

The Establishment, Dissolution, and Restoration of *Heimat*  
in German-Jewish Narratives by Stefanie Zweig and Jeanine Meerapfel

By

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## Abstract

Writers and filmmakers of second-generation Holocaust survivors often seek to establish tenuous continuities between their parents' pre-exile *Heimat* and their own experiences of German culture through their artistic works. The novelist Stefanie Zweig and the filmmaker Jeanine Meerapfel, as members of the second generation, have composed narratives that create such continuities and their complexities in the search for place and the quest for belonging. This dissertation focuses on Zweig's novels of the *Rothschildallee* (2008-2012) and Meerapfel's feature film *Der deutsche Freund* (2012), narratives that tell stories of this quest for *Heimat* from the perspectives of the first and second generations, and analyzes the complexities of this search.

To elucidate aspects of this search for place and belonging, this analysis works with conceptual tools borrowed from cultural geography and the Bakhtinian chronotope. The application of material and non-material traces from cultural geography in the analysis of these works reveals the unique character of German-Jewish geography as presented in these narratives. Through the Bakhtinian chronotope, an in-depth analysis of *Heimat* at a given time and of its changes over time reveals the complex relationships between time, space, and places in both public and private spheres. The house and the threshold emerge as the most important chronotopes in the narratives and evolve from novel to novel and from the written to the cinematic medium.

This analysis discusses the challenges of establishing *Heimat* from the perspective of the parent generation. The house in the *Rothschildallee* becomes symbolic of German-Jewish culture in its negotiation between the public and private spheres while the threshold here becomes a point of momentous crossings. Furthermore, it identifies the children's attitudes towards and expectations of the *Heimat* which their parents created for them. For the child generation, the threshold develops into a significant place of departures and arrivals that reveal the socio-cultural

struggles for the younger Sternbergs. Over time, the chronotopes of the house and threshold respond to the processes of dissolution and restoration of *Heimat*, showing the interdependencies of the public and private spheres. Finally the analysis shows the difficulties in establishing and maintaining *Heimat* across different houses and thresholds set in various cultural geographies

This analysis contributes to the study of *Heimat* from a German-Jewish perspective and points to developments in German-Jewish literature that has again become part of scholarly discourse in post-World War II literature and cinema. Zweig's novels commemorate the German-Jewish *Bildungsbürgertum* and acknowledge the daily struggles involved in establishing *Heimat*. Meerapfel's film treats the pursuit of a German-Jewish *Heimat* as one strand of a much broader story about the post-war quest for a place of home in two countries faced with the aftermath of exile and war crimes.

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## 1 Introduction

German-Jewish families living in Germany around the late 1800s and early 1900s pursued a dream captured in the idea of *Heimat* that was defined through a strong desire for acceptance and belonging. Following the 1871 emancipation of Jews in Germany, these desires appeared to be attainable to many German-Jewish families, and German Jews undertook measures to achieve this goal in the hopes of establishing a sustainable *Heimat* for future generations. The hope for a *Heimat* that could be passed down from parent to child was further ingrained with paragraph 118 in the *Weimarer Verfassung*, the constitution of the Weimar Republic, which stated all citizens had a right to their own private sphere: “Die Wohnung jedes Deutschen ist für ihn eine Freistätte und unverletzlich” (*Die Verfassung des Deutschen Reichs*). After only 62 years of Jewish emancipation, any form of *Heimat* that had been established by German Jews as German citizens came to a grinding halt as of 1933, which did not happen in a swift, sudden action, but occurred in a chain of events, many of which were willfully designed to extinguish traces of German-Jewish culture from German culture as a whole.

### 1.1 Presentation of Topic

Survivors of the first generation who experienced emancipation, oppression and exile passed on remnants of German Jewish culture to their children, the second generation, in spite of the fact that much of German-Jewish culture was destroyed through the onslaught of dehumanizing measures instigated by National Socialism. As a consequence of the rupture and the subsequent trauma caused by the Holocaust, the sense of *Heimat* and of a thriving culture passed on to the younger generation was fractured and lacked continuity. These remnants of culture often consisted of memories of places, language, and traditions. The physical loss of

one's homeland due to exile and the fractured nature of German Jewish culture that was a result of displacement and National Socialist persecution create a broken geography that members of second generation Holocaust exiles seek to overcome and restore in a variety of ways.

Some members of the second-generation seek to establish tenuous continuities between their parents' notion of *Heimat* and their own experiences of German culture, which can be seen in works by the novelist Stefanie Zweig and the filmmaker Jeanine Meerapfel. Zweig was born into a German-Jewish family from Leobschütz, a city in Upper Silesia, in 1932. As life in Germany became unbearable, she and her family escaped the persecution of National Socialism in 1938 and went to Kenya and lived in exile. The family returned to Germany in 1947 and settled in Frankfurt am Main. As an adult, Zweig worked as a journalist and writer until her death in 2014. Her experiences as a child in Africa were the inspiration for her best-known novel *Nirgendwo in Afrika* (1995). Like Zweig, Meerapfel's parents were German Jews who fled Nazi Germany during the 1930s and lived in exile. They settled in Buenos Aires, Argentina where their daughter Jeanine was born in 1943. She grew up in Argentina and went to Germany as a student in 1964 where she studied film in Ulm with Alexander Kluge and Edgar Reitz. Both authors share the experience of spending their formative years in the country of their parents' exile from National Socialist Germany.

As a consequence, both have to approach the trauma of the Holocaust from the perspective of the second generation returning from exile to German culture and coming to terms with their German-Jewish heritage. Stefanie Zweig's series of novels set in the *Rothschildallee* is a tetralogy including the following titles: *Das Haus in der Rothschildallee* (2007), *Die Kinder der Rothschildallee* (2009), *Heimkehr in die Rothschildallee* (2010), and *Neubeginn in der Rothschildallee* (2011). All four works tell the story of the Sternbergs, a German-Jewish bourgeois family, across four generations from 1900 to 1950. The family builds a house in the

*Rothschildallee* that becomes the anchor of their *Heimat* and survives the destruction of war. Jeanine Meerapfel's film *Der deutsche Freund* (2012) tells the story of two German bourgeois families; however, in contrast to Zweig's novels, this cinematic work focuses on two families of which one is a German-Jewish refugee family and the other has a Nazi fugitive as father. As with Zweig's novels, the film portrays different generations of each family but the focus lies mostly on the children, Sulamit Löwenstein and Friedrich Burg, who must come to terms with their families' histories and define their sense of *Heimat* between Germany and Argentina.

These respective narratives are representations of German-Jewish geographies in their formation and of the changes they undergo due to external and internal factors. The geographies in these literary and cinematic works serve to create a sense of *Heimat* in different ways. In the case of Zweig they serve to elucidate the complexities of *Heimat* before and immediately after the Holocaust in Germany whereas Meerapfel focuses on the trajectory of the 1950s to the early 1980s in Argentina and the Federal Republic of Germany. *Der deutsche Freund* shows the viewer a representation of *Heimat* that goes beyond geography and is situated in interpersonal relationships. This dissertation will analyze how Zweig and Meerapfel, through the medium of their choice, represent German-Jewish *Heimat*

## 1. 2 Existing Research and Thesis

In the late 1990s, Holocaust scholars Alan Berger and Efraim Sicher published two works on the literature written by the second generation. *Children of Job* (1997), written by Berger, provides a definition of second-generation writers and filmmakers that is limited to the direct offspring of those who survived Auschwitz while Sicher's book *Breaking Crystal* (1998) expands the definition to include children who experienced the Shoah from different perspectives, such as that of children growing up in exile. Both Berger and Sicher in their

respective works discuss Shoah literature by second-generation authors who lived in various countries, mostly in the U.S. and Israel. A more focused discussion about German-Jewish literature, especially that by second-generation writers, took place in Germany in the early years of the millennium.

According to Hartmut Steinecke in his published lecture “*Literatur als Gedächtnis der Shoah*” (2005), one could speak, since the 1990s, of a German-Jewish literature with over 200 published works written by 40 authors. Although these authors come from a variety of socio-cultural backgrounds and write in different genres, mostly novels and short stories, they share common characteristics, such as accessing the memory of the Shoah through indirect means and from multifarious perspectives (27). Steinecke speaks of the separation between Jewish and non-Jewish German writers, as represented in the different terms used to describe each group: *Generation nach der Shoah* and *Nachkriegsgeneration* (29). This division was more specific to the literature produced by the first generation; however, according to Steinecke, it appears that this separation is not as strict with the second generation. To evidence this development, he refers to W.G. Sebald’s *Austerlitz* (2001) which was not reviewed for its correct expression of atonement for the Holocaust but was instead noted for its contribution to literature that remembers and commemorates the Shoah (Steinecke 32). While this division may be less apparent in contemporary German literature, the works that are analyzed in this dissertation are identified as German-Jewish literature by the second generation.

Research to date on Zweig and Meerapfel consists of articles and several dissertations that analyze Zweig’s novels *Nirgendwo in Afrika* (1995), *Irgendwo in Deutschland* (1996) and her short stories on Africa, and Meerapfel’s films, including some on the *Der deutsche Freund* (2012). The most extensive piece of research on Zweig’s novels, up to now, is the dissertation by Natalie Eppelsheimer (2008) that focuses only those works concerned with Zweig’s time in

African exile. Another dissertation contains a chapter which analyzes Zweig's novel *Nirgendwo in Afrika* (Irchenhauser 2005). A third dissertation by Julia Baker (2007) departs from a sole focus on Zweig's time in exile and expands her analysis to include two novels *Nirgendwo in Afrika* and *Irgendwo in Deutschland*. Baker examines the relationships between memory, trauma, narrative, and fantasy in Holocaust literature of the second generation. With Baker's dissertation, one can only access the abstract. In sum, none of these dissertations analyzes any of the novels of the *Rothschildallee* tetralogy. None focuses on German-Jewish geography as *Heimat*.

Pertaining to Meerapfel, the most extensive research concerning her films is found in two dissertations. Ellen Marie Kreger published a dissertation in 2000, which analyzed the role of silence and female subjectivity in a number of films, including Meerapfel's *Malou* (1981). In 2003 Christian Gundermann wrote a dissertation that analyzed Argentinian films, including Meerapfel's, in the context of left-wing cultural production between the dictatorship (1976-1983) and the neo-liberalization of the 1990s. Two research articles discuss Meerapfel's films *La Amiga* (1988), *Malou* (1981), and *Im Land meiner Eltern* (1981). Catherine Grant in her article *Camera Soledaria* (1997) looks at themes of anti-Semitism, exile, and return in Meerapfel's *La Amiga* while Shawn S. Magee (1985) considers aspects of cross-cultural examination in the films *Malou* and *Im Land meiner Eltern*. Apart from films reviews on *Der deutsche Freund*, there is to-date no other secondary literature on this particular film.

As Zweig and Meerapfel are surviving children of parents who went into exile to flee National Socialist persecution, these two authors can be situated in the larger context of second-generation writers and filmmakers. The term "second-generation" in reference to post-Holocaust writing can be traced back to Helen Epstein's *Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors* (1979), which is a collection of interviews and

autobiographical narratives with members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation. At the end of the 1990s, Holocaust scholars, such as Alan Berger and Efraim Sicher, further explored the term “second generation” and provided a genealogy of definitions, which McGlothlin expanded in her research on works authored by members of the second generation. In the context of Holocaust studies, the term “second generation” usually refers to the children whose parents survived the Holocaust. Berger in his book *Children of Job* (1997) gives a narrow definition of second-generation writers “who are offspring of Jewish Holocaust survivors” (1). One should also note that the definition of 2<sup>nd</sup> generation has become more inclusive as more scholarly research has been published. Efraim Sicher in his book *Breaking Chrystal* (1998) opens the term to include “adopted children [and] children of refugees” (6).

Given the fact that both Zweig and Meerapfel were the children of refugees living in exile, they fall into Sicher’s expanded definition of second-generation authors. A much broader definition of second generation writers and literature is introduced by Erin McGothlin in her dissertation *Remembering Memory: The Holocaust and the "Second Generation"* (2001). Taking Sicher’s definition as a point of departure, she expands hers to include “writers whose families experienced the Holocaust and those who have no direct Holocaust experience, but nevertheless access the experience imaginatively” (19). In discussing authors of the second generation, McGlothlin also refers to Ezrahi’s loose categorization of the writers in question, when Ezrahi, in her article “Representing Auschwitz” (1995), states that writers of the second generation are often “dynamic” (122) in that the “dynamic or relativist position approaches the representation of the memory of that Place [Auschwitz, S.V.] as a construction of strategies for an ongoing renegotiation of that historical reality” (Ezrahi 122). One of these strategies is drawing on stories one has heard in the past. Zweig, in a interview, clarifies: “Die Familie Sternberg ist rein fiktiv,

aber die in dem Buch geschilderten Menschen sind längst ein Teil von mir und im Übrigen eine Hommage an Menschen, die nur noch in meinen Erinnerungen leben“ (Zweig, Randomhouse).

Letters as those found in Zweig's *Nirgendwo war Heimat* and stories she was told as a young person growing up in post-war Germany informed her imagination when she composed the narrative about the Sternberg family in the *Rothschildallee* tetralogy. Not only does Zweig draw on personal and familial narratives to tell the Sternbergs' story but she intertwines the histories of a family, a community, a region, and a country into one thick strand that, as an act of imagination, embeds the private sphere firmly in the public: "Das Herbeisehnen nach dem Verständnis um die Vergangenheit der Eltern ist eng verbunden mit der Suche nach Zusammenhängen der Familiengeschichte, damit diese als Ganzes verstehbar wird" (Herzberger 15-16). However, it can never be a complete whole due to the rupture from the Shoah. In this respect, narratives such as Zweig's are always constructed around what Berger calls a "presence of absence" (2) which is the absence of explicit representation of the Shoah, a gaping hole in survivors' family histories. With the remembered fragments of conversations and photographs with tattered edges, Zweig and other writers of the second generation reconstruct a family history whose time-space continuum was destroyed.

In addition to drawing imaginatively on memory to create narratives in a post-Shoah landscape, writers and filmmakers of the second generation also address similar themes in their works that often deal with "the indeterminacy of place and identity" (Remmler 11). The discourse on a lacking sense of place in German-Jewish literature is often examined under the term *Heimat*, the main focus in Anat Feinberg's article "Abiding in a Haunted Land: the Issue of *Heimat* in Contemporary German-Jewish Writing" (1997).

Apart from Feinberg's article, four dissertations have been written that analyze various aspects of German-Jewish *Heimat*. A broader analysis of *Heimat* in contemporary German

literature and film is found in Tessa Chi Hyung Lee's dissertation from 2001. She does, however, dedicate one chapter to the conceptualization of *Heimat* in Barbara Honigmann's works and the particular problematic of a German-Jewish sense of belonging. Lee notes in her research that Honigmann, who resides in Strausbourg, is able to explore her cultural Germaness through the geographical distance of living in France. Outside of German borders, it is easier for Honigmann to explore her Jewish identity. Clare Martha Davis (2001) wrote a dissertation on contemporary German-Jewish and Austrian-Jewish writers. She focuses on the role of literary texts in the dialogic process of establishing German-Jewish and Austrian-Jewish identity. Through literature, contemporary German-speaking writers reconnect with their parents' past and communicate its presence in their own lives. With a focus on the religious voices in works by Lasker-Schüler, Sachs, and Honigmann, Renate Kaiser Sturdevant (2010) investigated questions of religion, exile, and *Heimat* in these three authors' works. Anna-Lena Hermelingmeier's book *Wahrnehmung von >>Heimat<< und Exil* (2015) examines the concept of *Heimat* in terms of sensual perception, concentrating on the moment of crossing borders and motifs of transit, waiting, and encounter with the foreign. While Hermelingmeier analyzes the connection between time and space in respect to *Heimat* and exile, she does not use the Bakhtinian chronotope to elucidate the relationship between the two. Finally, Jens Kugele's *Kafkas Heimat-Topographien. Nation. Religion, Kultur und Schrift* (2011) discusses questions of how "the spatial constructedness of *Heimat* [in Kafka's texts] becomes an arena for different processes of cultural spaces. He uses the Bakhtinian concept of the chronotope as an analytical tool and works with chronotope constellations of houses and other structures. With the exception of Kugele's use of the chronotope in his analysis, none of these dissertations explores the spatial, temporal, and cultural parameters of German-Jewish *Heimat* in terms of everyday life from the perspective of German-Jewish geography and chronotope.



In the research on German Jewish *Heimat*, there is a gap in analysis of the representation of everyday German Jewish life and its connection to place and history in German society in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. This dissertation investigates works by Zweig and Meerapfel claiming that these works show the struggle for a German-Jewish *Heimat*. At the center of this analysis lies the concept of *place* in German-Jewish geographies and its role in the formation of *Heimat* using cultural geography, which is an area of geography that examines the intersection of geographical space and cultural activity.

### **1.3 Methodology**

The representations of German Jewish geographies as *Heimat* in Zweig and Meerapfel's works will be examined from a scholarly perspective that combines cultural geography, material and non-material traces and Bakhtin's chronotope. Here, one may ask the question as to what constitutes German-Jewish geography. It is a geography consisting of both abstract and concrete aspects. The abstract character of any cultural geography consists of values and certain cultural practices. In the case of German Jewish geography, it is defined through values of the German *Bildungsbürgertum* with its emphasis on ownership of property, on traditional gender roles, and on education, as means to achieve a position in society of high social standing. Part of this landscape would also be an interest in German classical culture, such as literature by Goethe and Schiller. Another component of German Jewish geography is a set of cultural practices expressed in the celebration of holidays and rituals such as weddings and funerals. Concrete aspects of the cultural geography in questions consist of architectural works in both the private and public spheres, to which individuals have emotional attachments, and names of public places, such as street names. In its connection to *Heimat*, a presence of a German Jewish cultural geography

does not necessarily mean a German-Jewish *Heimat*, which implies a sense of belonging to a certain cultural geography.

These aspects of cultural geography will be analyzed using the concept of traces because they provide a means to discuss the concrete and abstract components of German-Jewish cultural geography. From Jonathan Anderson's perspective, geographical context and material and non-material traces create individual places within space. In other words, Anderson looks at the presence of traces in a given geographical context, which constitutes a place. While this dissertation looks at the role of place and its transformations over time, especially in regard to processes of establishment, dissolution, and restoration of place as *Heimat*, it also employs Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope because it provides a conceptual tool that is central to the analysis of *Heimat* and its relationship to human action, space, place, and time.

The use of the Bakhtinian chronotope, especially in reference to its different forms of time, as a conceptual tool for the analysis in this dissertation will guide the close reading of the relationship between space and time in German-Jewish geography and its formation as a place of *Heimat*. From Bakhtin's perspective, the chronotope is the artistic expression of Einstein's idea of time-space, which is the literal meaning of the term in Greek. According to Bakhtin, the chronotope demonstrates "the intrinsic connectedness of time and space" (84), time "thickens [...] and takes on flesh" (84) through the melding of temporal and spatial aspects within the chronotope. Forms of time change throughout history and are indicative of transformations of places. Although Bakhtin explains that time and space are fused within a chronotope, he does not offer a "definitive definition" (Bemong & Borghart 5). Bemong and Borghart note "[a] [...] lack of analytical precision in Bakhtin's essays has led to a proliferation of heterogeneous chronotopic approaches to literature [...]" (5). Michael Holquist describes the chronotope as "an optic for reading texts as x-rays of the forces at work in the culture system from which they

spring.” (425) However, I would also add that the chronotope is an “optic” with which one can “read” the fusing of space and time from the perspective of the characters. Holquist’s framing of the chronotope is also helpful to the analysis of this dissertation. When read as “x-rays of forces at work in the culture system,” the “texts” by Zweig and Meerapfel reveal the changing relationships between culture, space, and time within chronotopes of German-Jewish *Heimat*. The analysis in this dissertation combines critical tools from cultural geography with the Bakhtinian concept of the chronotope in its focus on *Heimat*.

The term *Heimat* is usually rendered as ‘home’ or ‘homeland’ in English but these renderings do not capture the complexity of the term. In the Brothers Grimm’s *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (1877), the term is defined in language that focuses on the geographical aspect of *Heimat*, rather than on the idea of „belonging to a house.“ 1) “Das land oder auch nur der landstrich, in dem man geboren ist oder bleibenden aufenthalt hat;“ 2) “Der geburtsort oder ständige wohnort;“ 3) “Selbst das elterliche haus und besitzthum heiszt so, in Baiern.“

The definition of *Heimat* from Duden contrasts with the one in the Grimm dictionary insofar that Duden explicitly refers to the emotional aspects of the concept as in a “gefühlbetonter Ausdruck enger Verbundenheit gegenüber einer bestimmten Gegend.“ On the other hand, the definition from the Brothers Grimm implies that there is an emotional connection between person and place based on familiarity and family in that their definition refers to the fact that *Heimat* comprises the place, in which one was born and grew up. Celia Applegate expands this emotional connection from the individual home to the borders that mark regional and national boundaries. In her book *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (1990), she speaks of the “consciousness of national belonging” and the “disjunction between national claims and national realities” (ix) that come into play in the borderlands, as places demarcating *Heimat*. According to Applegate, borders have “the capacity [...] to take on cultural meaning

that transcends their political and economic purposes” (xi). Whether the attachment is to a house or to a nation-state, it is this emotional, psychological connectedness to a place that makes *Heimat* a concept that does not allow for a simple definition; instead it reflects the complexity of German history.

Generally speaking, the idea of *Heimat* plays a prominent role in understanding German culture, as it is an ideal that has informed German conceptualizations of home/homeland since the Romantic period (Blickle, Palfreyman and Boa). It is also an idea that has been misappropriated, especially by National Socialism. Lastly, it has been a topic of deep reflection for German Jews living in exile. *Heimat* and the processes involved in establishing, losing, and restoring it are important ideas in Zweig and Meerapfel’s creative works.

The idea of *Heimat* played a significant role in German Romanticism at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with its genre “Heimatsdichtung.” In the mid 1800’s, the term became important again as Germany was moving towards a nation-state. Over time, the National Socialists also appropriated the idea that is reflected in its linguistic use as “Heimatwehr, Heimatschutz, Heimatbewegung” (Krauss 12). The National Socialists misappropriated the term through its connection with a “Blut und Boden” mentality. Due to the misuse of the term in the Third Reich, it would be decades before the idea of *Heimat* would become more acceptable again. The term was also viewed negatively during the fifties, in which there was a plethora of *Heimat* films depicting it in terms of Alpine kitsch and flat characters.

It was in the 1980s that *Heimat* became the focus of public attention with Edgar Reitz’s series of *Heimat*, which inspired scholarship on the subject starting in the eighties up and into the millennium. Reitz’ film established a cinematic representation of belonging to a place. Alon Confino writes about how the *Heimat* idea became an interchangeable symbolic representation of the locality, the region, and the nation that made it possible for Germans to imagine nationhood

as a form of localness (185-186). Andrea Bastian in her book *Der Heimat-Begriff* (1985) offers a scholarly overview of the concept and presents criteria that allow for scholarly analysis of the term. She divides the concept of *Heimat* into the *Gemeinschaftsebene* and the *Gesellschaftsebene*. While the term embodies aspects of place in respect to *Gesellschaftsebene* such as geography and architecture it also encompasses personal desires and needs at the *Gemeinschaftsebene*.

