in *Christinas Heimreise* [1910]), intrigue and emotional turmoil are successfully resolved in the institution of marriage, in this case that of Silvia and Rudolf, with which the *Silvia im "Stern"* fragment ends.

Silvia im "Stern", inspired as it was by Hofmannsthal's Brühl sojourns, was to remain a fragment that Hofmannsthal revised throughout his life, but one that was never completed. The majority of the texts that Hofmannsthal wrote in the Brühl itself do not reveal an immediate influence of Hofmannsthal's surroundings upon the narrative fiction, yet the sheer number of texts that Hofmannsthal worked on in Hinterbrühl is signifi-

⁴⁰ Martin Stern, *Hofmannsthals erstes Lustspielfragment*, NR 70, 3 (1959), 463-498, 489.

⁴¹ *Silvia im "Stern"*, 21.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴³ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Note N 157 "XI 1911", in Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Sämtliche Werke XX: Dramen 18*, 207.

cant. They include work on *Das Glück am Weg* (1893), *Triumph einiger ›Künstler unserer Zeit‹* (1895), *Alexander* (1895), *Das Märchen der 672. Nacht* (1895), texts composed during the “produktive Herbst” of 1897: *Der weiße Fächer* (1897), *Der goldene Apfel* (1897), *Die Frau im Fenster* (1897), and *Die Hochzeit der Sobeide* (1897), as well as *Der Abenteurer und die Sängerin* (1898) and the third act of *Der Triumph der Zeit* (1901). In many of these texts the focus is on the fantastical element breaking into a previously ordered and structured existence. *Das Märchen der 672. Nacht* (1895) focuses on a protagonist who resides in an idyllic country house in the mountains before his ordered existence is interrupted following the receipt of a mysterious letter, accusing one of his servants of an unspecified offence. When he decides to clear up the matter, by going to the city in search of the servant’s former masters, he ends up being struck by a horse, leading to his death. It is striking how the antithesis between the city and the countryside is figured in this tale, as all the negative experiences in the story befall the protagonist in the city, while the country environment where the protagonist resides is shown to perfectly complement the protagonist’s personality. The description of the country house where the protagonist lives resonates strongly with Hofmannsthal’s biographical experiences of the spa resort of Hinterbrühl:

Wenn in der Stadt die Hitze des Sommers sehr groß wurde und längs der Häuser die dumpfe Glut schwebte und in den schwülen, schweren Vollmondnächten der Wind weiße Staubwolken in den leeren Straßen hintrieb, reiste der Kaufmannssohn mit seinen vier Dienern nach einem Landhaus, das er im Gebirg besaß, in einem engen, von dunklen Bergen umgebenen Tal. Dort lagen viele solche Landhäuser der Reichen. Von beiden Seiten fielen Wasserfälle in die Schluchten herunter und gaben Kühle. Der Mond stand fast immer hinter den Bergen, aber große weiße Wolken stiegen hinter den schwarzen Wänden auf, schwebten feierlich über den dunkelleuchtenden Himmel und verschwanden auf der anderen Seite. Hier lebte der Kaufmannssohn sein gewohntes Leben in einem Haus, dessen hölzerne Wände immer von dem kühlen Duft der Gärten und der vielen Wasserfälle durchstrichen wurden.⁴⁴

This is a rare example of Hofmannsthal topographically rooting his literary work in a location that bears an obvious resemblance to Hinterbrühl. For the most part, the texts Hofmannsthal worked on in the Brühl took

⁴⁴ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Das Märchen der 672. Nacht*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Heinz Rölleke et al, 42 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1975-), XXVIII: *Erzählungen I*, 13-30.

their inspiration less from Hofmannsthal's immediate surroundings than from classical antiquity (*Alexander – Die Freunde*), from *One Thousand and One Nights* (*Der goldene Apfel* and *Die Hochzeit der Sobeide*), the memoirs of Casanova (*Der Abenteurer und die Sängerin*), and the motif of Wilhelm Meister and Mignon (*Der Triumph der Zeit*). However, in a note to *Alexander – Die Freunde* (a note which Hofmannsthal composed one day while on the way to take the electric tram in the Brühl and on the tram journey itself⁴⁵) Hofmannsthal ironically ascribes Mödling and the Brühl an inspirational role:

Sonntag, 3. Februar 1895. – Ich sage zu den kleinen dunklen Häusern und Kindern in Mödling: gebt mir euch, – und sie geben mir den göttlichen Leib Alexanders des Großen im Bade liegend. – Gedanken = ein tiefes Kommunizieren mit dem Wesen der Dinge. Feuer einer Laterne vermittelt die Idee des ewigen Weltfeuers und die mystische Vereinigung mit diesem.⁴⁶

As illustrated by the examples from *Silvia im "Stern"*, *Das Märchen der 672. Nacht* and, indeed, the example above from *Alexander – Die Freunde*, the Brühl did not fail to leave traces in Hofmannsthal's work. The peace and quiet that Hofmannsthal enjoyed in Hinterbrühl were particularly germane to work on his early texts. In letters written from Hinterbrühl to his parents and friends the talk is of diverse work projects. He asks his parents to send various manuscripts to Hinterbrühl and similarly planned the staging of theatre plays from there⁴⁷.

The significance of Hinterbrühl to Hofmannsthal's life and work cannot be underestimated. A place that he was familiar with from childhood, it remained somewhere that he would return to throughout the course of his life, particularly in the period up until his marriage to Gerty Schlesinger. In Hinterbrühl he could be sure of finding the peace and tranquility that was so conducive to his work, as well as the social interaction and intellectual exchange with his friends and colleagues who similarly favoured the Brühl. The significance of Hinterbrühl to Hofmannsthal may be seen both in the sheer number of texts that he worked on there, as well as in his literary sublimation of his Brühl experiences, in particular in *Silvia im "Stern"*. Hinterbrühl, as a rural retreat in close proximity to Vienna, served as a model for

⁴⁵ See *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Brief-Chronik Regest-Ausgabe*, I, 237.

⁴⁶ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Alexander – Die Freunde*, in *Gesammelte Werke in Einzelausgaben*, ed. Bernd Schoeller in consultation with Rudolf Hirsch, 10 vols (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979), III: *Dramen* I, 519-528, 519.

⁴⁷ Hofmannsthal to his father 15.10.1897, in BW ELTERN, FDH.

Hofmannsthal for the kind of lifestyle that he aspired to, combining the peace and tranquility of the countryside with the proximity to the hustle and bustle of the city. It is an ideal that he would eventually realise in his mansion in Rodaun.