Christopher Wickham in *Constructing Heimat in Postwar Germany* (1999) considers *Heimat* to be specific to “the desire for a place of identity traditionally looked backward to a real, imagined, or even mythical place for security with clear regional characteristics” (8). Wickham sees *Heimat* more from a perspective of nostalgia with his emphasis on “looking back” and, as a phenomenon, the place plays a more significant role. The locus provides security for an individual. Other scholars such as Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman see *Heimat* as a concept that is embedded in the human experience. In their book *Heimat – A German Dream* (2000) they see *Heimat* as a necessity of the human condition: a “deep-seated psychological need, which may even be intrinsic to identity formation, but which is mediated differently through changing history and in different cultural contexts” (23). In *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (2002), Peter Blickle frames *Heimat* as “an area where geography and modern constitutions of identity intersect in German-speaking contexts” (xi). In the essay *Heimat als Utopie* (2000), Bernhard Schlink connects the idea of home with an unobtainable and ideal place that exists in memory and imagination:

Heimat ist Utopie. Am intensivsten wird sie erlebt, wenn man weg ist und sie einem fehlt; das eigentliche Heimatgefühl ist das Heimweh. Aber auch wenn man nicht weg ist, nährt sich das Heimatgefühl aus Fehlendem, aus dem, was nicht mehr oder auch noch nicht ist. Denn die Erinnerungen und Sehnsüchte machen die Orte zur Heimat (1).

Two aspects of Schlink's definition are particular to German-Jewish *Heimat*. First, the longing he mentions is not only for a place in the past but also for a place that has not yet become manifest. Johann Isidor Sternberg, in the context of Zweig's novels, desires a *Heimat* in which he and his family can exist simply as Germans. He never experiences this in his lifetime. Secondly, German Jews experience this yearning while one is in the locality of *Heimat* and not removed from it. From Schlink's view of home, one could say that German Jews have remained in this liminal state of *Heimat* over generations. For decades, they had lived in the place they wanted to call "home" but had the desire for new circumstances in which they could achieve a sense of belonging. In sum, the need for *Heimat* is a longing for belonging in a given place. The term "belonging" in the constellation of Jewish and non-Jewish Germans and the nation-state of Germany in its various forms involves the notion of those who are inside and outside of the place in question. Johannes von Moltke sees *Heimat*, in an article on *Heimatfilme*, as an idea poised at the "division between inside and outside, local place and foreign space" (88). German Jews lived on the outside of local place and, due to the way they, as a community, were framed by those inside the locality of the German nation-state occupied a realm of "foreign space" that exists in the minds of people on the inside. From Schlink and von Moltke, it becomes clear that German Jews occupied liminal spaces in their quest for *Heimat*.

The works by Schlink, von Moltke, Blickle, Boa, and Palfreyman refer extensively to the idea of *Heimat* as a concept that concerns the relationship between a physical place or landscape and the emotions, the psychology of individuals and groups, a concept that informs identity. Apart from the emotions and desires that mold the connection between individuals and places, one can also consider *Heimat* as a type of cultural geography defined through its material and non-material traces, of which some are portable and are not necessarily dependent upon a hard geographic location, such as a city like Frankfurt/Main. In *The Heimat Abroad* (2005), one sees

*Heimat* as a means to “preserve [...] Germaness” (O’Donnell, Bridenthal, and Reagin 2) which is defined as “the cultural markers of ethnic German identity practiced by a community” (4). Here, the locus of *Heimat* is not a geographical place but a space that has been made “German” through particular practices which speak for a portable form of *Heimat*. One could also say that a locality can evolve through culture-specific behaviors.

For this analysis, both definitions of *Heimat*, situated either in geographical places or in cultural practices are important due to the fact that Zweig’s novels deal with the quest for a home within Germany whereas Meerapfel’s film begins with a portrayal of *Heimat* from the perspective of exile. The analysis of *Der deutsche Freund* in chapter four of this dissertation illustrates how the film functions as a fifth novel in relation to Zweig’s tetralogy of the *Rothschildallee-saga* proposing an expanded view as the struggle for *Heimat* is a painstaking process for all children of the post-war generation. In this way, Meerapfel’s film offers a new perspective of *Heimat* and the quest for it. To investigate the complexity of this endeavor, this dissertation places the focus of its analysis on the struggle for *Heimat* from the perspective of second-generation authors as depicted in Zweig’s tetralogy on the *Rothschildallee* and Meerapfel’s film *Der deutsche Freund*. With the methodology combining cultural geography and the Bakhtinian chronotope, this study will contribute to the research on German-Jewish *Heimat*.

## 2 The Desire for Place: *Es ist erreicht*

*Heimat* as a concept is always about place but for German-Jewish writers of the second generation *Heimat* is not limited to geographical locations and can be situated at alternative sites. Anat Feinberg points out that *Heimat* for members of the second generation can be the language (Feinberg 162). Similarly, Zweig creates a German-Jewish *Heimat* in literature through the place Frankfurt am Main that was home to 26,000 German Jews by 1925 (<https://www.ushmm.org>). This resonates with an interview Zweig gave in 2010 that her *Heimat* is her Frankfurt neighborhood Bornheim, once a Jewish community (Herbst-Interview).

“Es ist erreicht,” the title of chapter one in Zweig’s novel *Das Haus in der Rothschildallee*, brings one question immediately to the mind of the reader in that she asks herself what it is that has been achieved. By the end of this chapter, the question has been answered: the Sternbergs, a young German-Jewish family in Frankfurt am Main, have moved into their new house at *Rothschildallee* 9. When the family moves into their new residence, they also cross a threshold. This crossing of a threshold becomes a chronotope, which symbolizes a boundary that the Sternbergs cross within German society. Hermlingmeier refers to the threshold as an “Ort des Dazwischen” which marks “den Umschlag im Erfahrungsgeschehen, der das Subjekt immer von Neuem auf die Umwelt ausrichtet, der also Abweichungen, Verschiebungen ermöglicht und damit die Lebenswirklichkeit neu ausrichten kann” (66). While crossing a threshold can be a moment of promise and opportunity, it may also cause tears and ruptures in the fabric of one’s life (66). In the context of the *Rothschildallee* novels, the success of this endeavor depends on the dialogue between the private and public spheres. Will the public sphere acknowledge the Sternbergs’ achievement of building such a home? For a moment, it appears to Johann Isidor Sternberg that public and private merge in a seamless passage.



This momentous occasion becomes a cause for celebration, especially when combined with other temporal and spatial traces as in those material and non-material markers that are specific to stepping over this threshold. The Sternbergs move into their residence on January 27, 1900, which becomes an important date for the family, especially the father, for several reasons. Not only have the Sternbergs moved into their new home, but they have also moved into an area of Frankfurt that is more affluent and reflects the family's economic success (*Haus* 26). In addition, establishing a home in a bourgeois environment possibly meant acceptance for German Jews:

Legal emancipation, financial success, and the benefits of urban life were only halfway measures. Jews needed and desired admittance to bourgeois society – their ticket, they believed to acceptance as “Germans.” To become part of a German *Volk*, a separate people and/or nation identifying with ancient Germans, a Germanic soul, and national consciousness verging on a racial community, was impossible. A bourgeois life-style, however, was tangible and achievable. (Kaplan 7)

The purchase of such a house for a German-Jewish family would have been viewed as a very tangible sign that they had gained entry to German society and would be accepted as respected citizens. It was only 29 years earlier, with Jewish emancipation in 1871, that German Jews received all rights belonging to German citizens. Before this political act, it would have been extremely difficult for German Jews to realize the ambition of building a house in a fairly affluent neighborhood. The date is also important in that January 27, 1900 was the emperor's birthday. In addition to these aspects, this January 27<sup>th</sup> happens to fall on a Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. The fact that the Sternbergs' move-in date coincides with a day that celebrates the Emperor Wilhelm II and is the Sabbath appears to Johann Isidor Sternberg as an auspicious sign for the future: “Die Jahre, die da kommen würden, erschienen Johann Isidor voller Sonnenschein. Wie der Tag, der vor ihm lag” (*Haus* 12). Johann Isidor thinks this to himself as

he closes the front gate to his property on his way to the synagogue. Here the narrator focuses on the aspect of him pulling the gate shut. He has crossed the threshold into ownership of a house and from now on leaves his house daily as a “ernsthaft[er] Bürger” (12). It is also at this point that the house establishes legitimacy as a chronotope of *Heimat*. The Sternbergs invest emotional capital into the house, and it has the power to transform them into more acceptable individuals for German society. The fact that he pictures a wonderful future for himself and his family after moving into the house speaks for the anchoring function of the new home.

One sees how various forms of time emerge in connection with the house. Firstly momentous time surfaces when they move to the *Rothschildallee* and secondly a promising future is attached to the place. Thirdly, there is idyllic time in which it almost seems that time stands still. This third form of time is defined through the tight interweaving of time and space. Bakhtin sees it as “an organic fastening-down, a grafting of life and its events to a place” (Bakhtin 225). This day as depicted in Zweig’s novel is one that shares characteristics with the idyllic in that there is a unity, a feature of the idyllic, of emperor’s birthday, the Jewish Sabbath, and the day on which the Sternbergs move into their new home.

Another aspect of idyllic time in the first chapter is the unity between the private sphere of the house and the public sphere of the city. However, to be more specific, this unity is seen from Johann Isidor’s perspective. The wintery atmosphere has undergone transformation: “Mit jedem Schritt, den er tat, genoss Johann Isidor die plötzliche Verwandlung der Winterwelt in eine der Zuversicht und Zukunftshoffnung” (*Haus* 13). The narrator moves from Johann Isidor’s perspective to a bird’s eye point of view and paints an urban landscape that mirrors the harmony felt by the Sternbergs in their new home (14). In the opening chapter of this first novel in the tetralogy, idyllic time plays a more significant role than in other chapters. The use of this time

form underscores the sense of promise that the Sternbergs attach to their new residence in the *Rothschildallee*.

The Sternbergs see the designing and building of their new house as the possibility to find their own place in and belong to German society. In this process the house functions as a chronotope, which provides insight into the spectrum of values that inform the Sternbergs' agency against the background of their socio-historical situation in the city of Frankfurt am Main at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **2.1 *Schein und Sein* of Place: Designing and Establishing the Sternberg Home**

While the house in the Rothschildallee signifies an era of promise for the Sternberg family, one could also say that it is a materialization of a chronotope of *Heimat* within a specific cultural geography that germinated years before the Sternbergs left Frankfurt's *Ostend*. At the beginning of the tetralogy, the idyllic form of time appears to be more visible in relation to the house.

While Bakhtin speaks of a chronotope of the idyllic, the adjective in this analysis will be connected to a form of time. While the house remains a chronotope of *Heimat* in all four novels, the forms of time that attached to it can change. According to Bakhtin, the idyll has three basic characteristics: 1) the idyll is a "little spatial world [that is] limited and sufficient unto itself" (Bakhtin 225). 2) Idyllic life in the Bakhtinian sense deals with the grand aspects of everyday life such as "love, birth, death, marriage [...], stages of growth" (225). It does not include "trivial" aspects of everyday life. 3) A third marker of the idyll is cyclical time as in nature: "the conjoining of human life with the life of nature, the unity of rhythm" (225-226). However, this form of time cannot be maintained as daily routines and outside events impede upon the harmony. Going to work and running the household are events that are repetitive and over time become trivial. Here comes another form of time into play, namely everyday time. Historical

time represented through personal and public events appear in the opening chapter. They serve the purpose of showing the trajectory along which the Sternbergs followed to the point where they could create their home.

These events include the Jewish Emancipation in 1871 and the beginning of a new century. The emancipation of German Jews in a united Germany constitutes a spatial indicator while a new century is a temporal indicator. One could also say that the time had arrived in which German Jews can establish a sense of belonging, a sense of *Heimat*. As *Heimat* implies a strong emotional attachment to a place, the chronotope of the idyllic is an appropriate conceptual lens through which one can analyze a narrative on the creation of *Heimat* due to the idyllic focus on a limited and unique geography.

In examining passages from the novel that relay childhood experiences for Johann Isidor Sternberg, it becomes clear that he, in his father's village, acquired values that informed his perception and thereby the manner, in which he shaped his environment. For example, Sternberg is constantly concerned with the outer appearance of the house; it should not show the full measure of his wealth. In other words, he practices caution in its design and architecture. Concerning the entrance of the house, Sternberg expresses doubt about the installation of a front door that is described as "bombastisch." He is afraid that the choice of such an ornate door reveals too much information about his economic status. Despite the fact that the architect of the house convinces Sternberg to choose this particular door, the reader still has the impression that Sternberg prefers a more modest façade of his house.

Sternberg's awareness of the necessity to maintain a modest appearance is a characteristic that he learned from his father: Von seinem seligen Vater, einem Viehhändler aus Schotten in Oberhessen, hatte Johann Isidor rechtzeitig gelernt, dass ein Mann nie als wohlhabend auffallen sollte. 'Ein bescheidender Rahmen,' hatte der Vater seinem Sohn eingetrichtert, 'ist wichtiger als

ein neuer Überzieher.” (*Haus* 35) Another influence in Sternberg’s childhood was his wealthy Aunt Luise, who saw her favorite nephew as “furchtlos, aufrichtig und klug” (*Haus* 23). It is partially through her that he comes into wealth and success. His aunt also shares with her nephew the opinion that material possessions bring sorrows and that it is better to give with “warmen als mit kalten Händen” (*Haus* 23). From her, Sternberg learns both generosity and appreciation for wealth. The values acquired during his childhood play a considerable role in the shaping of his own young family’s environment whose growth is closely linked with the cultural space of the new house over the course of time.

Working steadily towards his success, Sternberg begins as a textile merchant (*Haus* 24) and expands his business interests to founding a company that produces felt for hats. He also acquires a publishing house and makes various financial investments with good returns (*Haus* 25). The narrator of the novel notes that “[d]as Oberhaupt der kleinen Familie Sternberg hatte sich ungewöhnlich früh seinen Traum von Ehre und Wohlstand erfüllt” (*Haus* 23). Not only is wealth important to him, but also the achievement of a good, honorable reputation. In attaining these goals, it appears as if Sternberg and his family have reached a position in German society that allows them to lead a relatively carefree and prosperous life. Adopting the bourgeois canon of values was a strategy for German-Jewish families to gain acceptance in German middle-class society as Lässig points out in her work *Jüdische Wege ins Bürgertum* (2004):

Die soziale Figur des gebildeten Bürgers, der mit der materiellen auch die geistige Selbständigkeit verband und sich von Zwängen und Autoritäten zu emanzipieren vermochte, entwickelte sich unter diesen Vorzeichen zu einem allgemeinen, also nicht nur auf die Juden projizierten Leitbild. (Lässig 102)

Johann Isidor is representative of men who during the 19<sup>th</sup> century pursued a bourgeois lifestyle, confident of achieving acceptance on the basis of shared values. In hindsight, however, Zweig in

an interview points out how precarious such confidence will turn out to be: “Seine Prinzipien von Anstand, Ehrlichkeit und Fleiß scheinen sich ausgezahlt zu haben, er ist ein hoch angesehenes Mitglied der Gesellschaft. Noch weiß Sternberg nicht, dass sein Leben sich im nächsten Moment von Grund auf ändern wird.“ (<http://www.randomhouse.de>)

However, under further examination of a context consisting of German Jews in the wake of emancipation and the latent anti-Semitism that is expressed in subtle ways, one sees the potential for German Jews to lead such lives and, at the same time, the obstacles that prevent them from doing so. The Sternbergs have the opportunity to realize the dream of building their own house, but are not freely able to show their accomplishments for fear of being scrutinized by their non-Jewish neighbors. Sternberg wants the house to appear modest to the outside world.

The focus, here, lies on the word “appear” and the notion of *Schein* as found in the novel. On the one hand, it appears (*es scheint*) that German Jews have finally achieved full civil rights and equality in German society as represented in the Sternberg family. The Act of Jewish Emancipation (1871) states this fact on paper but could not spontaneously erase years and years of anti-Semitism and the caution, with which Jews approached their lives while living in a hostile environment. On the other hand, caution and modesty on the part of German Jews amount to another type of *Schein*. They appear to be and have less in the hope of escaping stereotypes and attaining acceptance, through which a sense of belonging can evolve. These two situations of *Schein* have their equivalents in *Sein*, which refers to the realities of the situation. In the novel, it becomes clear that anti-Semitism still exists and makes it very difficult for the Sternbergs to achieve a sense of belonging. Additionally, the Sternbergs must maintain a sense of *Schein*, which should enable them to be accepted. Apart from these two aspects, there are Johan Isidor’s accomplishments as a young adult, which give him the wherewithal to fulfill his desires. This

constellation of circumstances forms a space, a liminal one, which demands careful navigation on the part of the family.

*Liminal* is a term, which the OED defines as “of or pertaining to the threshold or the initial stage of a process.” With certainty, there are definitions of *liminal* by theorists such as Victor Turner and Homi Bhabha, which go into greater detail of how liminality describes different aspects of the condition of being in-between; however, the above definition from OED offers an adequate point of departure to explain the term as it pertains to the analysis of the *Rothschildallee* novels. For example, the Sternbergs literally cross the threshold of their home, an act, which is also symbolic of crossing into a new position in society. Apart from being a metaphor, the threshold, as Bakhtin sees it, is a chronotope. However, its significance as a chronotope is not as high as that of the house. One can divide Bakhtinian chronotopes into two categories: major and minor chronotopes. In this categorization, the house is a major chronotope while the threshold is a minor one. The act of crossing the threshold into the new house in the *Rothschildallee* signifies the initial phase of a process. The process, upon which the Sternbergs embark, is one of establishing a place, both physical and symbolic, of belonging in German society. Of equal importance is seeing liminality as composed of “entities [that] are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial” (Turner 95). It is the idea of “betwixt and between” that especially describes the space, in which the Sternbergs find themselves; they are located between two fixed points, Jewishness and Germanness, which much of the outside world sees as mutually exclusive. At the same time, the Sternbergs are “betwixt and between,” as they negotiate their lives within these two spheres.

Not only did the Sternbergs find themselves in a liminal space, but most German Jews did as well. In other words, Johann Isidor Sternberg’s efforts to maintain appearances, such as

his cautious attitude towards public display of his wealth, were a common practice for many German Jews of the middle-class (Peter Gay 21). Enjoying full rights as German citizens and their economic success, the German-Jewish bourgeoisie were anxious to establish their presence in German society. In order to accomplish this, German Jews went to great lengths to make a good impression on their Jewish and non-Jewish neighbors. Making a favorable impression also involved the constructing of a residence that would allow them to integrate into German society without being “conspicuously” Jewish.

While making a good impression is important to Sternberg, he is also interested in forging a life that synthesizes both Germanness and Jewishness. In addition, he also wants to engineer this synthesis through designing a house that reflects his values from both German and Jewish cultures. His aspiration to achieve this goal becomes especially apparent in that he does not purchase a house that has already been built, but purchases the land and hires an architect, with whom he works to create a house on his own terms. Johann Isidor Sternbergs’ terms mean differentiating between *Schein und Sein*. The Sternbergs’ house should be representative of *Sein* in that it mirrors his values of modesty, craftsmanship and civic pride. (*Haus* 18) His thoughts on the dichotomy of *Schein und Sein* are expressed through a conversation with his wife about another house.

Before Sternberg buys the land to build the new home, he inquires about another house, which captivates the interest of his wife, Betsy. “Das Haus, das es Betsy angetan hatte, war im neoklassizistischen Stil aus rotem Sandstein erbaut und glich einer Burg. Es hatte Erker, Fenster in verschiedenen Größen, Türmchen und Balkons mit kleinen griechischen Säulen” (*Haus* 34). The details of this house with its mix of architectural styles and its lack of unity in design suggest contradiction. For Sternberg, this house is an example of *Schein* in several aspects. First, it resembles a castle that recalls images of a medieval Germany, in which anti-Semitism was



widespread. Secondly, it combines architectural aspects, which do not mirror Sternberg's modesty. He finds the house to be pretentious. It is a house whose appearance is determined by architectural style from the past and does not reflect the Sternbergs' life.

In contrast to him, his wife finds the house attractive and believes it would show their wealth and success. To please his wife, Sternberg agrees to speak with the realtor who is selling the house. In the end, he tells the realtor: "Das [Haus] ist etwas für Leute, die nicht gelernt haben, den Schein vom Sein zu trennen" (*Haus* 35). In the above quote, special attention should be paid to the formulation *gelernt*. When Sternberg uses this word, the past participle of *lernen* (to learn), he is not only talking about any potential buyers of this house, but also about himself. More precisely, he is talking about what he learned from his father, who instilled essential values such as modesty in his son.

The home that Sternberg creates with the architect, Mr. Busch, is one representative of these values and aspirations:

[Das Haus] [...] hatte cremefarbene Mauern, was zwar als ein wenig gewagt galt, aber doch als zeitgemäß und künstlerisch, auffallend hohe Fenster mit ocker gestrichenen Rahmen, schöne breite Simse, geräumige Balkons und eine recht bombastisch gestaltete Haustür aus dunklem Holz und sonnengelbem Glas. (*Haus* 18)

In this description of the house in the *Rothschildallee*, analysis of the adjectives of "ein wenig gewagt" and "zeitgemäß" reveal aspects, which underscore Sternberg's sense of modesty and his desire to blend into German society.

In designing the exterior of the multi-family house, there is the presence of a certain concern and tension when it comes to how the house appears to those who see it from the street. For example, Sternberg's doubts about the front door that the architect has chosen reflect his concern for how he and his family are perceived by their neighbors. However, these concerns are

conspicuously absent when the focus lies on the decorating and design of the building's interior, more precisely, the Sternbergs' apartment. As the narrative perspective moves from the exterior to the interior of the home, the reader notes less tension in the process of completing the interior of the apartment that he and Betsy have chosen. For instance, Sternberg has few reservations with the elegant decorating of the rooms:

In der Rothschildallee 9 war das beste Parkett gelegt worden, das im Handel war; der Deckenstück mit dem Rokokodekor war eine Augenfreude, die teuren Seidentapeten in der Wohnung des Hausbesitzers würden Jahrzehnte und jede Moderichtung überdauern. Für die Ofennische im Sternberg'schen Salon schlug Busch die berühmten Kacheln aus der holländischen Stadt Delft vor. (*Haus* 19)

The one reservation that Sternberg expresses is concerned with the cost of the tiles from Delft. In contrast with those concerns about the exterior of the house, which had to do with impressions made to the outside world, Sternberg's unease with the choice of tile is only about the price. When looking more closely at the above passage, the description of house décor underscores his carefree attitude towards finishing the interior: "das beste Parkett" and "Deckenstück mit Rokokodekor" (*Haus* 19). Here it becomes clear that his uneasiness concerning the house is focused strictly on the exterior.

The meaning of the house for Sternberg's desire to create traditions that blend both aspects of German and Jewish culture is clearly expressed on the date of January 27<sup>th</sup>. Johann Isidor goes to the synagogue to commemorate this particular day, on which he and his family moved into their new home and the emperor celebrated his birthday. Another example of his efforts to achieve unity in his life is the name that he and Betsy gave to their eldest son: "Otto trug nicht zufällig den Namen des Reichgründers. Sein Vater verehrte Bismarck noch mehr als sämtliche drei deutschen Kaiser" (*Haus* 20). The Sternbergs give their first child a name in

which Germanness and Jewishness are both expressed: “Otto Wilhelm Samuel Sternberg.” (*Haus* 21) His third name “Samuel” reflects his Jewish heritage while the first two names mark the child as German. The first and last names written together “Otto Sternberg” suggest a synthesis of Germanness and Jewishness in the child. Another area, in which one also finds practices of cultural integration, is the preparation of food. These practices are usually carried out and directed by Betsy Sternberg. On the one hand, Betsy prepares classic European dishes and is well versed in French cuisine. On the other, she and her family follow the dietary laws of Judaism and combine these practices with culinary traditions from the Frankfurt region through her local, non-Jewish cook, Josepha (*Haus* 29).

The Sternbergs participate in a form of *Heimat* that, from their perspective, appears to be stable. It is a stability that arises from the material traces that populate the cultural geography of the Sternbergs’ life. Other traces like those of their children’s names and the cuisine specific to the region of Hesse and to Betty’s education seem stable. In short, they adopt aspects of *Heimat* that are considered solid and that are accepted by both Jewish and non-Jewish Germans. As the narrative progresses, one sees that these material traces do not provide the Sternbergs with a stable sense of *Heimat* as their position as German citizens is often challenged by political and societal forces.

## **2.2 Creating and Cultivating a Place in the Home**

While Johann Isidor Sternberg has greater influence on the exterior of the house, his wife, Betsy, shapes the interior of the home. Although her husband to a large extent determines the aesthetics of the basic details of the interior, such as the parquet floors (*Haus* 17), Betsy creates the atmosphere of the home and plays a central role for home life. Kaplan notes the expectations placed on bourgeois women such as Betsy: “She was to maintain a household positively

‘Germanic’ in its cleanliness and orderliness [...]” (*Jewish Middle Class* 25). This can be seen in the fact that Zweig introduces her to the reader before she introduces Betsy’s husband Johann Isidor. As the two leading figures in the first novel, each of them represents different aspects of the aforementioned time-space continuum. To an extent, one could even speak of a gendering of time. For example, as Betsy’s main sphere of influence is the interior of the house, she represents primarily cyclical time in the form of the weekly Shabbat celebration and the Sunday ritual of *Kaffee und Kuchen*. According to Bakhtin’s classifications of time, Betsy’s performance of these weekly rituals is part of idyllic time. She also participated in what Bakhtin refers to as “everyday time.” In this analysis “everyday” time, which includes the more “trivial” aspects of daily life such as going to and fro work is also called historical-linear time, which is expressed by Betsy’s her keen interest in her son’s playmates. As soon as the Sternbergs have moved into their own house, Betsy becomes very aware of the other children, with whom young Otto Sternberg spends his time (*Haus* 22). His mother’s vigilance in monitoring with whom Otto plays, is an expression of linear-historical time, insofar as Betsy wants her son to socialize with those children whose families reflect the self-image of the Sternbergs as a well-established middle-class family. Betsy’s concern about her son’s friends is also a concern for the future. If Otto socializes with people from good families, who are well positioned in society, he will be better prepared for a successful future. Betsy’s awareness of historic-linear time also becomes apparent when she discusses opportunities for business with her husband. Johann Isidor asks her what she thinks about acquiring a hat shop. In response, his wife seems skeptical of the idea and suggests that he can become a tailor for military uniforms: “Krieg wird es auch immer geben” (*Haus* 24.) Betsy Sternberg is a moving force in the first novel to acquire a new home. Although Betsy, like her husband, has a sense of linear time, it is expressed in another manner than that of her husband. She expresses it in conversations with her husband and in the upbringing of her children. It takes

place within the domestic sphere, her main area of agency. Johann Isidor Sternberg is more representative of historical-linear time as reflected in his development as a successful businessman. In contrast to Betsy, he acts more in the public sphere. He acquires one business after the other and plays the main role in the linear process of purchasing land, designing a house, and building it.

As already mentioned, Betsy's main sphere of influence is within the house, and it is in the kitchen of their new home, that the reader first encounters her. The narrative perspective focuses on Betsy at work in her kitchen, and the following passage emphasizes her role in cyclical time, which ties into the Bakhtinian chronotope of everyday time:

Am 27. Januar 1900 reichte allerdings ein zufälliger Blick aus dem Fenster, um aus einer fleißigen Hüterin von Heim und Herd eine Zeit verschwendende Träumerin zu machen.

‘Ich kann schon den Frühling riechen’, jubelte Betsy Sternberg, als sie morgens um neun in ihrer neuen Küche den ersten der beiden Sonntagskuchen in den funkelneuen

Herd schob. Ein extrafeiner Mandelkuchen war nach einem Rezept ihrer Wiener

Großtante Julia mit Sultaninen gebacken und mit kandierten Veilchen verziert. (*Haus 9*)

Casting a glance outside her window, it appears that Betsy takes on the joy and promise conveyed through the description of the Frankfurt street scene. She undergoes a momentary, not permanent transformation from “fleißiger Hüterin von Heim und Herd” into “eine Zeit verschwendende Träumerin.” This text passage identifies several of Betsy's most important roles. On the one hand, she is a practical and industrious individual, who keeps the house running represented through the use of the word “Herd.” On the other, she is also the protector and guardian of the home, a role, which is repeated throughout the series of novels. Upon moving into the new house, Betsy takes it upon herself to protect her son from associating with

certain children from their former neighborhood, the *Sandweg* (*Haus* 21). In doing so, she clearly reveals her intentions of creating a place, in which ambitions can unfold.

One could also say that the transition of perspective from the city of Frankfurt to Betsy in her kitchen is without obstacles and lacks any tension between interior and exterior. A happy and harmonious atmosphere on the outside is reflected on the inside. The narrator describes the events taking place on the “kaiserliche [n] Jubeltag” (*Haus* 9) and Betsy “jubelte”, dass sie “den Frühling schon riechen kann”. The use of the noun “Jubeltag” and the verb “jubeln” connects the external amity with Betsy. In other words, there is no trace of tension between the outside and the inside. The first hint of tension arises when her husband tries to dampen her enthusiasm about an early spring, which is also symbolic of a new beginning for the Sternberg family in their own four walls. He makes it a point to tell her that she does not sense the coming of an early spring, but is only influenced by the smell of raisins soaked in rum. This hint of doubt on his part foreshadows the fact that the relationship between the outer world and his home will not always be one characterized with harmony and a sense of ease. Johan Isidor’s skepticism a product of his childhood as his father was a livestock trader who was not always able to provide his family with great financial stability. His wife Betsy grew up in a home, in which values of *Bildung* were held in high esteem. Her father was a wealthy jeweler and was able to send Betsy to a finishing school in Switzerland. During her time at the school, she learned to cook French cuisine, to speak French, and to play the piano. In other words, she acquired a knowledge of *Bildung*, a highly valued bourgeois concept.

From a close reading, several values emerge from this passage such as optimism, and continuity of tradition. Optimism is reflected in the verb use “jubeln” and her declaration of spring in the midst of winter. Continuity of traditions is found in the recipe that was passed on to Betsy from her great aunt in Vienna. These values define the place Betsy is creating. The reader

first encounters Betsy in the kitchen. It is in this passage that one sees the intermingling of German and Jewish cuisines. Like many German women on January 27, 1900, Betsy is baking cakes for Sunday. For many Germans, Sunday was and is the day on which families and friends meet for coffee and cake. As minor as this point may seem, it shows that German Jews saw certain German rituals as part of their own culture. There is nothing in this passage that addresses Betsy as a Jew.

From the beginning of the novel, one sees that the Sternbergs have traditional family roles, which shape the place they are establishing for themselves in Frankfurt. Johann Sternberg works at his various businesses while his wife Betsy only ventures out of their apartment to go shopping or to take walks. Despite traditional family roles, Betsy maintains a high degree of agency within the home and in regard to her familial relationships. Betsy is different from many other Jewish women in that her father gave her a different upbringing than her sisters:

Betsy war die älteste Tochter des früh verwitweten Preziosenhändlers und Juweliers Siegfried Strauß aus Pforzheim. Er hatte das Mädchen einwandfrei erzogen, allerdings, wie man sich erzählte, ziemlich frei. Zum Befremden der Verwandtschaft hatte Vater Siegfried seine gescheite Tochter angehalten, sich nicht nur manuell zu beschäftigen, sondern auch geistig zu entwickeln. Betsy spielte gut Geige und ordentlich Klavier. Sie las jedes Buch über Musik, das ihr Lehrer ihr brachte, rezitierte bei Familienfesten Gedichte von Eichendorff und manch lange Balladen von Schiller. ‘Und malen tut sie wie Rembrandt’, schwärmte der Großvater. (*Haus* 30)

In addition to her musical talents, Betsy can read Hebrew fluently and speak French. When one compares Betsy Strauß with those women, who organized salons in early 19<sup>th</sup>-century Germany, such as Rahel Varnhagen, Dorotheas Schlegel, and Henriette Herz, one sees similarities in their education and integration of cultures.

Johann Isidor Sternberg's decision to marry Betsy Strauß also reflects his desire to blend into German society. Her education embodies elements of Jewish traditions and the German *Bildungsideal*. She is able to move in both worlds. He also values the fact that Betsy has a good work ethic as a wife, which is apparent in the gift he selects to honor the first day in their new house:

Zum Umzug in die Rothschildallee hatte Johann Isidor seiner Betsy einen Überwurf für die Leiste mit den Küchenhandtüchern geschenkt – hellblaues Leinen in feinem Kreuzstich gearbeitet und mit dem Text 'Beklage nicht den Morgen, der Müh und Arbeit bringt, es ist schön zu sorgen für die Menschen, die man liebt' bestickt. (*Haus* 11)

In observing this idyllic scene of his family's first breakfast in their new apartment, Sternberg is too filled with optimism for the future: "Die Harmonie der kleinen Szene, die er soeben erlebt hatte, erfüllte sein Herz mit Zuversicht" (*Haus* 11). The harmony he experiences in this moment is a result of his wife's work within the home. It is a situation, in which Betsy reveals her agency. Despite the fact that Betsy's realm, for the most part, is limited to the house and those places, which enable her to organize the Sternbergs' family life, she develops a great amount of agency to influence the emotional lives of the others living in the house.

It is also through her agency that the house, specifically the Sternbergs' apartment, becomes a place of comfort. As the house was newly built, the rooms and their contents were described in terms of their newness, which appear sterile before the family makes use of them. For example, a "nagelneuer Herd" is a sterile object that becomes instrumental in producing a sense of place as Betsy bakes cakes for the first Sunday in the *Rothschildallee*. The oven only becomes part of the home after Betsy has produced something, in this case, a cake, which will be shared with members of her family. The cake, the finished product, is not just the result of flour, eggs and other ingredients; it is also a product of invested energy and familial relationships.



Betsy pays close attention to details when baking the cake as she decorates it with candied violets. It is a recipe passed from one generation to the next. These moments as previously described mark the beginning of the Sternbergs' time-space continuum. As the novel continues and the time-space continuum becomes more complex and deepens, the reader sees that the kitchen as a chronotope evolves with some material traces remaining the same while the relationship to those traces change. Such is the case with the kitchen as the Sternberg family grows larger and the outside world grows more hostile with the onset of World War I. As the narrator describes the kitchen, the perspective focuses on the new stove and oven, the *nagelneuer Herd* (*Haus*, 11). In the narrative of the first chapter, the new stove is a material trace, which is used to help Betsy establish herself as a successful German housewife and mother. The narrator presents the reader with a picture of a young pregnant mother baking cakes in her kitchen for the Sunday ritual of coffee and cake. This act of preparing food for an event that takes place every weekend is an example of a non-material trace. In contrast to material traces, non-material ones are fleeting, as they are activities performed by human actors, in that they are not static objects in contrast to material traces. As a material trace, the new stove remains the same throughout the first novel and serves as an example for a trace that remains the same, while the relationships to this trace change. The kitchen with its stove becomes a place that sustains and provides comfort in dark, uncertain times: "Bei den Sternbergs duftete es am Sonntagnachmittag nach Harmonie und Frieden, nach Bohnenkaffee und frischem Gebäck" (*Haus* 154). Despite a war raging elsewhere in Europe, the house in the *Rothschildallee* remains a place of sanctuary for the Sternbergs.

As the story of the Sternberg family and their house develops in the first novel, the chronotope of the house takes on a new form due to changes in relationships between the house and its occupants and also among the various Sternberg family members. At the beginning of the

first novel, the chronotope of the house in the *Rothschildallee* was one of establishing a place, through which the Sternbergs could develop a sense of belonging. In the second chapter, the family has grown larger and the Sternbergs have become more financially successful. At this point in the story, the chronotope of the house is no longer simply a chronotope of establishing a place of belonging. It has evolved into a chronotope of maintaining place. The reader sees the efforts involved on Betsy's part to maintain the house. Betsy is at this point the mother of four children and her husband often travels for work. With these changes in the family structure and her husband's absences, the house has become a chronotope, which Betsy must maintain as a household, which serves as her workplace, and which also provides her with a place to carry out activities that make her an educated (in the sense of *Bildung*) German mother and housewife. The multifarious functions of the house as place is shown in the narrative perspective as it oscillates between the needs of her children and her own needs for intellectual stimulation as expressed in her interest in reading literary works by Thomas Mann:

Frau Betsy saß auf der mit kirschrotem Plüsch bezogenen Récamière vor dem weiß lackierten Wiener Kaffeehaustisch, den ihr Mann ihr zum fünfzehnten Hochzeitstag für den Wintergarten geschenkt hatte. Mit einem Anflug von schlechtem Gewissen klappte sie das Buch zu, in dem sie die letzte halbe Stunde mehr geblättert denn gelesen hatte.  
(*Haus* 37)

The above passage contains material traces that represent salon and *Kaffeehaus* culture. The narrative perspective focuses on two pieces of furniture in this sunroom. Betsy reclines on a Recamier sofa, which points to salon culture. This type of sofa is often associated with Juliette Récamier (1777-1849), a French woman, who was well known for her Parisian salons in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The white Viennese *Kaffeehaus* table that was a gift from her husband on their 15<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary connotes the culture of a *Kaffeehaus*, which in the early 1900s was

experiencing the height of its popularity. Viennese *Kaffeehäuser* would have been places where writers would produce literature and intellectuals would discuss ideas. The pieces of furniture in the sunroom, the Recamier sofa and the coffeehouse table, are material traces that are representative of the role of education, especially literature. There is also the non-material trace of Betsy reading a novel by Thomas Mann indicating that material and non-material traces are consistent with each other. The act of reading is in accordance with the meaning attached to the material traces.

### **2.3 Moving within Urban Space: Frankfurt Neighborhoods**

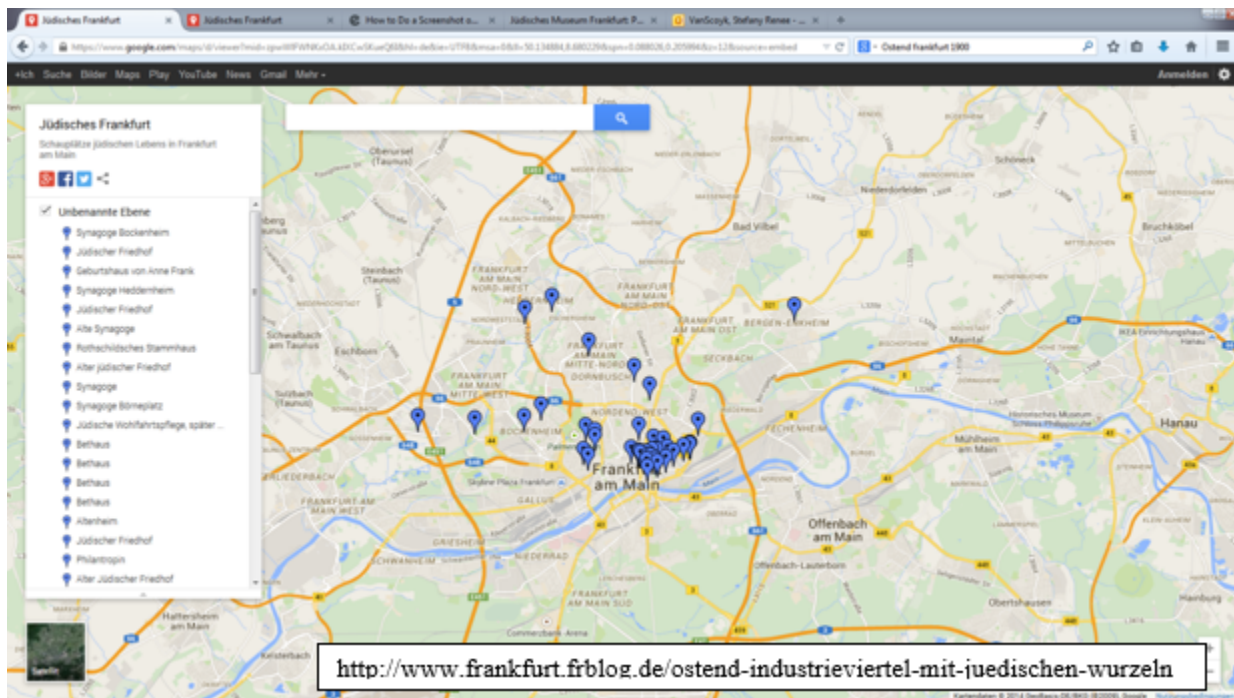
Throughout the four novels, the Sternbergs' house in the *Rothschildallee* remains the anchor, to which all members of the family are connected. Consequently, the Sternbergs' home serves as the narrative focus in all four novels of the series, and it is also the most important place from the reader's perspective throughout the narrative. As seen, the new home reveals an abundance of material and non-material traces that elucidate the situation for bourgeois German Jews; however, in continued analysis of various places that constitute the geographical context of the Sternbergs, one sees the significance of the neighborhoods, such as the *Ostend* and the *Nordend*, the streets that fill them. Each Frankfurt neighborhood described in Zweig's novels represents different relationships, which the Sternbergs have to their Jewish and non-Jewish neighbors, and to German society in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, the neighborhoods are places in which one sees how the Sternbergs perceive themselves as German Jews.

### 2.3.1 Ostend as a Place of Jewishness

Before their arrival in the *Rothschildallee*, the Sternbergs resided in Frankfurt *Ostend*, a neighborhood, in which 45% of Frankfurt Jews lived in 1895.

([http://juedischesmuseum.de/fruehere\\_ausstellungen.html?&L=1](http://juedischesmuseum.de/fruehere_ausstellungen.html?&L=1)). The other 55% of the Jewish community in Frankfurt resided throughout the rest of the city, especially in the *Nordend* and *Westend*. Situated between the *Anlagenring* and the *Tiergarten*, *Sandweg* and the *Hanauer Landstraße*, the *Ostend*, since its beginning in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, developed into a blue-collar neighborhood, where specific streets became a hub of Jewish life in Frankfurt. The *Sandweg* with its surrounding area, in which the Sternbergs lived before relocating to the *Nordend*, was filled with family-owned shops and places of Jewish cultural life. Among other institutions that targeted the Jewish residents of the *Ostend*, one could find hospitals, schools, nursing homes, and the synagogue at the *Friedberger Anlage*. This abundance of places that provided an institutional network of support for the Jewish community in *Ostend* is visible from the map below. One clearly sees a density of places (the place on the map where one sees the most bubbles is the *Ostend*) that shows how this neighborhood was the geographical center for many Jews residing in Frankfurt (<http://www.frankfurt.frblog.de/ostend-industrieviertel-mit-juedischen-wurzeln>).

In the *Ostend*, one finds the *Alte Synagoge*, *Synagoge Börneplatz*, *Synagoge An der Staufermauer*, four *Bethäuser* (prayer houses), the *Rothschild'sches Krankenhaus* (Rothschild Hospital) at Röderweg 97, and an *Israelistische Realschule* (Israelite Secondary School). As one moves away from the *Ostend*, there are other Jewish institutions and organizations, and the old Jewish cemetery located in the Rat-Beil-Str. in the *Nordend*, but the center of Frankfurt Jewish life is found in the *Ostend*.



For Johann Isidor Sternberg and his growing family, Frankfurt *Ostend* serves as a halfway point between the more rural communities, from which Johann Isidor and his wife Betsy originated, and their home in the *Rothschildallee*. This street becomes a chronotope, in which the Sternbergs' life circumstances connect with the geographical point of the *Sandweg* along their time-space trajectory. Not only is the *Sandweg* a halfway point in geographical terms, but it is a metaphorical point between their places of birth and the *Rothschildallee*. As already mentioned, the title of chapter one in *Das Haus in der Rothschildallee* is “*Es ist erreicht,*” which implies a point of arrival that seems to be of a more permanent nature. While the *Rothschildallee* evokes a certain

stability that accompanies a more permanent place, one could say that the *Sandweg* leaves behind an impression of impermanence as reflected in its name. Sand as such does not provide a solid foundation, upon which one can establish solid structures of both material and social nature. An exhibition on the *Frankfurter Ostend* at the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt comments on the fact that the *Ostend* lost those traces due to the destruction of this place as a result of the Holocaust that made this place distinctively Jewish. For Jews who were more orthodox, this neighborhood with its infrastructure of Jewish-oriented institutions would have provided such a community with a sense of belonging. However, for those like the Sternbergs, who pursued an ideal of belonging to German society, the *Ostend* was a place that was a stepping stone to other places.

Despite living in a primarily Jewish neighborhood, the Sternbergs occupy a liminal space in their apartment on *Sandweg*. As German Jews in a space that has a plethora of places that support Jewish life, one could think that the Sternberg family could develop a sense of belonging. Within this context, it is important to consider that the *Ostend* had a large orthodox community in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

([http://juedischesmuseum.de/fruehere\\_ausstellungen.html?&L=1](http://juedischesmuseum.de/fruehere_ausstellungen.html?&L=1)), and the Sternbergs are not orthodox.

Orthodox Jews would identify more with being Jewish while the Sternbergs identify themselves as both Jews and Germans. In their identification with aspects of both cultures, Johann Isidor and Betsy pursue an ideal of joining Jewishness with Germanness that will allow them to belong to the greater whole of German society. In other words, they have no desire to live in a neighborhood that caters more to Jewish identity and that will create more cultural distance between themselves and other Germans. The pursuit of the aforementioned ideal plays a significant role in the liminal position that the Sternbergs occupy, and it is also an expression of

individualism that partially separates them from the community in the *Ostend*. The contrast that emerges from the constellation of a larger Jewish community and an individual German-Jewish family provides a valuable analytical tool for the analysis of the *Ostend*, more specifically the street *Sandweg*.

From the narrative perspective, the reader learns that Frankfurt *Ostend* is a bustling neighborhood, in which community plays a significant role underscored in the description of group activities. These include women meeting on the street to gossip and men gathering to drink beer. Not only do the adults gather on the street, but so do the children where they play. Through the narrative perspective, the reader learns that the children pay little attention to social convention: “[D]ie Kleinen [die Kinder] mussten sich nicht um gesellschaftliche Konventionen scheren” (*Haus 22*). As the *Ostend* is introduced, the focus lies mainly on how the children in this neighborhood socialize and this shows that socializing for them was a carefree process, in which the parents did not interfere: “[Die Kinder] [...] durften auf der Straße spielen, und sie durften sich aussuchen, mit wem sie es taten” (*Haus 22*). In the setting of the *Sandweg*, one sees that Otto Sternberg is one of many children and is not isolated from the group of boys as shown when Otto is mentioned along with Heiner and Karlchen.

For the time period, during which the Sternbergs lived in this area, Otto was allowed to play with children, who did not belong to his social class. The differences in social class between Otto and his friends become evident when the parents’ professions are described: “Die Mütter von Ottos Freunden besorgten für feine Leute die große Wäsche, die Väter waren vor der Geburt ihrer Söhne verschwunden” (*Haus 22*). It is especially in the figure of the Sternberg’s eldest son Otto that the contrast between *Ostend* and *Nordend* becomes apparent. In the former location, Otto could play with whom he wanted. After his family’s move to the latter, his parents will impose more limitations on him.

### 2.3.2 Nordend: A Place of Schein und Sein

The *Nordend* actually consists of two neighborhoods: *Nordend-Ost* and *Nordend-West*.

*Nordend-Ost* is the smaller of the two and borders on *Sandweg* and *Ostend* while *Nordend-West* lies between *Friedberger Landstraße* to the east and the *Eschensheimer Landstraße* to the west.

More affluent than the *Ostend*, the *Nordend* and its neighborhoods become especially important, as they are places portrayed in all four novels. Most notably, the Frankfurt *Nordend* becomes a locus, which, when analyzed, reveals the dynamics of *Schein und Sein* for the Sternbergs.

#### 2.3.2.1 Günthersburgallee und Günthersburgpark as a Place of False Aspirations

*Günthersburgallee* and the *Günthersburgpark* are important places within the chronotope of the *Nordend*. Both the boulevard and park bring aspects of *Schein und Sein* into the chronotope.

Firstly, the street is the site where Betsy and Johann Isidor Sternberg considered buying a home before building their house in the *Rothschildallee*. The architecture of the house in the *Günthersburgallee* was a *mélange* of different architectural styles. Although Betsy first encourages her husband to purchase the house, he declines as, according to him, this particular house was real estate for someone, who could not differentiate between *Schein und Sein*.

This theme of *Schein und Sein* is carried over into the names of the street and the park. It should also be pointed out that the geographical locations such as the *Rothschildallee* and the *Günthersburgallee* exist in both contemporary Frankfurt and the *Zweig* novels. At one time, the land, on which one finds the *Günthersburgpark*, belonged to Johann Jakob Günther, a wealthy Frankfurt merchant, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The park itself forms a minor chronotope within the larger chronotope of the *Nordend*. When considering the most tangible strands of the park, one sees a plot of land in a German city bearing a German name. However, it becomes more complex when the more concealed strands of the chronotope are taken into account. For



example, Carl Mayer von Rothschild acquired the property in 1837. Between 1837 and 1839, Rothschild hired a landscape designer, who developed the land into a park inspired by English gardens. In 1892, the park was opened to the public under the name *Günthersburgpark* ([www.frankfurt.de](http://www.frankfurt.de)). It is interesting to note that, although a Rothschild was responsible for initiating and financing the park and opening it to the public, it retained a German name that could not easily be confused with a German-Jewish name.

### **2.3.2.2 Rothschildallee A Place of Realized Aspirations**

As noted, the Sternbergs decide to build their own multi-family home in the *Rothschildallee*, which speaks more to aspects of *Sein* than *Schein*. Instead of choosing to purchase a stately home that is a mix of architectural styles, Johann Isidor Sternberg chooses to work with a Frankfurt architect, who gives the house a design that is contemporary of turn-of-the-century Frankfurt in 1900. In one respect, the design of the house reflects the situation of German Jews in the wake of Jewish Emancipation in 1871. For example, the house is designed to be understated and not draw too much attention to itself. In other words, the structure should retain a degree of modesty. However, the understated design is also punctuated with features that betray the success of the Sternberg family living within its walls. It is here that parallels can be established between the Sternberg house and the Sternbergs' status in German society as Jews: Johann Isidor Sternberg is eager to integrate his family in the German upper middle-class society, but hesitant of revealing too much prosperity. The location of the house in the Rothschildallee forms a chronotope that resembles that of the *Günthersburgallee*.

### 2.3.3 Johann Isidor Sternberg's Places of Work

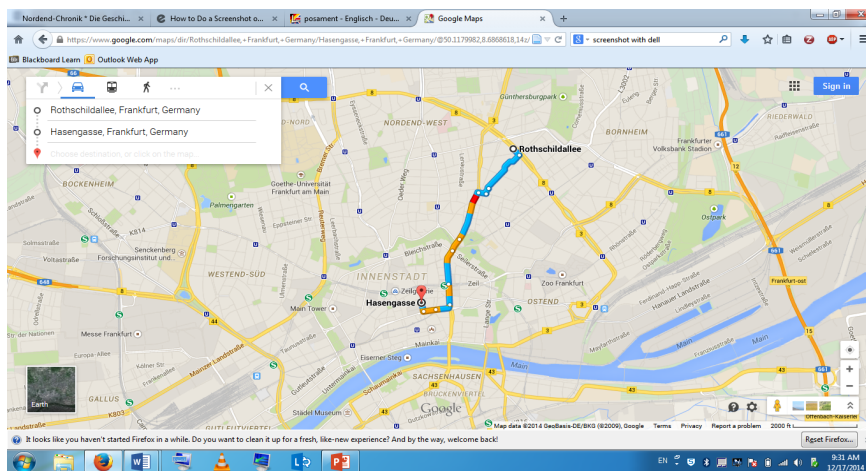
Like his house, Johann Isidor's businesses take on form through his own initiative. For example, he opens a shop for sewing supplies in the *Hasengasse* in the city center, which is also the *Altstadt*. The fact that Johann Isidor has his shop in the city center is a trace that signifies that German Jews have left the parts of the city, which were once considered "Jewish" such as the *Ostend*. The Frankfurt *Altstadt* was once to home to Goethe. At least spatially speaking Johann Isidor is closer to one of the centers of German literary culture. Owning a shop in the city center also alludes to the Sternbergs' desires to integrate into German society. In the novel, Sternberg's shop is well received as the narrative perspective points out that his clientele is from Frankfurt's best social circles. Being well received by others is an important aspect of the various chronotopes in the novels of the *Rothschildallee*. The guiding ideas of belonging and being well received inform the shaping of places in the novels. It is especially in the first novel of the series that one sees the extent to which these ideas influence the building of the house and his businesses:

Der Tuchhändler Sternberg war ein geschickter Schmied seines Schicksals. Stets hatte er mehrere Eisen im Feuer, beobachtete aufmerksam die Börse und wusste nicht nur dort im richtigen Moment zuzugreifen. In einem neu erbauten Haus eröffnete er ein Geschäft für Kurzwaren, Knöpfe, und Posamenterie in der Hasengasse. Sie galt als eine kommende Gegend und war im Falle der Posamenterie Sternberg noch besser als ihr Ruf. Zu den Kundinnen gehörten die Damen der besten Gesellschaft, Beamtingattinnen und Gouvernanten, Schneiderinnen aller Prominenz [...]. (*Haus* 24)

One parallel between the building of his house and the opening of his shop can be found in the manner, in which he seeks locations. Both buildings are constructed in areas that hold promise as in the *Hasengasse* being a "kommende Gegend" (*Haus* 24). Although the narrator describes this

area as one that has potential to become a thriving business district, it is the combination of high quality and the good location that brings about the success of Sternberg's shop by exceeding expectations. While he searches for locations that hold promise, in order to position himself well, this also reflects his position in German society. With Jewish Emancipation, German Jews also occupied a position, which held promise.

It is also interesting to note that the narrator gives an extensive list of the different customers that frequent the shop. Through the language, there are two markers that differentiate between individuals in this passage. With the *-innen* suffix, the reader knows that Sternberg's customers are mostly female: "Kundinnen, [...] Beamtengattinnen, [...] Schneiderinnen aller Prominenz" (Haus 24). There is nothing in the language that marks religious difference. The narrative focus on the fact that Sternberg's customers come from a variety of social strata with an emphasis on the upper middle class offers a glimpse of possible acceptance by other Germans at a business level.



(<https://www.google.com/maps>)

From the map above, one sees the trajectory in space, through which Johann Isidor travels on a daily basis. This trajectory covers the area from the *Rothschildallee* in the *Nordend* to the *Hasengasse* in the city center, the location of the *Posamenterie*. From the Sternberg home

to the shop, it would have been approximately a 25-minute walk. In the first novel, the spatial trajectory from home to shop remains more or less the same and does not go beyond these two points, which also symbolically represents the time-space trajectory of his life in Germany as in it is a trajectory that does not go beyond superficial acceptance as a German Jewish businessman. However, the shop in the *Hasengasse* is not his only business venture. In 1898, he becomes a partner in a publishing house that makes postcards and later he founds a company that produces felt (*Haus* 25). Through these two additional businesses, he adds to his places of work, expands the radius of his activities, thus increasing the potential to develop business relationships with other people. While he tries to build relationships, it becomes painfully evident, especially during World War I, that building business relations with other Germans is extremely difficult:

Sämtliche Versuche des soignierten und hoch geachteten Handelsmannes Johann Isidor Sternberg seinem Vaterland zu dienen, waren fehlgeschlagen – zuletzt sogar eine Bewerbung bei einer Militärdienststelle in Bad Homburg, die sich mit der Nutzbarmachung von gebrauchten Textilien für Kriegszwecke beschäftigte. (*Haus* 159)

Johann Isidor Sternberg and his family continuously tried between 1900 and 1914 to establish a sense of belonging within German society. Evidence of this pursuit is found in the extreme care, with which they created a home reflecting values of modesty and stability. This pursuit of belonging also informs the manner in which he builds his businesses. He develops lines of business that are important to everyone. In other words, the services and goods that he offers are needed by everyone in Germany. For example, it matters not if one is Jewish or Christian, everyone needs sewing supplies or a postcard. Here, as with the house, one sees how Johann Isidor strives to remain modest in the choice of products and services he provides to his customers. Sewing notions, postcards, and the production of felt do not speak of extravagance, but of modesty and understatedness. Despite all his efforts not to be conspicuous, still existent

anti-Semitism makes it difficult for Johann Isidor to obtain business contracts, especially during World War I. His attempts at establishing a *Heimat* that goes beyond the perimeters of the *Rothschildallee* and *Hasengasse* are counterpointed by events and circumstances outside his control that prevent him and his family from achieving full acceptance.

The measures, which Johann Isidor and his family undertake to create a context for belonging in German society, all take place within a geographical area that becomes the spatial trajectory of their pursuit to belong. This spatial trajectory between the *Rothschildallee* and the *Hasengasse* symbolizes both the limits and success of Jewish Emancipation. Geographically speaking, the *Hasengasse* is close to the center of the city, but it is not center. Metaphorically speaking, the building of his home and businesses show some degree of acceptance in and integration into German society, but not complete acceptance and integration. It is, at the same time, evidence of expansion due to his own merits as a businessman. His businesses also provide Johann Isidor with a sense of stability that helps sustain him during the war:

Obwohl in der Posamenterie keine neue Ware mehr angeliefert wurde und die Nachfrage nach lustigen Kriegspostkarten sehr gesunken war, behielt er die Gewohnheit bei, morgens zu seinem Tagewerk aufzubrechen. Er ging stets zuerst in den Verlag und dann in sein Kontor in der Hasengasse. Nachmittags kümmerte er sich um Besorgungen, für die nicht mehr die Geschicklichkeit einer energischen Frau erforderlich war, sondern Männermut und Kaltblütigkeit. (*Haus* 268)

Johann Isidor's places of work and the house comprise two major components of the Sternbergs' time-space trajectory. At the beginning of this trajectory, places of home and work both hold a sense of promise that complements the hopes of many German Jews in the wake of emancipation. At the point of the First World War, these two places, which at the beginning of the novel stood in very similar positions, start to diverge within the trajectory. The place of home

remains more harmonious and stable while the places of work are more erratic, subject to changes in public opinion as a result of events within the context of World War I.

#### **2.3.4 Otto Sternberg: Places of Education**

Upon moving into their new home, Johann Isidor and Betsy Sternberg had great hopes for their son, whose life underwent drastic changes with the transition from the *Sandweg* to the *Rothschildallee*. Johann Isidor refers to January 27, 1900, the day of the Sternbergs' arrival to the *Rothschildallee*, as "der Tag der Wende" (*Haus* 22). This day brought many changes for Otto, a four-year old child at the time, which resulted in social isolation when compared to his life in the *Sandweg*. The narrator describes Otto as sad and lost (*Haus* 16) in his new environment. One could say that young Otto's education begins on this day.

As a four-year old boy, Otto informs his father that he wants to be a coachman when he grows up: "Ich will Kutscher werden" (*Haus* 23). Rather than humoring his son in this moment, Johann Isidor Sternberg makes it clear that a coachman is not an appropriate profession for a son from a good family. As Otto goes through his education, he attends a *Gymnasium* with the goal of completing his *Abitur*. Although he attends the school of his father's dreams, it does not become a place of belonging for Otto. Instead, he experiences blatant anti-Semitism from his teachers:

In der Untertertia [fourth year of this German secondary school] hatten die Schüler die Vase auf dem Lehrerpult abzeichnen müssen, und Otto hatte nicht gemerkt, dass der Krug einen Henkel und die Rosen Stacheln hatten. Mehreren Jungen in der Klasse war es ebenso ergangen, doch der Lehrer hatte Ottos Zeichenblock auf den Boden geworfen und gewütet, sein Vater solle das Schulgeld sparen und es an die Armen verteilen. „Man

merkt gleich, dass du aus einem bilderfeindlichen Volk stammst‘, hatte sich der Lehrer in Rage gebrüllt.“ (*Haus* 127-128)

Through such inhospitable acts, school becomes a place of rejection, to which Otto is forced to go due to his father’s aspirations.

In addition to troubled relations with his teachers, Otto does not develop close friendships with fellow pupils at his school. His only friend is Theo Berghammer, the son of a tenant in the Sternberg house. Although Theo is the son of a teacher, who works at a *Gymnasium*, Johann Isidor is skeptical of the friendship. Analysis of this friendship brings several things to light concerning relationships between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans. Firstly, a friendship with a non-Jewish German is not necessarily a marker of acceptance within German society. In other words, Theo is not associated with values, to which Johann Isidor aspires (*Haus* 56). A friendship between a Jew and non-Jew, when it comes to Sternberg’s eldest son, would be appropriate when the non-Jewish friend would, for example, attend Otto’s school and come from a family that is in a similar financial position as the Sternbergs. Johann Isidor’s failure to completely accept the friendship between Theo and Otto shows discrimination towards a person based on class-consciousness determined by wealth. This point reveals that Johann Isidor’s idea of acceptance is attached to certain conditions. On the one hand, he desires general acceptance for himself and his family in German society, but, on the other hand, wants this acceptance to come from a specific societal class, namely the wealthy German bourgeoisie, to which Theo does not belong.

Superficially speaking, the place of the *Gymnasium* is a place of aspiration for Johann Isidor. This aspiration is fulfilled through forcing his son to attend a school, which for the son becomes a place of antipathy and prejudice. To hold on to these aspirations for his children’s success, Johann Isidor goes to great lengths to force Otto to stay at the school: “Seit der

Ankündigung, dass [Ottos] [...] Versetzung in die Obertertia gefährdet wäre, waren nämlich seiner Freizeitgestaltung auf väterliche Anordnung hin unangenehm einengende Grenzen gesetzt worden“ (*Haus* 52). With pressure from his father and teachers, school becomes a place of not-belonging as Otto’s teachers ridicule him for attending a *Gymnasium* “In wechselnder Reihenfolge hatte er sein Schicksal, seinen Vater, den Lateinlehrer samt Schuldirektor und ein Bildungsideal verflucht, das immer noch auf tote Sprachen statt auf Naturwissenschaft und moderne Technik setzte.“ (*Haus* 52). His father forces Otto to go to this school in the belief that his child obtaining an *Abitur* diploma and continuing to university will have the stepping stones towards a place of belonging in German society.

### 2.3.5 Places of Socializing

While places of home, work, and education are chronotopes, which contain a means to an end, namely, that of belonging, places of socializing are chronotopes that show to which degree a sense of belonging has developed. Do the Sternbergs socialize with their non-Jewish peers, who are from the same stratum in terms of education and wealth? Places of socializing to be analyzed in this context consist mostly of cafes and friends’ houses

For example, Betsy and her friends meet for coffee and conversation in a downtown café:

In jeder Gesellschaft kam neuerdings einer auf *Königliche Hoheit* von Thomas Mann zu sprechen. Der Roman war im Vorjahr erschienen, and Betsys Freundin Margot Einstein, die als ein Blaustrumpf galt und deshalb ledig geblieben war, hatte beim Dienstagskränzchen im Café Hauptwache wieder einmal von der ‘raffinierten Romankonstruktion’ geschwärmt. Obwohl Betsy durchaus für moderne Literatur empfänglich war, fand sie den Roman weit weniger animierend als den Titel; dass der Autor ein fiktives deutsches Fürstentum zum Schauplatz seiner Geschichte genommen



hatte, irritierte sie. Gerade weil sich Madame Sternberg für den deutschen Adel interessierte, legte sie Wert auf Authentizität. (*Haus* 37)

Considering the company Betsy keeps, such as her friend Marot Einstein, and the meeting place of the café, one learns about several aspects of Betsy's position in society. Firstly, Betsy and her friends discuss a novel that she is culturally interested in. She regularly meets with women from her strata at *Café Hauptwache*, a famous Frankfurt coffeehouse that was established in 1905 (<http://web.cafe-hauptwache.de>). The reader learns from the above text passage in Zweig's first novel *Das Haus der Rothschildallee* that their meeting, *Kaffeekränzchen*, takes place every Tuesday. There is a mix of personalities in the group of women. Most of them are married and well situated such as Betsy, and there are also women such as Margot Einstein, who are unmarried and modern, even considered to be a bluestocking.

The former type of woman would have been more traditional as signified by Betsy's rejection of Mann's novel *Königliche Hoheit* that is known for its artful, more modern structure. Another reason for her distaste of the book is its irreverent treatment of the aristocracy as the narrator mentions Betsy's desire for authenticity in stories about aristocratic lives. In Imperial Germany before World War I, a fascination with aristocrats was commonplace among members of the German bourgeoisie. For example, many German-Jewish families would have portraits of the German emperor and his wife hanging in their living rooms (Kaplan 3). While Betsy, like her contemporaries, shares this fascination, her desire for authenticity may represent a deeper desire for stability in society and continuity within her family that one may believe to exist in aristocratic structures. These structures represent power that is handed down from generation to generation. Although power may not be Betsy's focus, she does want to achieve something, which may be passed onto the next generation. For example, if Betsy and Johann Isidor were to pass their house onto their children, it would be evidence of stability in their position as German

Jews and the continuity of their family line. Furthermore, Betsy's distaste for the inauthentic representation of the aristocracy in Mann's novel *Königliche Hoheit* and her preference for his novel *Buddenbrooks* with its more conventional representation of German bourgeoisie are also expression of her desire for stability and continuity. The more traditional narrative structure of *Buddenbrooks* represents a world that appears more stable and the plot of the novel is about a family whose wealth and stately home have passed from generation to generation; however, the novel is also about the decline of this family. Despite the narrative of crumbling, decaying structures in Mann's novel, Betsy's focus is on those structures that are more traditional and conventional.

Women such as Margot Einstein would have been more modern in her tastes as illustrated through her appreciation of the novel's "raffinierten Romankonstruktion" (*Haus* 37). Betsy's circle of friends consists of other Jewish women such as Margot Einstein. Although they have diverging tastes in German literature, there is no tension in their interaction. There are no traces of questions such as "what is German" or "what is Jewish." The only non-Jewish German, with whom Betsy socializes, is the family cook Josepha.

As mentioned, Betsy Sternberg socializes mostly with other German-Jewish women and has contact with non-Jews, who work in her household. Her limited exposure to non-Jewish individuals, can, in part, be explained by the fact that Betsy's time-space trajectory encompasses the house in the *Rothschildallee*, meeting with her friends in cafes, and going shopping. In other words, the places in which she spends her time determine who is part of her social circle. In contrast to his wife, Johann Isidor Sternberg has a higher number of acquaintances, who are not Jewish. This aspect of his social circle is also determined by place, as his main places of agency are his businesses. The fact that his businesses sell goods and offer services that appeal to a wide cross-section of customers explains his more frequent contact with non-Jewish Germans. For

example, Sternberg meets with a banker by the name of Weidenfeld, who was born Jewish but converted to Protestantism. Among their subjects of conversation, the two men discuss which spa town would be the best option for the Sternbergs' vacation. Weidenfeld suggests that the Sternbergs go to Baden-Baden as it is the most welcoming spa town to Jews. Other spa centers such as Bad Ems have a reputation of anti-Semitism. Not even a German, who was once Jewish and later converted to Christianity, is in a position to socialize without having his Jewish background brought into it. The narrator says, "Der Bankier hatte Johann Isidor ein für alle Mal klargemacht, dass es auch jenen, die sich neue Rudel suchen, nicht gelingt, sich von ihren Wurzeln zu befreien" (*Haus* 78). In spite of this conversation with one, who has assimilated through a religious conversion and is still not accepted as completely equal, Johann Isidor still seeks relationships with non-Jews, in which he finds acceptance of who he is. Such a relationship is his extra-marital affair with Fritzi Haferkorn, a non-Jewish woman, with whom he has a daughter, Anna.

While the relationship as an extra-marital affair is kept hidden and secret, it is also a place, in which he experiences acceptance with an "other" who moves within a trajectory that lies outside of his own that is mostly defined through German-Jewish culture. One should also note that the places, where the relationship between Johann Isidor and Fritzi unfolds, lie outside the spatial trajectory between his home in the *Rothschildallee* and the *Hasengasse*. His businesses at the *Hasengasse* constitute a point of intersection where people of different backgrounds can meet and come into relationship with each other. Once established, the relationship between Johann Isidor and Fritzi continues into a different trajectory as he purchases a home in Sachsenhausen. In analyzing this constellation of places and their respective trajectories, one sees that the *Hasengasse*, the place of work, lies in the middle while the two places that cap the trajectory represent two different spaces of domesticity.

From a geographical perspective, the house in Sachsenhausen lies outside Frankfurt proper; one must cross a bridge to go there. The other places that play an important role in Johann Isidor's life, the house in the Rothschildallee and his businesses in the Hasengasse are on the other side of the river. Johann Isidor must cross the *Alte Brücke* to get to Fritzi's home in the *Textorstrasse*. The Main River as a geographical marker acts as natural border between Sachsenhausen and Frankfurt proper in the physical geography of the place. It is also a case in point that the river serves as a boundary that separates the relationships in Johann Isidor's life.

While Fritzi and Johann Isidor were still having the affair, he was the one who journeyed across the bridge to visit Fritzi and Anna. The narrator comments the following as Anna stands before the house in the Textorstrass waiting for her father: "Anna stand vor dem Haus, in das ihr Vater immer mit tief heruntergezogenem Hut gekommen war" (*Haus* 271) In this short passage, one sees that the secretive nature of the relationship is not present. Firstly, Anna is standing in front of the house; she stands outside the concealed domestic sphere of the house waiting for her father. Secondly, the narrator in this sentence uses the German past perfect when describing the way Johann Isidor once wore his hat, so that no one would recognize him. The use of the German past perfect implies that Johann Isidor is not wearing his hat pulled down over his face as he did in the past. This visit to the house in the *Textorstraße* does not require the same measures to safeguard his identity, as the affair is now over. Crossing the bridge with Anna is the crossing of a threshold for both Johann Isidor and his daughter as he is revealing hidden aspects of his life to his family and Anna is entering the Sternbergs' time-space continuum. The bridge is also symbolic of Anna's place in the Sternberg family; Anna is a bridge. Accepted and integrated into the Sternberg family, Anna also maintains her German, Christian identity on paper. She is raised as one of the Sternbergs' daughters, but develops a double sensibility of German-Jewish and German-Christian sensibilities due to the circumstances, under which she grew up. Up until

the age of eight, Anna lived with her mother and crossed the bridge regularly with her every Friday. These weekly shopping trips across the bridge from Sachsenhausen to Frankfurt proper trace a trajectory that lies outside that of the Sternbergs. As she makes this one trip across the bridge with her father, she goes beyond the trajectory that was established through trips with her mother. Anna's entry into the time-space trajectory of the Sternbergs will prominently impact the Sternberg family in future decades as portrayed in the later novels of the series.

#### **2.4 *Es ist erreicht*: Achievement of Place and Emerging Doubt**

As the first novel in the *Rothschildallee* series, *Das Haus in der Rothschildallee* begins in 1900 and ends in 1917. In the latter half of the novel, the narrator focuses especially on events surrounding World War I. By 1914, the year in which the war begins, the Sternbergs have achieved a sense of place that can be largely attributed to their home in the *Rothschildallee*. Over the years, the house, no longer just a structure, has become a home that has evolved as a chronotope taking on both material and non-material traces. In 1900, upon its completion, the house was a chronotope of establishing place. In the analysis of the house as this chronotope, there was a particular focus on the façade of the house and how it appeared to the outside world. In other words, there was the hope that the appropriate design of the house would be of benefit to the Sternbergs as they tried to establish themselves as members of German society. Over time, the house develops from a chronotope of establishing place to one of maintaining place. At this point in the analysis, one sees that the chronotope of maintaining place was especially defined through non-material traces that stemmed from Betsy's cultural activity in the house.

As the novel unfolds, the house becomes a place of social stability for the Sternbergs that has been defined through material and non-material traces. Among the non-material traces are possessions to which the Sternbergs have developed emotional attachments. For example, the

Sternbergs acquire furnishings that document the history of their lives in the house, which have evolved for over 14 years. For instance, the Viennese coffee house table that Johan Isidor gave Betsy on their 15<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Such details throughout the novel illustrate how a structure has become something more than the walls that make up the house. It has become a solid foundation from which the Sternbergs can venture out into the world. Not only does the house validate their achievement of place within the German bourgeoisie, but it is Johann Isidor's financial success that attests to this accomplishment. The Sternbergs' financial position also gives them the wherewithal to journey to Baden-Baden for a summer holiday

As comfortable as the family may be in the *Rothschildallee*, venturing out from this Frankfurt boulevard into the wider space of Germany is not without its difficulties. One of the biggest factors in choosing Baden-Baden for their destination was the recommendation that this spa town was more receptive to German Jews than other places such as Bad Ems. Johann Isidor receives this recommendation from Mr. Weidenfeld, a banker, who has assimilated to the point of joining the Protestant church. In the character of Weidenfeld, one sees the idea of *Schein und Sein* at play again. In respect to *Schein*, it appears that Weidenfeld fulfills the criteria that are necessary to be considered German. From the narrator's portrayal of the conversation between Weidenfeld and Johann Isidor, one sees that *Schein* is not enough. Despite his conversion to a faith that is considered "German," Weidenfeld is not able to shake off the anti-Semitism that he still experiences and it is within this context that Weidenfeld gives Johann Isidor some friendly advice to take his family to Baden-Baden and not Bad Ems.

From the very beginning of the chapter on Baden-Baden, it is unmistakable that the spa town presents a striking contrast to Frankfurt: "In Frankfurt erinnerten die Wolken auch im Sommer an aufgedunse graue Schwämme. In Baden-Baden waren es flauschige Federwolken, die in den Monaten der Fülle am Mittagshimmel Reigen tanzten" (*Haus* 69). The Sternbergs

leave the daily, familiar surroundings of Frankfurt and the *Rothschildallee* and enter a more pastoral space, which becomes clear when the narrator describes traces such as “flauschige Wolken” (*Haus* 69) and compares a Sunday dinner on the terrace to a French Impressionist painting (*Haus* 85). In contrast to the gray skies over Frankfurt, the clouds in the skies over Baden-Baden invite members of the family to have fanciful thoughts and seduce them to remember aspects of their past lives that had all but disappeared since moving to Frankfurt. In observing these clouds Betsy thinks of Frau Holle, a figure from a German fairy tale: “Oberbetten von Frau Holle,” sagte Betsy beim Frühstück auf der Sonnenterrasse” (*Haus* 69). It is interesting to note that Betsy draws a comparison between the clouds and a German fairy tale as the spa town develops into a chronotope, in which another form of time is at play that contrasts starkly with the form of time in Frankfurt. Bakhtin says the following about the form of time in fairy tales: “[H]ours are dragged out, days are compressed into moments, it becomes possible to bewitch time itself. Time begins to be influenced by dreams; that is, we begin to see the peculiar distortion of temporal perspectives characteristic of dreams (Bakhtin 154). Such a change in temporal perspective takes place for Johan Isidor as the *Baden-Badener* clouds lead his thoughts to stray from the present to memories of a childhood in Schotten: “Die Wolken verwandelten sich in die hüpfenden Lämmer auf den Frühlingwiesen seiner Kindheit und ehe der Kurgast aus Frankfurt das Wort zum Protest fand, sah er die Bilder, roch die Düfte und hörte die beunruhigenden Klänge von dem fernen Gestern“ (*Haus* 73).

In contrast to Betsy, who appears to embrace this change in temporal perspective, Johann Isidor becomes uncomfortable with the way the place Baden-Baden affects him: “Ganz verrückt,” bestätigte Johann Isidor: “Wozu ist das Ganze eigentlich gut, wenn die Quellen zehren und einem erwachsenen Mann Gespenster erschienen? Was Unbekömmliches trinken kann ich ja auch zu Hause. Zum halben Preis” (*Haus* 73). His discomfort in this context arises from the fact

that the time-space trajectory that Johann Isidor occupies in Frankfurt is structured with traces that clearly separate the private from the public. In Baden-Baden, those traces of the public sphere are absent. Instead, he finds himself in a place that is both public and private and it is more difficult for him to find a stable position in this environment: “Die Schwebezustände zwischen Traum und Wirklichkeit kränkten ihn am meisten” (*Haus* 81). The term *Schwebezustand* translates into English as “state of uncertainty,” which can be found at two levels in the narrative. First, there is the state of uncertainty that Johann Isidor experiences in Baden-Baden as he is, so to say, out of his element of work and a more structured environment. Secondly, it is also a state of mind that describes that of German Jews as a whole in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. On the one hand, they have achieved a sense of security and accomplishment as members of German society, but they never feel completely secure and confident in their situation as the Sternbergs and others are still looked upon as outsiders of German society. The atmosphere in Baden-Baden, more inviting and accepting than in Frankfurt, is but a small taste of how things could be for German Jews. In Baden-Baden, no one asks the Sternbergs about being Jewish. In this way, Baden-Baden is a dream, which culminates in the narrative with a Sunday dinner in the hotel:

Das Sonntagsessen wurde des schönen Wetters wegen ausnahmsweise auf der Terrasse eingenommen. Es war ein Bild, wie es die französischen Impressionisten, die ja nun auch in Deutschland Furore machten, hatten malen können – voller Licht und Sonne und beschwingt vom Pulsschlag des Lebens der trunken macht. Das noch junge Weinlaub kroch die ockergelben Hausmauern hoch. Der Herbst war noch weit, der Winter Äonen entfernt. Wenn der Strahl des kleinen Springbrunnens herabfiel und die Hängegeranien auf den Balustraden und die Fuchsien im Halbschatten benetzte, verwandelten sie sich in leuchtende Boten des Sommers. Zwei Spatzen badeten im Brunnen.” (*Haus* 85-86).



The language in the above passage underscores the dreamlike, timeless atmosphere that the Sternbergs experience in Baden-Baden. In the comparison of the scene to an Impressionist painting, the narrator lends the dinner a timeless, idyllic quality that one finds in observing a work of art. The display of flowers, the play of light, and the movement of water in a fountain are all visual traces in this dinner scene at the hotel that one would find in an Impressionist painting by Renoir or Monet. The narrator also uses descriptions of time such as *Äonen* in reference to the seasons. In addition to language that highlights the timelessness of the scene, there is also language such as “das noch junge Weinlaub” (*Haus* 86) that symbolizes the sense of promise within the chronotope of Baden-Baden. The perfection of this scene seems to hold a promise of acceptance for the Sternbergs. The idea of Jewish emancipation is still young and developing, but has arrived at the point at which the Sternbergs can enjoy a vacation without any blatant traces of anti-Semitism.

As a chronotope, Baden-Baden is located outside the space-time continuum that began with the design and construction of the Sternbergs’ home. This spa town is the chronotope of a dream. Time seems to come to a halt. Temporal planes mix – Johann Isidor and Betsy have memories of their childhoods that merge into their experience of an idyllic atmosphere of Baden-Baden. This dream culminates in the Sunday dinner of June 28<sup>th</sup> and comes to an abrupt end with the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife. The sudden interruption of the Baden-Baden interlude forces the Sternbergs to return to Frankfurt and to leave Baden-Baden that within the novel is a chronotope of promise and possibility of acceptance and belonging in German society. It is not to say that Baden-Baden is on a separate time-space continuum, but it digresses from the main time-space continuum that is located between public and private spheres, between politics and domesticity.

These two spheres are represented in the chronotope of the balcony in the novel.

Merriam-Webster defines the term “balcony” as follows: “a platform that projects from the wall of a building and is enclosed by a parapet or railing” (*Merriam-Webster*). As a structure of importance in the novel, the balcony is linked to the private sphere in Frankfurt and the public sphere in Berlin. A third balcony described in the passage about the Sunday dinner contains traces of the domestic balcony in Frankfurt with its geraniums and fuchsia. These flowers, especially the fuchsia, are material traces that connect the two balconies in Baden-Baden and Frankfurt offer a kind of visual validation of social status for the Sternbergs. Material traces that mark the Sternbergs’ place of domesticity are found at an upscale hotel in Baden-Baden.

As the Sternbergs return to the *Rothschildallee*, the reader encounters a scene with Josepha, the Sternbergs’ housekeeper and cook standing on the Sternbergs’ balcony. In this scene, one encounters the balcony in a domestic space. Within this space, the balcony is an idyllic place that is cultivated to be aesthetically pleasing for those who live in the dwelling that supports the platform of the balcony and those who see the balustrade railing with its flower boxes from the street below:

Als die zwei Autodroschken, die der rechtmäßige Herrscher des Hauses am Hauptbahnhof für sich und die Seinen, für die Kofferberge und die zwei großen Hutschachteln organisiert hatte, vor dem schmiedeeisernen Tor in der Rothschildallee 9 hielten, hatte Josepha gerade begonnen, die Balkonbepflanzung zu versorgen. Noch im Jahr darauf tat es ihr gut, sich die Szene zu vergegenwärtigen. Das Bild war sommerlich, friedlich und federleicht, eine nach Rosen duftende Idylle unter einem Himmel ohne Wolken. Josepha, die Frau in der Sonntagsschürze und mit geflochtener Haarkrone, spürte einen Hauch von Jugend auf ihrer Haut. Sie ließ einen feinen Wasserstrahl auf die weißen, rosa und violetten Wicken regnen. Auf den zarten Blumentöpfen glitzerten die

Tropfen in den Farben des Regenbogens. Alle Jahre wieder wurden in den grünen Balkonkästen Wicken gepflanzt. Der Hausherr wollte es so, Wicken waren seine Lieblingsblumen. Er allein kannte den Grund. (104)

In similar fashion to the balcony in Baden-Baden, the balcony in Frankfurt serves an aesthetic function in that both are adorned with flowers that should have visual appeal for the passers-by. However, the balcony in Frankfurt is utilized for expressing aspects of the Sternbergs' individuality, especially that of Johann Isidor. In place of the standard geraniums, the Sternbergs' balcony has sweet peas in a wide array of colors. While pleasing to the eye, "Wicken" are a flower of special significance for Johann Isidor. The significance of the flower to the head of the Sternberg family remains a secret.

Within the time-space trajectory between Frankfurt and Berlin in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Germany, in which German Jews were trying to establish a secure sense of belonging, the Sternbergs' balcony in Frankfurt represents the domestic sphere while the balcony, from which the emperor declares war in Berlin and calls on members of political parties and religions with outsider status to be part of German society, represents the public sphere:

Am nächsten Tag [im August 1914] erklärte Kaiser Wilhelm II: 'Man drückt uns das Schwert in die Hand', und verkündete auf dem Balkon seines Berliner Stadtschlusses: 'Ich kenne keine Parteien und auch keine Konfessionen mehr; wir sind heute alle deutsche Brüder und nur noch deutsche Brüder.'" (125)

In contrast to the balcony in Frankfurt, the balcony in Berlin serves both an aesthetic political purpose. In its political purpose, it serves as a platform to make a declaration of war, which causes disunity in the world and, at the same time, promotes unity within Germany. Like the balcony in Baden-Baden in the Sunday dinner scene, the balcony in Frankfurt also provides a

sense of promise. From this balcony, the emperor suggests the possibility of social acceptance through invitation to *all* Germans to participate in the First World War.

## 2.5 Chapter Summary

The first novel of the *Rothschildallee* series marks the beginning of a new phase in the time-space continuum of the Sternberg family, in which they establish themselves as a successful, bourgeois German-Jewish family. The process through which the Sternbergs establish themselves is represented symbolically in the designing and building of their new house that eventually becomes a home and the foundation for a sense of *Heimat* for the family. The address *Rothschildallee 9* develops into the place where the Sternbergs feel most rooted, thus becoming the locus of their *Heimat*.

Special attention to the details of the exterior of the house shows that the Sternbergs as German Jews in the wake of Jewish Emancipation were extremely conscious of outer appearances. Within this context, one sees how space responds to changes in time in that the house reflects the Sternbergs' desire to gain acceptance in German society. Johann Isidor undertakes measures in the design of the house so that it harmonizes with the aesthetics of the time. He tries to avoid anything that would make the house appear conspicuous. The house should be stately in an understated fashion that is not boastful of the Sternbergs' wealth. Despite Johann Isidor's desire for a modest appearance of his new home, details, material traces, of the house contradict his intent. For example, the house has a front door that is described as "bombastisch" and large windows that allude to the Sternbergs' wealth. Although one should also note that Johann Isidor's decision for the front door was a painstaking one that was only made under pressure from the architect designing the house. The caution, with which the

Sternbergs approach the designing of their house, so that it does not appear to be too boastful of their success, reflects their desire to be accepted by larger German society.

As the house in the *Rothschildallee* develops into the anchor of the Sternbergs' *Heimat*, different forms of time emerge to the foreground and then fade away, replaced by another form of time. In the opening chapter of *Haus*, the narrator focuses on idyllic time which achieves an atmosphere of promise and possibility. Another point in the novel where the reader encounters idyllic time is in the portrayal of the Sternbergs' holiday in Baden-Baden. Their trip to Baden-Baden, similar to the move to the *Rothschildallee*, is an event that symbolizes that the family has achieved something significant. Idyllic time in both cases is not sustainable for a longer period of time and eventually transforms into everyday time which through its repetitive nature shows the ongoing struggle of the Sternbergs to establish themselves in German society. Another reason why idyllic time does appear more frequently in the narrative is that it is a form of time not suitable for showing developments, due to its lack of linearity, according to Bakhtin. A more linear form of time is necessary to show how the chronotope of the house responds to external expectation and events.

Although the exterior of the house should be understated, the interior of the house may reflect the family's wealth with little concern for appearances. The home's interior has the best wooden parquet floors and the finest fabric for its drapes. This contrast between interior and exterior is representative of how the Sternbergs as German Jews in Imperial Germany also had to negotiate the manner in which they led their lives. The exterior is symbolic of how their lives should appear to other Germans. Johann Isidor and his family want to blend in with non-Jewish Germans of their bourgeois stratum and to be accepted as equals. The wish for acceptance also speaks for the deeper desire of belonging. The interior is symbolic of their lives that are lived in

private. The Sternbergs and other German Jews also wanted to live full lives with their Jewishness.

While the house is a chronotope of *Heimat* that represents how German Jews in Zweig's novel negotiated their public and private lives, there are other chronotopes that measure the degree of acceptance and their sense of belonging in the broader context of German society. This sense of belonging not only applies to the Sternbergs and their acceptance within German society, but also to Anna and her acceptance with the Sternberg household. These chronotopes of place include places of work, education, and socializing, which represent a widening circle of opportunities that the Sternbergs achieve through their own merit and the limitations of their spatial trajectory that reflect the lack of wider acceptance in German society.

### 3 Expectation, Entitlement and Erosion of Place

While the first novel, *Das Haus in der Rothschildallee*, depicts the Sternbergs' efforts to establish a *Heimat* for themselves in their new home in the Rothschildallee and thereby define their place within German society, their new residence continues to be the major chronotope for all of the four novels. Similarly, the Sternberg house in the *Rothschildallee*, throughout the tetralogy, remains representative of Johann Isidor's life-long goal to establish a place of belonging for himself and his family within German society, which in its most ideal version would accept German Jews as simply German.

With the construction of the house, both Johann Isidor and Betsy crossed a threshold from their life in an apartment in the *Sandweg* into a new life that reflects elements from both *Bildungs-* and *Besitzbürgertum*. The idea of *Bildung* expresses itself mostly through the character of Betsy and her use of the spaces in the house. The sunroom, for example, is the space utilized for reading novels, such as Thomas Mann's *Buddenbrooks* and *Königliche Hoheit*. The notion of *Besitzbürgertum* is mostly found in the character of Johann Isidor as he is considerably concerned with the financial success of his businesses. In addition to the house in the *Rothschildallee* he acquires other residential and business properties. This is, however, not to say that the patriarch of the Sternberg family does not aspire to aspects of *Bildungsbürgertum* as he wanted Otto to attend the best grammar school and to pursue studies at the university. In sum, it is difficult to provide a strict delineation of the two types of *Bürgertum*, and for the purposes of this analysis one should see the Sternbergs' *Heimat* as a synthesis of both.

Moving across the aforementioned threshold does not bring an end to the liminality of their lives as German Jews. In spite of this, the house does serve as a point of stability from which the family can pursue not only private but also those aspects of *Heimat* found in the public sphere, such as successful business relationships with all Germans and acceptance of the

Sternberg children in their respective schools without the presence of anti-Semitism. With its stability, the house provides the Sternbergs with a place of sanctuary in which they can find some peace of mind after experiencing unwelcoming places in the public sphere. The movement between the private and public spheres always takes place at the threshold and the act of traversing this point becomes representative of the pursuit of acceptance.

Having moved into their house in 1900, the Sternbergs pursued their objective of creating a home by following a family model that had been widespread for centuries, a model based on patriarchy, in which the sons were raised to pursue university studies and eventually following in their fathers' footsteps. The daughters were raised to be good wives and mothers. This model would still have been acceptable at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, prior to World War I. Over time, particularly in the Weimar Republic, changes within society and families made this model less viable and outdated. Not everyone was willing to reflect on these changes and re-examine their life styles to adapt their roles within the family to the new circumstances. Johann Isidor is such a man, who failed to acknowledge the changes and pursues his goals guided by traditional gender roles. Due to his choices based on the outdated patriarchal model, he has many difficulties with his children. His daughters are raised to become good upper middle-class wives, but they refuse this role in different ways. Erwin, the only remaining son, rejects his father's vision of the future. The ensuing conflicts and tragic mistakes become the central concern with the focus on the new generation in *Die Kinder der Rothschildallee*, the second novel of this family history and contribute to preventing fulfillment of expectations regarding a *Heimat* for the new generation as envisioned by both the parents and the children for whom *Heimat* is intimately connected with a fulfillment of their individual dreams. Particularly the increasing political counter-currents not only prevent such a place, both socially and physically, they ultimately reverse expectations and partial achievements regarding a *Heimat* in German society.



### 3.1 Expectation of Place

In *Die Kinder der Rothschildallee*, which covers the time frame 1926 to 1937, the Sternbergs have achieved and are firmly settled in a comfortable, upper middle-class lifestyle. The parent generation, especially Johann Isidor, find that reaching this goal does not bring with it the acceptance and the sense of belonging in German society that he had expected. In the fictional world of Zweig's novel and the historical reality of German Jews, an increased awareness of the impossibility of belonging became painfully evident, especially for the parent generation, in the aftermath of World War I as Kaplan states in her book *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (1998): "Germany's defeat in World War I and postwar political and economic instability magnified anti-Jewish passions (13)." Of the elder Sternbergs, Johann Isidor would have more than one occasion to observe the rising anti-Jewish sentiment compared to his wife Betsy because, through his work, he moves more within the public domain.

Both Johann Isidor and Betsy come to terms in different ways with a life that falls short of the expectations they had upon moving into their new home in 1900. Johann Isidor approaches his life with disappointment and skepticism caused by past events, such as the German government's refusal to do business with him during World War I and the census of Jewish soldiers fighting in World War I. Alternatively, Betsy develops a sense of continuity of place through a return to cyclical time in the form of family celebrations and tasks of daily life.

#### 3.1.1 Johann Isidor: Limitation of Place in German Society

When confronted with his sense of place in the house and within German society, Johann Isidor experiences an array of emotions that range from pride and achievement to skepticism and lethargy. Firstly, he feels emotions of pride when it comes to the house in the *Rothschildallee* and his businesses in Frankfurt that enable him and his family to sustain their bourgeois life. As

an optimistic citizen of Imperial Germany, he had built this home for his family according to his values of modesty and contemporary style. Zweig in an interview notes that this foundation has seemingly achieved what Johann Isidor set out to do: Seine Prinzipien von Anstand, Ehrlichkeit und Fleiß scheinen sich ausgezahlt zu haben, er ist ein hoch angesehenes Mitglied der Gesellschaft. ([http://www.randomhouse.de/SPECIAL\\_zur\\_Rothschildsaga\\_von\\_Stefanie\\_Zweig](http://www.randomhouse.de/SPECIAL_zur_Rothschildsaga_von_Stefanie_Zweig))

Secondly, his businesses are sources of positive identification for him. In addition to the textile goods and notions he sells in the shop in the *Hasengasse*, Sternberg acquired three clothing stores and a publishing house for postcards. (*Kinder* 36) The one business to which Johann Isidor has the strongest emotional attachment is the shop in the *Hasengasse*. It was his first shop and the one, in which he had his affair with Anna's mother, Fritzi Haferkorn. On the one hand, the Sternberg businesses provided the family with the wherewithal to maintain their home and sustain their bourgeois lifestyle. On the other hand, his businesses, especially the textile goods and notions form an environment that gives Johann Isidor the security to make decisions with confidence: "Seine Entscheidungen traf er mit der Spontaneität eines Menschen, der Grund hat, seinen Erfahrungen zu vertrauen" (*Kinder* 35). Within the constellation of the *Rothschildallee* and the *Hasengasse*, his daily walk to and from work, Johann Isidor creates his place in German society, which does not go beyond this trajectory. This constellation serves as a chronotope that is representative of the limits set on German Jews in their efforts to belong to German society. They experience success within a limited scope that, on the one hand, came into being through their improved legal position in German society. On the other, Johann Isidor achieved success through his own ingenuity and hard work.

In the role of the businessman, Johann Isidor exhibits a confidence and stability that stems from the emotions that arose from his experiences sitting behind his desk making business

decisions. In his study or at his places of work, he is “der, der er immer gewesen war” (*Kinder* 35). These rooms function as chronotopes in which there is an absence of anti-Semitic traces that would remind him of not truly belonging to German society. Instead, Johann Isidor is surrounded by traces such as his desk that reflect his prowess and success as a businessman and his position as the head of his family, as the decision-maker. These minor chronotopes also bring back emotions of being *geschickt*, *einfallsreich* and *mutig*, but these emotions do not follow him as he enters into spaces and places beyond the constellation of the *Rothschildallee* and the *Hasengasse*.

### 3.1.2 Betsy: Continuity of Place

From the beginning of the first novel in the series, Betsy was intent on establishing a home for herself and her family. In fact, she first appears to the reader in Sternbergs’ kitchen baking cakes for the first Sunday *Kaffee und Kuchen* in the new house. A sense of newness and possibility is tangible in the narrator’s language describing Betsy’s activities in her *nagelneuen* kitchen. By contrast, the language in the first chapter of Zweig’s second novel is more neutral in its description, and the household appears to be more settled. Compared to the first novel, there is very little description of the house. A shift in the narrative perspective from the house to the Sternbergs speaks for the fact that the house has reached a plateau in its material development as a place. But it is not untouched by change, because the house in the *Rothschildallee* has been updated with modern plumbing and electricity (*Kinder* 35).

After nearly three decades in the house, it is now the life activities of the Sternbergs that fill the house and constitute the primary focus. Daily routines and family celebrations as non-material traces have taken on more importance than the material traces of façade and interior of the Sternberg home. One can also refer to these non-material traces as cyclical events that occur within the chronotope of the house and can be associated with the idyllic time form that is an

integral part of the Sternbergs' vision of *Heimat*. During the first years of living in the house, family celebrations would have been more typical of idyllic time as there was more harmony among the family members. In the second novel, idyllic time transforms into a form of time that is more similar to everyday cyclical time that is punctuated with more eventful moments.

As in the first novel, Betsy's primary focus lies on the tasks she was educated to fulfill daily and the well-being of her family. Part of Betsy's tasks is the organizing of family celebrations, which include the weekly Sabbath celebrations, other Jewish holidays, and secular ones such as *Neujahr*. This focus on the organizing of celebratory moments is an important aspect of Betsy's response to the deterioration of life for German Jews in the year of 1933. She responds with an insistence on continuing with the planning and preparation for special occasions such as the *Shabbat*. Overall, one could refer to her response to the negative events such as the April 1 boycott of Jewish businesses as one of continuity. While Johann Isidor responds to the boycott with feelings of hopelessness, Betsy tries to restore some traces of normalcy to their daily life: "[Betsy] [...] hatte in Krisen und im Kampf immer auf den gewohnten Ablauf des Lebens gesetzt" (*Kinder* 210) The usual course of events that Betsy has in mind consists of shopping, cooking, and setting the table for *Shabbat*, but the *Shabbat* takes on a different form of time when seen in the historical context of the 1930s in Germany. Now, the weekly gathering around the *Shabbat* table no longer carries an understanding of routine and normalcy with a touch/trace of idyllic, harmonious time. The rupture of the announcement that Jewish businesses will be boycotted on April 1, 1933 evokes a protest reaction in Betsy who is conscious of both the social position her family has earned for over thirty years and the precarious climate in the city. Rather than sending Josepha to shop for the *Shabbat* meal, she ventures out into the city two days before the impending boycott and exposes herself to uncertainty and potential hostility. In this situation, time, experienced with a heightened

subjective awareness, overshadows the weekly routine of preparing for the Shabbat meal; the moment becomes more significant and unpredictable. Consequently, also the subsequent Shabbat event where the entire family is gathered, takes on two layers of time: one layer of a remembered time of normalcy and another layer of uncertainty and precarious time for both the present and the future, particularly, since Victoria and her family were evicted from their apartment nearby and have moved in with the Sternbergs.

While the novel progresses in its narrative of the tightening noose of Nazi oppression, family celebrations, Jewish high holidays, and weekly *Shabbat* become a sanctuary from the worsening conditions outside the home and the weekly *Shabbat* dinner at the Sternbergs' dining room table becomes more momentous in meaning. The act of drawing the family to the table for the *Shabbat* meal was a coping strategy for German Jews in an increasingly hostile environment as noted in a Harvard study from 1941. The psychological study analyzed the memoirs of 90 émigrés and determined that life for German Jews became more focused on the family: "Most dramatic are the many instances of return to the healing intimacy of the family after bitter experiences of persecution' the Harvard study observed" (Kaplan, *Despair* 51). The "healing intimacy" (Kaplan, *Despair* 51) to which the study refers can also be found in the Sternberg's dining room at the dinner table. In Zweig's second novel of the series, the place of the dining room and its table become a chronotope of sanctuary in the 1930s. The act of gathering the family around the dining room table for the weekly *Shabbat* is a regular ritual for the Sternbergs and it takes place independent of the hostile environment outside the house. Within the context of the *Shabbat* dinner, material traces such as candlesticks and challah and non-material traces such as the saying of the blessings would provide the Sternbergs with a sense of continuity. These traces of Jewish cultural tradition are more stable while those outside the home are more

prone to change due to National Socialist measures to dominate the public sphere with traces reflecting Nazi ideology.

### **3.2 The New Generation: Entitlement of Place**

The Sternberg children with the exception of Anna only have the perspective of the fully established home, since they were born after their parents' move into the *Rothschildallee*. Unlike their father who pursued both material and non-material traces that make up *Heimat* and play a role in establishing a sense of place, the children are aware of the house and the material comforts that is the physical manifestation of their parents' labors. For Johann Isidor, non-material traces consisted of his successful career and social contacts with important individuals in commerce such as the Bankier Weidenfeld (*Haus* 78). His children, however, would be more aware of the material traces such as the house and their parents' wealth that affords them an affluent life style.

Clara, Erwin, Victoria, and Alice do not know of their parents' lives in the *Sandweg*, which was only experienced by the eldest son. If Otto had survived the World War I, there might have been more continuity in the life perspectives across the generations. His death, however, destroyed any potential for continuity passed from older sibling to younger sibling. Johann Isidor as a parent also fails to pass on a more balanced perspective to his children due to the fact that he disengages from the younger ones, with the exception of Anna. The combination of Otto's death and Johann Isidor's disengagement from his children creates a vacuum within the time-space trajectory of the Sternbergs' children. They continue in this line of development that they themselves fill with a sense of entitlement that is also fueled by the bourgeois lifestyle their parents created. The Sternberg children are unaware of the monumental threshold that their

parents crossed upon moving into the *Rothschildallee*. The threshold as a major chronotope in the narrative of the parents' lives remains just as meaningful for the second generation, the children Anna, Victoria, Clara, Erwin, and Alice.

### **3.2.1 Anna: A Lack of Entitlement**

While analysis of Anna's and Victoria's perceptions of place and *Heimat* will be covered in two individual sections, one should also note that Anna and Victoria are very similar in that they have a father, who gave both daughters identical gifts when he returned from his business trips. They were also born in the same year, and after the age of eight both Victoria and Anna share a common home.

Despite these similarities, the half-sisters' personalities and aspirations vary greatly, and these differences are reflected in the expectations they bring to the place of the Sternberg house. As a chronotope in the novel, the crossing of the threshold uncovers the degree to which Anna and Victoria differ in their perceptions of place. Anna crosses the threshold as an eight-year old child when Johann Isidor brings her to the *Rothschildallee* after the death of her mother. In addition to the concrete situation of crossing that threshold, it was also a metaphorical crossing. Anna crossed a threshold into a new life and a new family. Bakhtin states that the threshold as chronotope is "charged with emotion and value" (Bakhtin 243). The infusion of emotion and value is not something that the chronotope achieves on its own. Instead it becomes charged by human action. In this instance, it is action on the part of Betsy that makes Anna's initial crossing of the Sternbergs' home more of a life change than a crisis. Betsy opens her home and her arms to her husband's other daughter. Subsequent acts of crossing the threshold would not contain the high amount of emotion and value as the first one did. In this way, one can see how a chronotope takes on different variations in regard to Bakhtinian forms of time. Anna's arrival to the

Sternberg house and her first steps into their apartment comprise a moment that can be referred to as “chairological time” or *Augenblick*, terminology taken from Heidegger’s essay “Being and Time.” In comparing both Heidegger’s and Bakhtin’s essays, Liisa Steinby sees parallels between Heidegger’s conceptualization of time and Bakhtin’s chronotope that help elucidate the importance of human action within the construct of a chronotope: “A chronotope provides the right moment of time and place for human action, but the action itself makes use of time to become reality.” (Steinby 116) In her analysis of the Bakhtinian chronotope, Steinby does not see time and place in concrete, physical terms. From Steinby’s perspective, time and place are aspects of a moment that demands human action. It is the force that makes a chronotope come alive and take on different forms. Betsy meets Anna, the child from her husband’s extra-marital relationship at the threshold across which Anna enters a new world. Betsy determines the action at this time and in this space which influences the chronotope in either a negative or positive manner and therefore shapes Anna’s perception of the threshold. Betsy’s kind welcome into the house is the human action in this chronotope of the threshold that forms Anna’s consciousness in this new place. Furthermore it is through her welcoming attitude that Betsy makes Anna’s transition into the family easier and also sets the tone for future moments of crossing the threshold.

Most obviously, Anna becomes part of a new family, but she also encounters a new culture once she has entered the Sternbergs’ house. Anna especially encounters this new culture in the person of her stepmother. Shortly after Anna’s arrival, Betsy takes the initiative to shape the atmosphere of the place, into which Anna enters, declaring to her husband : “Nur weil du aus dir einen Narren gemacht hast’, sagte sie bald nach Annas Ankunft in der Rothschildallee, ‘werde ich doch nicht die garstige Stiefmutter spielen. Aschenputtel und Schneewittchen sind nicht in einer jüdischen Familie aufgewachsen.” (*Kinder* 28) Here the chronotope of the



threshold also reveals several aspects of the way in which Betsy deals with German and Jewish culture. In her statement about German fairy tales, one sees that Betsy is familiar with the figure of the wicked stepmother that appears in both Cinderella and Snow White, but chooses not to integrate it into her family life. Instead, by emphatically taking a distance from this figure, she makes a value statement in favor of Jewish culture.

Although a threshold is a place of encounters, it is also a place where one decides to let something or someone in or not. The encounter between Betsy, Johann Isidor, and Anna shows that Betsy determines what or who crosses her threshold and may not enter her home. She accepts Anna with open arms, she rejects taking on the identity of the unkind stepmother that plays a role in some German fairy tales such as “Schneewittchen” and Aschenputtel.” She refuses to be the wicked stepmother in this situation. In this context, the threshold becomes a place where Betsy uses the fairy tales as non-material traces to define the cultural geography within her home balancing German and Jewish traditions.

Anna crosses a cultural boundary when entering the Sternbergs home for the first time. Until the age of eight, she lived with her Christian mother and was fully unaware of her Jewish heritage. Although she does not have this knowledge, Anna is conscious of entering a place that offers security in the wake of her mother’s death and is, at the same time, culturally different from her first home. The crossing of this threshold gives Anna a double perspective which will enable her to easily navigate the private domain of the Sternbergs’ home and its German-Jewish context and the public domain of a German city like Frankfurt because she gains insight into German-Jewish life in addition to the German mainstream perspective. Unlike the other Sternberg children, Anna, after the age of eight, grows up with a father who saved her from a life in an orphanage and later encouraged her to feel at home in the *Rothschildallee*.

Betsy, likewise, plays a significant role in Anna's childhood as she integrates Anna into the family and builds a relationship with her, in which Anna becomes more like a daughter than simply the child of Johann Isidor's extra-marital relationship. Although Anna becomes a member of the family, the absence of pressure to fulfill the parents' expectations allows her to move easily between public and private spheres. In contrast to her siblings, Anna is not considered "Jewish" by German society, as Johann Isidor never officially adopted her as his daughter. She retains her mother's family name "Haferkorn," a name that is not considered to be as "Jewish" as "Sternberg." In traditional Judaism, the mother and not the father determines whether a child is Jewish or not. Both Johann Isidor and Betsy are aware that Anna is not considered to be "Jewish" as her mother is a Christian German. In other words, she can more easily integrate into German society.

In the cultural climate of the Sternberg home, Anna's place thus stands out because expectations of her are less obvious. In a sense, she fulfills Johann Isidor's unspoken wish by taking an interest in his textile business where her mother had worked. In her new home, Anna increasingly becomes a resource for her parents but in contrast to her siblings Victoria, Clara, Erwin, and Alice, she is not subject to the same expectations that are placed upon them by Betsy and Johann Isidor.

With her different outlook and experience Anna moves more easily between home and the outside world. It is evident that the momentous threshold crossing for her was the moment she entered the Sternbergs' home after her mother's death. Anna needed to find her place within a domestic and not a public space. The security she found in her new home contributed to Anna's ease of crossing the threshold from private to public and vice-versa:

Anna brauchte doppelt so viel Zeit wie ihre Mutter, um Brötchen zu holen. Nie kam sie an den Kindern vorbei, die in der Anlage in der Günthersburgallee mit Schaukel, Wippe

und Sandkasten spielten. Mit den Nachbarn im Hausflur unterhielt sie sich so lange, als wär sie gerade von einer Weltreise zurückgekehrt, und sie ließ sich von Fremden in nicht enden wollende Gespräche ziehen. Wenn die Geschäftsleute auf der Berger Straße über die Zeiten und die Politiker klagten war Anna eine aufmerksame und anteilnehmende ZuhörerIn. Sie erkundigte sich nach der Familie des Schornsteinfegers, tröstete weinende Kinder mit Bonbons, die sie eigens zu diesem Zweck besorgte, und bewunderte die Babys stolzer Puppenmütter. Auch jeder Hund, der in ihren Augen aussah, als brauche er Zuspruch und einen Klaps auf den Kopf, wurde von Fräulein Anna bedacht. (*Kinder 8*)

Time in the above passage is marked with generosity, as there are no temporal limits on Anna's trip to the bakery. The narrator does not refer to any specific time although one can surmise that the action takes place in the morning as Anna is on her way to pick up *Brötchen*. Although the narrator remarks that Anna needs "doppelt so viel Zeit wie ihre Mutter" (*Kinder 8*), there is no critical tone in this observation. The narrator simply explains why Anna takes more time for such trips to the city. She interacts with the people she meets between the *Rothschildallee* and the bakery. In contrast to the vague nature of time in this passage, the references to place are more specific as Anna meets different people in the *Günthersburgallee* and the *Bergerstr.* The walk from the *Rothschildallee* to the *Bergerstrasse* is about ten minutes, but *Zweig* uses *Zeitdehnung* to yield a rich, detailed description of Anna's walk. The one chronotope that comes to mind at this point in the text is the chronotope of the road that is often characterized with encounters and meetings. In the above passage, when the narrator notes that Anna needs twice as much time as her mother to go to the baker's, it is not the walking distance along Frankfurt streets that causes Anna to take a lot of time. Instead, it is the number of encounters with other people, which Anna has during her walk, that lead to Anna's needing more time to complete the errand of getting bread from the baker. This particular chronotope of the road is not a long one, but it is broad and

rich when considering the many interactions in which Anna engages. The abundance of time, space, and encounters in this chronotope crystalizes through Zweig's use of *Zeitdehnung*. In turn, the application of this literary device highlights Anna's attitude toward interactions on her walk in that the determining factor in Anna's use of time and space is the human encounter. Her sense of time is not measured by the clock but by the number of people she happens to meet. Anna's ease of moving about in this urban sphere indicates a sense of belonging and *Heimat* in which there is no rupture between the Jewish and the German sphere. What is natural for her appears to be shown as a model for German-Jewish *Heimat*. Furthermore, the agility with which Anna crosses the threshold speaks for her robust sense of *Heimat* that becomes apparent when faced with the increasingly difficult circumstances of life under National Socialism.

### **3.2.2 Victoria: Entitlement to a Place of Performance and Admiration**

The second youngest Sternberg daughter Victoria serves as a foil to her half-sister Anna. Coming from a financially secure upper middle-class family, she projects a sense of entitlement to pursue her dreams. Where Anna's dreams of having a family and living in a modest home, Victoria sees herself as a stage actress playing romantic heroines in theaters across Germany. Her dreams of performing on the stage start to take form as a child and accompany her into young adulthood. They also influence her behavior within the family and inform her decisions as she crosses the home threshold into the world outside the *Rothschildallee*. As a child, Victoria accompanies her family on their first family holiday to Baden-Baden, and it is here that she at the age of six behaves in a manner that foreshadows her desire to become an actress. On Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, the Sternbergs attend an elegant dinner at the *Badhotel zum Hirsch* where they are all staying. The entire family gathers around a large table with a beautiful meal and Victoria is the center of attention:

[Victoria] sorgte [häufig] auch für Tafelmusik, indem sie sämtliche französischen Kinderlieder sang [...]. Die meisten Gäste hatten bereits erwachsene Enkel und nicht mehr den Hauch einer Erinnerung, was in Kindern vorgeht. Fast alle waren sie jedoch noch beweglich genug, um den Kopf indigniert in Richtung Victoria zu schütteln. “Das”, hatte die temperamentvolle Missetäterin schon am dritten Tag des Baden-Badener Aufenthalts diagnostiziert „sind alles Frauenwölfe, die das arme Rotkäppchen fressen wollen.“ (*Haus 87*)

As Victoria sings French children songs, she performs and develops an awareness of attention in the disapproving stares of the hotel’s older guests. Although it is negative attention, six-year-old Victoria is able to turn it into something positive for herself. The negative attention does reflect negatively on her singing performance for Victoria takes on the role of innocent *Rotkäppchen* surrounded by women who resemble wolves. Not quite unlike her mother, Victoria rejects the negative character of a Grimm’s fairy tale but takes it a step further. She transfers the negativity of the wolf onto those women who do not approve of her performance and identifies with the good character, the potential victim *Rotkäppchen*. The irony in this identification lies in the fact that she is utterly unprepared to recognize the wolf and later makes the same mistake as *Rotkäppchen*. Through this performance, the table at the hotel transforms into the first stage, at which Victoria shows her love of performance and theatrics.

Over time, it becomes increasingly clear that Victoria finds her self-worth in how she succeeds in projecting herself to others. She finds confirmation in the presents other people give her and, as a young woman, Victoria finds her worth in other people’s validation of her person, especially her appearance. Hoping to join the theatre as an actress someday, she focuses on internationally known role models which, however, do not merely indicate her desire to be

equally recognized and popular. It is these role models that also reveal her consciousness of being different:

Aus der koketten kleinen Vicky mit dem frühreifen Charme, dem weder Frau, Mann noch Kind hatten widerstehen können, war eine Schönheit mit langen Beinen und markantem Profil geworden [...] Die junge Sternberg, die sich vorgenommen hatte, so berühmt wie Sarah Bernhardt zu werden und so umschwärmt wie Josephine Baker, sah bei jedem Blick in den Spiegel eine Königin. (*Kinder* 11)

The young Victoria chooses role models that reflect her own situation of being different, but still belonging. For Victoria, the French-Jewish actress Sarah Bernhardt represents someone who can identify herself as French, the nationality of the country which she considers to be home, and as Jewish, which in the case of Bernhardt does not appear to interfere with a successful acting career. Josephine Baker represents someone, who is visibly different due to her dark skin color and still enjoys the admiration of the French. Both role models have differences that do not hinder them from being admired. Victoria appears to aim at achieving a similar status in Germany. Despite being Jewish, she, Victoria Sternberg, would be admired as a successful actress in Germany. In the Sternberg family, Victoria is not only admired for her beauty, but also for other characteristics as seen from Anna's perspective: [Anna] [...] aus der anderen Welt imponierte nicht nur Victorias Schönheit, sondern noch mehr deren Besessenheit und Energie“ (*Kinder* 11). Victoria's obsession surfaces when she envisions her future as an actress. She is convinced that she is born to be an actress (12) and that theater directors will line up to offer her parts in famous plays such as Hamlet's Ophelia, Romeo's Juliette, and Othello's Desdemona (12). In this vision of her future, she positions herself on theater stages in Frankfurt and Berlin: „Sie sah sich, ehe man sie nach Berlin holte, in ihrer Heimatstadt auf der Bühne stehen, mit Lorbeer bekränzt, auf Rosen gebettet und mit jubelnden Kritikern bedacht“ (12). When one reads

Victoria's narrative in the context of her as a young German-Jewish woman, it is meaningful that she dreams of portraying women in Shakespearean plays who are not German. Both Juliette and Desdemona are Italian and Ophelia is Danish. Although Victoria also dreams of playing Faust's Gretchen, she wants to play Goethe's heroine in a new, different manner that an audience has never seen before. The fact that Victoria wants to give a performance of an unorthodox Gretchen and to take on roles of non-German heroines implies that she does not see herself in classic German women's roles. Furthermore, her role models, Sarah Bernhardt and Josephine Baker are not German, but French-Jewish and Afro-American. These points are indications that Victoria as a young German-Jewish woman has difficulties in finding her place in German society. In her imagination, she crosses a threshold and creates a place, a theatrical stage in which she receives the public validation she needs. She often seeks this validation from non-Jewish men whom she meets for meals at restaurants, at which the dinner table becomes a place of performance because Victoria eats non-kosher foods such as lobster and pork (*Kinder* 15). In so doing she chooses to cross a cultural threshold between the Jewish and the German spheres in the belief that she has greater chances of getting theatrical roles by playing a social role as a non-Jewish woman. By eating foods that are forbidden in Judaism, Victoria covers up traces of her Jewish background. Her behavior in this context implies that Victoria performs a role that makes her more "German" in the eyes of those men, with whom she meets, for example by eating those foods that are not served in her parents' German-Jewish home even if the consumption of these non-kosher foods makes her ill.

Victoria's social performance as a non-Jewish woman does not enable her to reconcile her vision with reality, but leads to the destruction of her dream when she secretly takes a trip to Berlin with a man who promises to take her to see the latest plays, such as Brecht's *Dreigroschenoper*. Her secure places of social performance at home and in a familiar urban

space do not transfer to securing an entitlement to a place of performance on the public stage. This development is linked with the change of geographic place from Frankfurt am Main to the anonymity in the unfamiliar metropolis Berlin. Victoria is raped, robbed, and left alone in Berlin and this act of violence forces her to cross the threshold of her sexuality that signifies a drastic change in the course of her life for two reasons. Firstly, this threshold-crossing is not one of her choosing, it is forced upon her. Secondly, the manner in which she crosses this threshold does not correspond with the one her parents had envisioned for her. From her parents' perspective, this threshold would have been crossed in the form of marriage to a man who embodied the same values that the senior Sternbergs hold dear. The particular threshold that Victoria crosses in Berlin also conflicts with the vision she had for herself. From her perspective, she left the house in the *Rothschildallee* for the possibility of being discovered as an actress in Berlin. The rape in Berlin shows Victoria that there was very little stability in her own vision of the future. It also demonstrates how thoroughly unprepared she was for venturing into an unfamiliar place and social environment. It is the familiar that saves her, first in the person of her brother Erwin who lives in Berlin as an aspiring painter and then, upon their return to Frankfurt, in the private sphere of her room in the house in the *Rothschildallee* that, to date, has been the most stable point in her life. The house as a secure place also reflects the perceived stability of her parents' vision for her future that consists of finding a husband, who meets her parents' expectations and who is able to create a life which corresponds to the elder Sternbergs' cultural geography. This vision contains traces, such as a house that is similar to their own, not to mention a successful career for the husband that reflects success and status held in high esteem by German society. After the events in Berlin and her recovery from them in Frankfurt, Victoria takes on the role of a charming, young girl, who is attractive to men that meet her parents' expectations of status, profession and wealth. She thereby makes her parents' wishes into her choice thus fulfilling only



that part of her dream that had envisioned an apartment in a prestigious looking building of the *Günthersburgallee*, adjacent to the *Rothschildallee*. In crossing this threshold to establishing her own family with the young Jewish lawyer Friedrich Feuereisen, Victoria selects an urban milieu that is adjacent to that of her parents not only geographically but also socially and culturally.

In contrast to Anna, Victoria's sense of *Heimat* and belonging is dependent upon others' admiration of her. She experiences this admiration, when performing in various situations like the one where she "plays" *Tafelmusik* at the hotel in Baden-Baden or the one where she eats pork in the company of her male suitors. These places of performance are mistaken for *Heimat* and leave her with a notion of it that is harmful to her. In fact, one could say that her rape in Berlin is related to this idea of home. In the wake of events following the traumatic experience of her rape, Victoria finds a safe haven in her parents' home and develops a relationship with her brother Erwin that provides her with an interpersonal space in which she experiences acceptance. In the interaction with her brother, she does not need to perform but this time in which Victoria does not play a role is short lived.

### **3.2.3 Erwin: Entitlement to a Place of Personal Liberty**

Erwin's first figurative threshold to cross occurred at the moment of his brother Otto's death in World War I when he had to step into his brother's shoes. In fact, Otto's death presented a threshold for the Sternberg parents as it marked a boundary between hope and despair. All of the expectations that had been placed on Otto were then imposed upon the other children, especially Erwin as the second son. One should also add that the family had to cross this threshold from one situation into a new one: from one of harboring hopes, especially in the case of Johann Isidor that they, as German Jews, would finally belong to German society if one of their sons became a soldier for the *Vaterland*. Otto was also the one child designated to follow his father and take

over the Sternberg businesses. As previously pointed out, Otto's death marks the threshold between aspirations and disappointment. Since the eldest Sternberg child will not bring the father's dream of belonging and acceptance in German society to fruition and, instead, the dream died with Otto, this creates a vacuum within the Sternberg family. In this vacuum, the family home becomes a place of oppressiveness for Erwin as Johann Isidor seeks to push his second eldest son into a mold that was meant for Otto, but fails in convincing Erwin to make this choice:

Nach dem Tod seines Bruders Otto hatte sich der vielversprechende, vielseitig interessierte, intelligente, witzige, damals vierzehnjährige Erwin Sternberg dem Leben verweigert. Er mochte nicht Stammhalter sein. Vaters Posamenterie, die Geschäfte, der Verlag interessierten Erwin nicht. Er wollte weder einen bürgerlichen Beruf, noch hatte er vor, für eine Familie zu sorgen. (*Kinder 23*)

The father's treatment of his only remaining son reveals Johann Isidor's unrelenting desire for acceptance and recognition within German society according to his goal. As a father, he is more interested in a son that meets his preconceived notions of belonging than a son who is content when allowed to pursue his own vision. Johann Isidor's vision for a successful son is not conducive to Erwin's finding his own place in the *Rothschildallee*. Instead he must find a space that provides him with a sense of liberty. As a result, the figurative threshold that Erwin initially crossed at 14 years of age after his brother's death leads to a literal crossing of a threshold from the *Rothschildallee* to Berlin where he hopes to become a successful painter. This means that Erwin must make a decision between, on the one hand, fulfilling his father's expectations of a son who shares his views and follows in his footsteps, and on the other hand, pursuing his own aspirations as a painter. In choosing the latter Erwin removes himself from a cultural geography which is associated with personal oppression. He places himself into another geographical, cultural, and social context when he moves into a small backroom in Berlin:

Erwin lebte seit fünf Jahren in Berlin; dort hockte er in einem Hinterzimmer, trank zu viel Schnaps, wurde nie richtig satt und träumte in allen Farben, die den expressionistischen Malern heilig waren, die Welt würde eines Tages seinen Namen kennen. In sein Elternhaus kehrte Erwin nur dann zurück, wenn die finanziellen Zuwendungen aus Frankfurt aufgebraucht waren und er nicht mehr wusste, wie er in Berlin Kost und Logis bezahlen sollte (*Kinder* 23).

While the material traces of Erwin's living arrangements in Berlin mark a cultural distance from Frankfurt in that he lives in a backroom that is one of many and lacks any of the comforts in the form of food that he had in Frankfurt when his mother and Josepha cooked, it is the non-material trace of relationships that has changed because of Victoria's traumatic experience in Berlin. It triggers a return, albeit in a different role for Erwin. The self-chosen role as a protector of his sisters who is more aligned with reality and political developments than their father, endows Erwin with recognition and a sense of purpose. Although he failed in fulfilling his aspirations as a painter, he achieves partial independence through a teaching position at the *Städelschule* (*Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste*), the Art Institute in Frankfurt. By detaching himself from the cultural geography of his home when he moved to Berlin, he was able to discover and thereby redefine his place in the geographical sphere he had left which made possible his return to a reconfigured space at home. Through his newly found sense of purpose, Erwin develops a sense of *Heimat* that transcends place. Although he expresses an affinity with the cultural geographies of the house in the *Rothschildallee* and the region of Hesse in terms of language and cuisine, Erwin derives meaning from the relationships with his siblings that are not dependent upon place.

### 3.2.4 Clara: Entitlement to a Place of Acceptance

Clara as the eldest daughter and Erwin's twin sister receives little attention from her father.

Johann Isidor sees her as an extension of her mother as revealed when Betsy wants to buy new shoes for Clara in Baden-Baden:

Clara braucht auch neue Schuhe. Sie hat sich in welche verliebt, die Mary Jane heißen, genau wie das Mädchen in ihrem Englischbuch. Das fängt heute ganz früh bei den jungen Mädchen an, dass sie sich für Mode interessieren.

“Meine Tochter nicht, Clara ist doch noch ein Kind. Und wozu braucht ein Kind moderne Schuhe? Sie kann doch deine alten auftragen. Jedenfalls eines Tages, wenn sie hineingewachsen ist. Wenn sie mit uns im Auto sitzt, sieht ja ohnehin niemand ihre Füße. Außerdem soll nur einer wagen, nach den Beinen meiner Tochter zu schielen” (*Haus* 83)

One sees here how the parents' views of their eldest daughter contradict each other. Betsy understands her daughter's desire to express her individuality in choosing a certain fashion. Betsy sees changes in the culture and recognizes that girls are more interested in fashion than earlier. Johann Isidor sees Clara as “his daughter” and decides for her that she should not be interested in fashion. As Johann Isidor determines that his daughter can wear her mother's shoes as soon as she has grown into them, he imposes a vision of a present and future on his eldest daughter that invalidates her as an individual. In this statement, he also discounts Betsy's ability to ascertain the situation with her daughter. For Clara, her place in the home is one of limitations.

Between the incident with the shoes in Baden-Baden and Clara's volunteering at a hospital during World War I, one sees parallels in Johann Isidor's treatment of his daughter. Clara wants to study medicine, but her father once again ignores his daughter's individuality and desires, as he did with her wish to buy the Mary Jane shoes in Baden-Baden. Even when she

receives a marriage proposal that is more aligned with his own vision of Clara's future, he still seeks to impose his own agenda on her:

Ein Poet mit Stethoskop statt gesatteltem Pegasus nannte Clara ein Licht in der Finsternis und bat um ihre Hand. 'Wenn es der gnädige Herr Vater erlaubt.' Der gnädige Herr Vater schüttelte den Kopf, als er von dem Antrag erfuhr. Noch weniger aufgeschlossen zeigte er sich, als seine Tochter ihm ihre Absicht mitteilte, entweder sichere er ihr zu, sie dürfe nach dem Abitur Medizin studieren, oder sie würde umgehend abgehen. (*Haus 236*)

By immediately reacting and telling Clara that she can break off even her high school education, Johann Isidor pushes his daughter's interests to the margins, as he did in the case of the "Mary Jane" shoes. He does not entertain the idea of her marrying a doctor although such a man would meet the Sternbergs' expectations of a son-in-law. Johann Isidor gives no justification for not allowing her to become engaged to the doctor (*Haus 237*). Moreover, Johann Isidor does not allow her to pursue an education. Prevented from crossing the family home threshold to establish her "own" place outside the *Rothschildallee*, Clara establishes a place for herself within the family home through an act of defiance.

The birth of her illegitimate daughter, Claudette, moves Clara further to the margins which is visible in her change of place to a 4<sup>th</sup> floor apartment in her parents' house. Financially dependent on her parents, Clara, nevertheless, places her daughter in the center as Claudette has all the freedom to express herself and to establish her own individuality apart from receiving the best of material possessions. By giving the young girl much freedom in pursuing her desires, Clara creates a place for her daughter, which reflects the place she herself would have welcomed from her parents. Clara crosses a threshold into more independence by raising Claudette in a manner that reflects Clara's values more emphatically than those of her parents. Her father's

affectionate relationship with Claudette indicates that Clara has achieved a place of acceptance also, at least indirectly, regarding her more modern outlook on life. Her sense of *Heimat* is achieved through navigating between two different sets of values. Unlike Victoria who adopts her parents' bourgeois model, Clara asserts her own values through her refusal to marry and to reveal the name of Claudette's father and through her means of parenting as expressed above. However, due to the parents' insistence that Clara should not pursue the study of medicine, she remains financially dependent upon support from male members in her family.

### **3.2.5 Alice: Entitlement to a Place of Comfort and Ease**

Compared with her siblings, Alice crosses the threshold from the home into the public sphere much later and in a different socio-historical climate, that is, under the looming threat of National Socialism. Although all Sternberg children must make decisions to deal with the political and social situation confronting Jews in Nazi Germany, Alice is initiated into adulthood in a life-death situation. She will have to cross her threshold while confronted with discrimination at school. Alice and her niece Claudette will have to cross the boundary that marks a loss of *Heimat* in the *Rothschildallee* and in Germany as well as their entry into an exile situation.

Alice, the youngest Sternberg daughter, born in spring 1915, came into a world ravaged by war when her family was grieving the death of the eldest Sternberg son Otto in the trenches whereas her siblings, on the other hand, were all born in times of relative peace. Against the background of losing Otto, Betsy is thankful that her youngest child is a girl and not a boy. Alice's position within the family is defined in the context of her brother's death. Since in February 1915, all Germans, including the Sternbergs, faced scarcity of resources and dealt with food shortages, other members of the Sternberg family will associate those difficult times with

Alice's arrival as she grows into young adulthood. Further defining her place in the family is the fact that Alice a latecomer in her family. Betsy is 42 years old when she becomes pregnant with Alice. Such a late-pregnancy in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was a source of embarrassment. While the family members largely ignore or sideline the youngest Sternberg it is through the narrator that the reader sees a more balanced characterization of Alice, emphasizing her exceptional musical talent and charm.

Given the cultural geographical context of her birth, Alice also finds it difficult as a teenager to find her place in the family. Her mother and father contribute to Alice's challenges in defining her position within the Sternberg household. This is visible in Johann Isidor's voicing his opposition to Betsy concerning their daughter playing the piano:

[Alice spielt Klavier.] „Mach das verdammte Viech [den Papagei] nicht verrückt“, protestierte der Hausherr, „der Vogel stört mich doch gar nicht. Der ist direkt Balsam für meine Ohren“.

“Was stört dich denn sonst, um Himmels willen?“

“Wer stört mich, nicht was, verdammt noch mal! Bist du denn taub? Dein verehrtes Fräulein Tochter treibt mich in den Wahnsinn. Bitte richte ihr aus, dass zwei begnadete Hungerkünstler in der Familie Sternberg ihrem Vater für ein ganzes Leben reichen. Wenn es sie auch noch nach Ruhm und Ehre dürstet, lernt sie mich kennen. Und zwar umgehend.“ (*Kinder* 45-46)

In the above conversation, Johann Isidor disassociates himself from Alice and speaks of Alice as Betsy's daughter, even orders his wife to communicate his wishes to Alice. Rather than seeing the situation as one, in which his youngest daughter is expressing herself through playing the piano, he sees her as a potential *Hungerkünstler* as he thinks about Erwin as a painter and Victoria as an actress. Both Erwin and Victoria are children that do not meet his expectations in

addition to Clara, and Johann Isidor does not want a fourth child, who fails to meet his expectations. In criticizing Alice for possibly seeking fame and success as a pianist, he fails to see that his children, like him, desire a place to which they belong while also being themselves, pursuing their potential, and receiving recognition.

While Alice struggles to define her place within the family, she must do the same in the public sphere at school: „Die Schülerin Alice Sternberg [wurde] vom gesamten Lehrerkollogium als phlegmatisch, desinteressiert und minderbegabt gebrandmarkt“ (*Kinder* 48). Alice’s relationships to adults at home and at school do not help her develop a sense of belonging because she does not fulfill their expectations. By contrast, her response to the teaching methods of the new pedagogue, Fräulein Dr. Kranichstein, demonstrates that she can improve her academic standing in this public sphere. Because Dr. Kranichstein sees the talented individual in Alice, which her disinterested parents fail to recognize, she identifies how Alice can combine her musical gift with other subjects. Through the character of Alice, the reader sees that relationships are an essential part of establishing a place of belonging. If the relationships disappear, the place of belonging eventually vanishes which becomes apparent in Alice’s case once Frl. Dr. Kranichstein is dismissed from the school for her political views which are rumored to be communist.

When the National Socialists come into power, Alice is 18 and Jewish pupils are no longer allowed to attend school with so-called Aryan children that for the National Socialists are synonymous with being German and belonging to German culture and the German nation. By depriving Jews access to a German identity through aryanization, and forcing German Jews to develop a more Jewish identity, the government defines the cultural place for Alice, both in the public and the private sphere. In Alice’s character, one sees a young woman who, after trying to find her place within German bourgeois society which she seemed entitled to pursue, is forced to



go to the synagogue to seek a place of belonging. Although Alice primarily accepts this new place within her urban sphere because here, she develops a romantic relationship with a young orthodox Jew, she ultimately creates a place for herself through her marriage to him and emigration to South Africa. In her country of exile, she defines herself through a growing family of her own. Furthermore, Alice and her family's sense of *Heimat* is defined through Orthodox Judaism which transcends national borders and provides them with a structured life.

### 3.3 Erosion of Place

While measures such as the boycott of Jewish businesses and the Civil Service Restoration Act in 1933, which forced all German Jews to leave their positions as civil servants, played a significant role in pushing German Jews to the margins of German society, the National Socialist regime wanted to erase all traces of German-Jewish influence and culture. To accomplish this goal, National Socialists executed a wide variety of acts whose primary goal was to extricate German Jews from the cultural, and physical geographies of Germany. In looking at the chain of events that eventually led to the near destruction of German Jewry, a trajectory emerges, in which one can see how institutionalized displacement of German Jews affected every aspect of German Jewish life. The National Socialists first attacked German Jews at an economic (Ruth Gay 256) level, beginning with the boycott of Jewish-owned businesses on April 1, 1933. One week later, 7 April 1933, Jews could no longer serve as civil servants. In August 1933, German Jewish doctors were not permitted to treat insured patients. These three events were among many that occurred in 1933 and chipped away at German Jews' place in society. These legal acts that either removed many German Jews from their positions or made it very difficult for individuals to support their families financially were part of the social death of German Jews, about which Betty Scholem wrote in her memoir *Mutter Und Sohn Im Briefwechsel 1917-1946* (256). After

she learns about the plight of her sister, who was a physician and lost many patients, Betty Scholem writes: “[German Jews][...] are being destroyed in this bloodless way (closing off the free professions from Jews) just as certainly as if their necks had been wrung” (quoted in: Ruth Gay 256). Losing the legal right to work was significant contributing factor to the social death of German Jews.

Not only were German Jews isolated in their professional lives, but also in their social lives. Eventually the institutionalized anti-Semitism of the National Socialists follows a path that encompasses places of socializing and sport and even the homes of German-Jewish families. On August 22, 1933, German Jews were banned from many beaches at the North and Baltic Seas and public swimming pools. German sport clubs (Turnvereine) turned away individuals, who did not have the documentation to show their Aryan status (Mönninghoff 22). The National Socialists also introduced a law that prohibited the inclusion of Jewish holidays in official calendars (Mönninghoff 23). By the mid-1930s, German Jews lived in isolation and were not permitted to meet in cafes (Kaplan, *Dignity and Despair* 45). These laws and policies of institutionalized anti-Semitism caused the erosion of the social places that German Jews occupied. The scope of National Socialist anti-Semitism ran along several lines, one economic and the other social and cultural. Within this trajectory, German Jews are removed from public places, thus forcing them to create their own places to carry on with daily life.

Banished from the public sphere, German Jews often sought refuge in their homes to avoid the hostile environment of public places such as theaters, museums, and concerts. Kaplan remarks that German Jews “limited their social life to their own homes and organizations” (Kaplan, *Dignity and Despair* 51) However, it was not always safe to meet in people’s homes for fear that the Gestapo was watching German-Jewish homes, especially where there were large gatherings (52). Each legal act of anti-Semitism such as the boycott of 1933 and the Nuremberg

Laws as of 1935 contributed to an erosion of habitable place that eventually led to the destruction of German-Jewish cultural geography and *Heimat*.

### 3.3.1 The Disappearance of the *Rothschildallee*

In order to reach their goal of completely ostracizing German Jews and traces of a German-Jewish history or culture from Germany and the German culture, the National Socialists used many different means of institutional anti-Semitism. Following the first events of April 1933, the National Socialist governments of cities such as Frankfurt am Main undertook measures to remove physical traces of German-Jewish culture from urban geographies. One common measure of removing any visible reference to a German-Jewish presence was the changing of street names. While the renaming of streets by the National Socialists as an act of institutional anti-Semitism happened in many German cities such as Lübeck, Potsdam, Mannheim (Azaryahu 385-386), and Frankfurt (Email from Ulrike Heinisch), they did not make these changes simultaneously. Frankfurt, as other cities, had its own timeline in reshaping its urban geography to reflect National Socialist values and desires. In comparing the cities Frankfurt and Lübeck, one can see that each city pursued these changes at different points in time. Azaryahu refers to Willy Brandt's recollection of events following the Enabling Act of March 20, 1933 in his book *Links und Frei*: "In Lübeck on 20 March (1933) a large number of people were taken into so-called protective custody. Soon thereafter began the renaming of streets (Brandt 80)." In Frankfurt, the *Rothschildallee* was renamed *Karolingererallee* on May 10, 1933 (Heinisch). While we do not know the exact dates of when streets in Lübeck received new names deemed appropriate by the National Socialists, it seems from the context of Brandt's recollection that these changes occurred there somewhat earlier in 1933 than in Frankfurt. From the perspective of the chronotope, this shows that each city as its own chronotope had its own timeline in how it

changed in regard to time and space. While Lübeck and Frankfurt as urban chronotopes may have overlapped in some ways at a given time, it was not a complete overlap, at least in respect to renaming streets. These two German cities did not overlap in this aspect until May 1933. Through these two examples, one can see how the concept of the chronotope can reflect the differences in cultural geography and perspectives. The fact that the name *Rothschildallee* was not changed until December 1933 shows that the Sternbergs could hold on to that vestige of *Heimat* and place until the end of the first year of National Socialist (NS) rule.

The *Rothschildallee* as a street is not only significant for its place in the familial history of the Sternbergs and in the urban history of Frankfurt am Main, but also for the reason that the street is named for a well-known German-Jewish family, the Rothschilds. This family became very influential in Frankfurt am Main and Europe. Mayer Amschel Rothschild, born in Frankfurt, was a court Jew to the Landgraviate of Kassel-Hesse during the 1760s. In contrast to other families of court Jews, Rothschild's sons were able to inherit the family's fortune acquired through Mayer Amschel's banking business. (<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com>) A city street named after a famous German-Jewish family would have been a signal to German Jews that they had an important and valued presence in the city's urban history. This presence was acknowledged officially and rewarded with the street name, and thus became part of the city's cultural geography. Seen in the context of Jewish Emancipation and the burgeoning success of a German-Jewish family, the *Rothschildallee* is a validation that Jews are accepted in German society at a superficial level, but it is acceptance nonetheless. The street name also implies the stereotype of the wealthy Jew, with which the Sternbergs do not want to be associated. Johann Isidor does want to show his wealth in the building of his home, which should be modest and understated. Betsy also acts against this stereotype in that she tells shopkeepers that she lives in the *Rothschildallee*, but is not a Rothschild. The street name is both validation of the German-

Jewish presence in the history of Frankfurt and an allusion to a stereotype. Independent of these two points, the name *Rothschildallee* was and is official recognition of the role of German Jews in German history and the National Socialists wanted to remove all traces of public acknowledgement of this role.

In their quest to aryanize Germany, National Socialists changed the names of streets and other public spaces: “Aus dem Börneplatz wurde der Dominikanerplatz, aus dem Börsenplatz der Platz der SA. [...]. Die Untermainbrücke wurde zur Adolf-Hitler-Brücke” (*Kinder* 236). The *Börneplatz* was named for the German-Jewish writer Ludwig Börne (1786-1837) who was a political writer, satirist, and journalist. 1935, it is renamed *Dominikanerplatz*.

Of the places in Frankfurt that are renamed in the novel, it is the renaming of the *Rothschildallee* that impacts the Sternbergs’ sense of place. Zweig in her novel often portrays the street in language that emphasizes the beauty of the place as she does in the following passage: “Die Rothschildallee war besonders prächtig an diesem unheilvollen 1. April, die Forsythienbüsche eine Symphonie in gelb, ebenso die Tulpen und Osterglocken in den Vorgärten” (*Kinder* 224). The *Rothschildallee* as a street retains its serene qualities when faced with the hostility from the April 1<sup>st</sup> boycott of Jewish businesses. The combination of the street name and the pleasantness of the place provide the Sternberg family with refuge and stability and a point of identification, all important aspects of *Heimat*. These aspects are partially lost in the moment when the *Rothschildallee* becomes the *Karolingerallee*. The Sternbergs’ emotional attachment to the street name is embodied in Claudette’s reaction: “[Es war] [...] Claudette, die weinte. Die Rothschildallee, in der sie geboren und aufgewachsen war, war umbenannt worden, Sie hieß nun Karolingerallee (*Kinder* 235). Naming the street after a medieval Germanic family that once reigned over Europe conveys the message to the Sternbergs that a German-Jewish

presence is no longer desired. It also shows that the trajectory of anti-Semitism is encroaching on their home.

### 3.3.2 Frankfurt Streets as Places of Hostility

In Zweig's first novel, the narrator sets a scene, in which Betsy Sternberg looks out of her kitchen window at the street below, the Rothschildallee. From Betsy's perspective, the street appears to be a place of harmony and belonging. As a chronotope, the street with its cheerful appearance coincides with the sense of promise that was in the air on January 27, 1900 when the Sternbergs moved into their new home. An important aspect of the image of Betsy gazing out of her window is the symbolic barrier that the window becomes. Betsy is able to look at the life on the street, but is not part of it. Similarly, German Jews observe life in Germany and are not able to overcome the barriers that prevent them from fully participating in German society. Similarly, three decades later, Betsy observes a Frankfurt street, a seemingly peaceful scene, through a window as she sits in the tram:

[Betsy] [...] war selten so früh unterwegs. Bäume, Häuser, die ersten Frühlingsblumen in der Friedberger Anlage, selbst die Menschen auf der Straße und die Hausfrauen mit geknotetem Turban, die ihre Betten zum Lüften in die offenen Fenster legten, erweckten von der Tram aus den Eindruck, die Welt wäre soeben erst erschaffen worden.

*(Kinder 204)*

This scene from the second novel is similar to the one in the first novel in that Betsy is the observer of harmonious goings-on and not a participant. In addition, this scene takes place against the background of a hostile political environment, a few days prior to the NS-boycott of Jewish businesses. As Betsy gets off the tram, she says "good-bye" to the conductor, who

expresses an embarrassment in that moment which, together with Betsy's own reaction exemplifies how the tram as a place of encounter between strangers reveals the changes in the public sphere:

“Pardon”, sagte Betsy. Verblüfft schaute sie der abfahrenden Tram nach. Ihrer Lebtag hatte sie sich nicht von einem Straßenbahnschaffner verabschiedet; sie fand ihre Redseligkeit unpassend und albern, war jedoch nicht besonders beunruhigt. Viel mehr beschäftigte sie der Umstand, dass sie offenbar bereits so sehr an die Veränderungen gewöhnt war, die die Juden in Deutschland zu Menschen zweiter Klasse degradierten, dass ihr Herz nicht aufmuckte. (Kinder 205)

Betsy's perplexity following this interaction with the conductor shows how social relationships have shifted since Hitler and the National Socialists came to power. Before 1933, Betsy as a member of the *Bildungsbürgertum* would not have thought of being explicitly polite to a conductor, since the class differences would have been more stable. Compared to the conductor, Betsy's fashionable dress reflects her bourgeois life-style and their respective appearances reveal differences in social status, education, and financial wealth. After 1933, class differences lost their stability for the Jews when the National Socialists introduced the idea that the worth of a person is measured by their ethnicity and Jews are no longer regarded as members of the “German” community. In this new political and social climate, the tram as a place where classes interact becomes an indicator here of the effect political change has on people at this time in National Socialist Germany, not only on Betsy as a Jew but also on people like the conductor who may not agree with the new ideology. This is evident in the conductor's visible discomfort when he chooses to silently keep his arm down as Betsy leaves the tram with the traditional “good-bye” instead of the prescribed “*Heil Hitler*” greeting.

Getting off the tram at the *Hauptwache*, a central point in downtown Frankfurt, Betsy encounters a street scene that contradicts the one she observed from the tram. The traces of normality that constitute the first scene Betsy had observed from her seat in the tram are overpowered by traces of National Socialism. Traces, such as a chocolate cake with roses made of marzipan presented as a birthday cake for Adolf Hitler in a baker's shop window, reveal to which extent National Socialism has wormed its way into German daily life. Betsy encounters boys of a Hitler youth group organized in a march formation, who look angry and determined and sing songs celebrating National Socialist ideals (*Kinder* 206). In this scene, there are no barriers that both protect and isolate Betsy and she is no longer an observer as she was in the tram swiftly moving from one place to the next. The tram as a place of transition only appeared to provide a modicum of distance from the changed political and social climate. If one treats the *Hauptwache* as a chronotope, one only sees traces of a political movement that seeks to exclude Betsy as a German Jew. To navigate this hostile time-space, Betsy exhibits agency and denial expressed in the way she walks and shops:

Trotzdem schlenderte Frau Betsy Sternberg, der ein jeder seit ihrer Jungmädchenzeit eine wache Intuition für das Leben und die Menschen attestiert hatte, so entspannt zur Freßgass, als wäre sie auf einer Expedition im Dschungel gewesen und hätte die Entwicklung der letzten drei Monate in ihrer Heimat nicht mitbekommen. (*Kinder* 206)

Betsy's carefree gait may imply she will not give anyone the satisfaction of seeing any fear she may feel. However, her relaxed manner amounts to a form of defiance. She avoids exhibiting fear and caution which would confirm the veracity of the anti-Semitism that was on the rise. Her defiance can be seen as an act of conscious resistance: it does not allow those traces, such as the birthday cake for Hitler or the young Hitler youth to intrude upon her own perception of



Germany as a place she considers to be *Heimat*. Through her defiance she superimposes on the present a layer of remembered time from the days before National Socialist rule. This layer of time takes shape in her shopping and preparing Shabbat celebration later that evening. It makes possible a private space of comfort for a limited time in which the clock is turned back (*Kinder* 201).

### **3.3.3 Public Places of Blatant Anti-Semitism: *Wiedersehen mit Baden-Baden***

Not only did German cities as urban chronotopes have different timelines concerning events of institutionalized anti-Semitism, such as the renaming of streets, these urban chronotopes also differed in the severity of anti-Semitic acts at a grass-roots level. Therefore, German Jews experienced changes in perceptions of place and loss of place in varying degrees which is exemplified through the character of Victoria when she attempts to relive the carefree time of her first sojourn in Baden-Baden as a child. It prompts her second trip in the autumn of 1933 after she has experienced eviction from her apartment, her husband losing his job, and public events, such as the boycott on April 1, 1933. In Victoria's case, the layer of remembered time that she imposes on this trip is more difficult to realize in the public sphere of Baden-Baden than Betsy's similar attempt in the privacy of her home. Victoria's favorite place, the *Badhotel zum Hirsch*, is a material trace that she associates with the non-material traces of, on one hand, her childhood performance at the dinner table and, on the other hand, the excursions with her aunt. Given the dual nature of the material traces, the *Badhotel zum Hirsch*, represents a positive locale in Victoria's remembered time but undergoes transformations into a more hostile place during the National Socialist time period. Victoria, however, focuses on recovering the happiness she

experienced as a child through an event that approximates one of the non-material traces of the first sojourn.

Invited to dinner in the hotel on this second trip in the fall of 1933, the ambience of the place appears to be the same one as she experienced on the first holiday with her family in 1914: “An diesem Abend speiste Victoria im Badhof zum Hirsch, wie in den Sonnenzeiten von denen ihre Mutter mit einem Strahlen erzählte” (*Kinder* 263). An elegant meal and the décor of the hotel (*Kinder* 266) convey the impression that Victoria has been able to return to a time that was connected with a place where social friction was absent. However, the conversation she has with her hostess, Lilly Bär, about her and her family’s experiences in Berlin contradicts Victoria’s limited perception of anti-Semitism across Germany. Although she learns how Lily’s husband was arrested and died in prison and is shocked by Lilly’s narrative, it is still second-hand experience for Victoria. It is only after Lilly’s suicide at the hotel and Victoria’s direct encounter with anti-Semitism there when the receptionist tells her she must leave the hotel, since a person of her kind, meaning a Jewish individual, is not desired that Victoria realizes she cannot recover the positive and uplifting emotions from non-material traces of the past. The alternative appears to be a return to Frankfurt, once again, to the apparent stability of her parents’ home in the *Rothschildallee*, just before even that street undergoes its political name change.

### 3.4 Chapter Summary

In Zweig’s second novel *Die Kinder der Rothschildallee*, the Sternbergs experience both limits and opportunities inside and outside their chronotopes of *Heimat* in the *Rothschildallee*. The chronotopes in question here are the Sternberg house, the threshold from the house to the outside world, and Johann Isidor’s businesses. Each character of the Sternberg family experiences his/her momentous crossings of the physical threshold and has his/her unique figurative

thresholds to traverse. Johann Isidor and Betsy, in contrast to their children, have already crossed certain thresholds in their lives and focus their energies on what they have already accomplished. For example, they make improvements to the interior of their home. Johann Isidor concentrates on the businesses that he has already made successful. He stays within the boundaries established by his house in the *Rothschildallee* and his businesses in the nearby streets, such as his shop in the *Hasengasse*. Betsy concerns herself with the running of the household and becomes a prominent source of support for other family members as German society starts to turn against those of Jewish faith. Through the tools made available to her in the house and her upbringing, Betsy carves a sense of continuity for herself and other family members through reclaiming the rituals of the weekly Shabbat and maintaining the routines involved in running a large house. In other words, Betsy creates a private sphere in this second novel that counterbalances a public sphere that is becoming increasingly hostile.

All of the Sternberg children, with the exception of Anna, cross the threshold into the greater space of Germany and find it difficult to find their own places in German society. The difficulties in creating their own places of belonging are compounded by their upbringing and the increasingly threatening environment towards German Jews. Made difficult through an upbringing that insisted on a patriarchal model of family life, the daughters choose paths that either correspond or deviate from the one set for them by their parents. Victoria chooses to marry a man who meets the criteria determined by her parents. Clara deviates from course of finding a husband that would fit into her parents' image of marriage and has a child out of wedlock. Alice, the youngest daughter, also chooses the path of marriage that is combined with a turn to an observant practice of Judaism. Anna, the daughter from Johann Isidor's extramarital relationship, is not subject to the same pressures as Betsy and Johann Isidor's biological children. She moves easily between the chronotopes of Betsy and Johann Isidor's *Heimat* and the outside world.

Anna's command of both worlds positions her to help her family under the NS dictatorship and save the life of Victoria's daughter.

As the only remaining son in the Sternberg family, Erwin must leave the family home and his hometown Frankfurt am Main to find his own path. In other words, Erwin makes a sharp turn from the path set for him by his parents, especially his father, to Berlin where he hopes to make a living as an artist. Over time, Erwin recognizes the vacuum created by his father's cleaving to a model of life that ignores dangerous changes in the public sphere and returns to the family home, the private sphere. In Erwin's character, the reader sees the importance of the private sphere and the strength it can give to an individual. Following his return to the *Rothschildallee*, the only son becomes more content and has the strength to make difficult decisions for himself, his twin Clara, and niece Claudette when confronted with the tightening noose of Nazi oppression.

Based on the analysis of the characters and their responses and relationships to certain chronotopes, one sees how the private sphere with its rituals becomes a place of sanctuary that counterbalances threats in the public sphere. However, when the threats are coupled with powers that have the capability of destroying the private sphere, an individual is completely stripped of any sense of belonging. Another result of the analysis reveals that some notions of *Heimat* are more robust than others. The more resilient forms of the concept are grounded in relationships, in a structured lifestyle such as Orthodox Judaism or a clear sense of purpose. Johann Isidor's sense of *Heimat* in the first two novels of the tetralogy is strongly dependent upon acceptance into German society which erodes under National Socialism while Betsy finds hers within the family.

#### 4 Places of Dissolution and Restoration

The analysis has so far traced the nature of place in the context of German-Jewish *Heimat* from its establishment in 1900 to its maintenance and to the beginnings of its dissolution under National Socialism in the 1930s as portrayed in the chronotopes of *Das Haus der Rothschildallee* and *Die Kinder der Rothschildallee*. While analyzing the path of the Sternberg's particular *Heimat* in Frankfurt, one sees that *Heimat* has often been negotiated between the personal and public spheres. For German Jews this was a matter of creating places for themselves in which a sense of home could unfold between the values of the *Bildungsbürgertum* and Jewish traditions, on the one hand. On the other hand, it was also matter of creating places that blended in with the physical and cultural geographies of Germany. The one place that remains constant throughout the narrative is the house which serves as the anchor of the Sternbergs' *Heimat*, whose threshold constructs the boundary between private and public. As the primary chronotope in these works, the house responds to changes in familial and political relationships.

This chapter examines the dissolution and the restoration of *Heimat* as represented in the chronotopes of the last two novels of Zweig's tetralogy *Heimkehr in die Rothschildallee* and *Neubeginn in der Rothschildallee*. Public and personal places undergo transformations, which bear witness to the violent displacement of German Jews from their cultural and physical geographies of Germany. During the National Socialist period and especially at the beginning of World War II, National Socialism and its followers dominated places in both public and private spheres to ensure that the traces of German-Jewish life were eradicated and were not able to take root again. This all led to an atmosphere, which inspired mistrust across all areas of life. The situation was especially precarious for German Jews who were able to avoid the deportations and had to go into hiding

From the perspective of those who lived inside the physical geography of Germany under National Socialism but maintained a different cultural geography within themselves and, to a degree, in their homes, one sees how places, such as the Sternbergs' house, the Dietzes' apartment, and the *Großmarkthalle* respond to changes in human relationships in both the private and the public spheres. Furthermore, processes in the restoration and development of *Heimat* in the last two novels reveal how these places become different chronotopes compared to those at the beginning of the series when *Heimat* was first being established.

#### **4.1 Places of Dissolution**

The German Jewish sense of place disintegrated in the 1930s along a trajectory that can be traced from the public to the private sphere. Another aspect of this trajectory is that time appeared to be running out as well. The National Socialists first enacted laws that did not allow German Jews to access public places and then passed legislation that removed German Jews from their places of work and their homes, thus starkly reducing their access to both public and private spheres.

Ultimately, the National Socialist regime utilized all means available to extricate German Jews and their cultural traces from German society in both public and private spheres. Following the banishment from the public sphere, German Jews were removed from their homes and were forced to live in so-called *Judenhäuser* where they experienced further isolation. The apartments and houses that once belonged to German Jewry became places in which cultural traces of German Jewish life were broken down, appropriated, and sold. Public places, such as the *Großmarkthalle*, underwent disruptions in their usual operations and were instrumentalized in National Socialist processes of breaking down the last vestiges of agency among German Jews.

#### 4.1.1 Places of Stolen *Heimat*: Jewish Residences

The Sternbergs' sense of place as a family disintegrates further with the emigration of Erwin, Clara, Claudette, and Alice as depicted in the second novel *Kinder der Rothschildallee*. During the years of 1938 and 1939, the remaining Sternbergs, who include Betsy, Johann Isidor, Anna, Victoria, and her children, her daughter Fanny and her son Salo, are still able to maintain a sense of *Heimat* as long as they remain in the house. Up until this point, the house has provided a semblance of home, as it is at once a refuge and a barrier between them and the hostility in the public sphere. Anna as the only Sternberg child who has a different name from her siblings and who is not classified as a Jew leaves the family home upon her father's bidding as he is concerned with her safety. At the end of 1938 and the beginning of 1939, the hostility in the public sphere begins a sharp encroachment upon the private sphere in the form of decrees and laws that will force Jews to leave their homes and to find housing, in which only Jews are allowed to live. With this decree, time also changes its character, everyday time with its daily routines of going to work, shopping, and visiting friends evolves into a form of dead-end time. At this point, one also sees how the attempts to homogenize public places, such as parks and cafes, in that Jews were no longer allowed to enter these places, have now become part of the private sphere.

On December 3, 1938, *Die Verordnung über den Einsatz des jüdischen Vermögens* was enacted shortly after the November Pogrom of the same year. According to this law, more specifically paragraphs six and seven, German Jews were forced to liquidate any businesses they owned and were not allowed to purchase any real estate. The law does not directly address the question of houses, such as the Sternbergs' home in the *Rothschildallee*, that were owned by Jews. On December 28, 1938, Göring addressed this issue and made the following statement concerning real estate that was rented or owned by German Jews:

Der Mieterschutz für Juden ist generell nicht aufzuheben. Dagegen ist es erwünscht, in Einzelfällen nach Möglichkeit so zu verfahren, daß Juden in einem Haus zusammengelegt werden, wo weit die Mietverhältnisse dies gestatten. Aus diesem Grunde ist die Arisierung des Hausbesitzes an das Ende der Gesamtarisierung zu stellen, d. h. es soll vorläufig nur dort der Hausbesitz arisiert werden, wo in Einzelfällen zwingende Gründe dafür vorliegen. (Qtd. in Benz 632)

By 1939, according to the *Gesetz über Mietverhältnisse mit Juden* from April 30th of that same year, the law made it illegal for Jews to live with so-called Aryans, and Jews were forced to leave their residences and move to housing in which only Jews lived. In writing her novels of the *Rothschildallee*, Zweig makes these abstract laws concrete by exposing how they wreaked havoc in people's daily lives. In order to do this, she draws on her own family history as represented in her memoir *Nirgendwo war Heimat* (2012) with a letter dated March 19, 1939 from her Aunt Suse, her mother's sister. In the letter, Zweig's aunt writes about how her mother, Zweig's grandmother, is subjected to a visit from the future tenant of the apartment that she will soon have to abandon:

Neulich brachte der Kerl [von der Stadt] einen Mann in Straßenbahneruniform mit einer hochschwangeren Frau und drei Kindern mit. Die Kinder begannen sofort, in sämtlichen Schubladen herumzukramen, die Eltern interessierten sich am meisten für unser Silber. Zum Abschied nahm der Vater die zwei Schabbesleuchter von Großmutter mit. "Auf Vorschuss", sagte der Mann von der Stadt und lachte hämisch. Keiner von uns wagte, etwas zu sagen. Es war klar, dass man den Leuten bereits Zusagen auf unsere Wohnung gemacht hat. (*Nirgendwo* 127)



The incident as relayed in this letter shows how the grandmother's apartment is now under the public sphere as represented by the visits from the city representative. His sense of agency as exhibited through the manner he visits the apartment without asking the grandmother's permission shows the reader, to which degree Zweig's family has lost their possibilities of agency. Here one also sees how time takes on new meaning for German Jews. The *Schabbesleuchter* to which a form of time is attached that evokes continuity and transcends generations is removed from family ownership. Like Zweig's grandmother the Sternbergs suffered consequences from the same law. Although they owned their house in the Rothschildallee, they had so-called Aryan tenants, such as Theo Berghammer, who, due to his Aryan status, acquires control of the property. For the Sternbergs in Zweig's narrative, the enactment of the *Gesetz über Mietverhältnisse mit Juden* leads to the dissolution of their ownership of the home. For the parent generation whose identity was closely intertwined with the house and its cultural geography, it is also the dissolution of their *Heimat*.

The Sternbergs' next residence in the novel is one of the so-called *Judenhäuser* (*Heimkehr* 27). When compared to their former home, a *Judenhaus* becomes a chronotope of *Anti-Heimat* at three levels. Firstly, these houses lacked the cultural geographical context with material and non-material traces that the Sternbergs had meticulously cultivated over the years. Secondly, the family itself that had been an essential part of their *Heimat* were now gone. Finally, the Sternbergs had been stripped of their identities as German citizens and, with the loss of the house, were practically homeless. Their situation was similar to individuals who actually experienced such circumstances: "Jews had to sell more furniture with each successive move into tighter and tighter quarters. Often an entire family was squeezed into a small room; sometimes complete strangers were jammed together" (*Dignity* 153). Under these conditions, German Jews' sense of place is shrinking in the number of their possessions and in the amount of

space, in which they can freely move. Space to one's self becomes increasingly scarce as experienced by the poet Gertrud Kolmar. She writes her sister: "Since my bed is in the dining area, I actually have no refuge anymore, no space to myself, and the feeling of homelessness... has grown ever more powerful" (*Dignity* 27-28). In tandem with shrinking space and agency, time decreases and takes on the character of being a dead-end. The idea of refuge was also an important trace in the Sternberg's sense of *Heimat* and place before moving into the *Judenhaus*. Betsy referred to the sunroom in her former home as her refuge where for Johann Isidor it was his office. Both of these rooms were filled with material traces that also reflected the activities with which the parent generation of the Sternbergs identified. Betsy identified with literature and Johann Isidor defined his identity through work.

The shrinking sense of place that the Sternbergs experience in Zweig's third novel occurs under similar circumstances. Like Gertrud Kolmar and other German Jews, the Sternbergs move to a smaller living space at the former Reinemann'schen Villa at Bockenheimer Landstraße 73 that was an actual *Judenhaus* shared by six Jewish families (Michels, "Drei von 1180 Menschen kehrten zurück"). Not only were the *Judenhäuser* small and cramped but they were also not adequately heated. Kaplan notes "frost often formed in the rooms, since fuel deliveries were never adequate" (*Dignity* 154). Referring to similar living conditions, the narrator in *Heimkehr* states: "Seit über zwei Jahren hungerten und froren [...] [die Sternbergs] in der primitiven Unterkunft, die Hoffnung auf Davonkommen hatten sie aufgegeben" (*Heimkehr* 27). Losing living space, suffering from malnutrition, and lacking protection from the elements are all factors that make the house at Bockenheimer Landstraße into a chronotope of *Anti-Heimat*. The narrator limits the description of life in the *Judenhäuser* to this short passage. The perspective of place that began as broad and generous in the two first novels of Zweig's tetralogy has become truncated, as the characters' own sense of place has deteriorated due to persecution. The

*Judenhaus* in the *Bockenheimer Landstraße* is the last place of residence for the Sternbergs before their deportation on October 19, 1941. From this point on, the narrator limits the perspective of the terror and persecution to follow. Zweig in an interview clarified her position with regard to writing about the places of the Shoah: “Ich wollte nicht, dass der Holocaust ein Objekt von Fiktion wird [...] Es wäre in meinen Augen geschmacklos“ (Raanan, 2010). Zweig allows the narrator and characters to describe emotions and some memories, but does not go to the actual places such as the interior of the *Großmarkthalle*.

#### **4.1.2 A Place of Deadly Transformations: The *Großmarkthalle***

The *Großmarkthalle*, Frankfurt’s large indoor market, was a new building known for its architectural design and cutting-edge technology, designed by Martin Elsässer and built in 1926. More accurately, its construction began in this year but was not completed until 1928/1929. Its construction coincided with a time of relative economic and political stability in Germany of the mid and late 1920s, which in part arose from developments under Gustav Stresemann, Foreign Minister of the Weimar Republic (1923-1929). During his time in office, the Dawes and Young plans helped Germany lower the reparation payments from World War I, and the Locarno Treaty from 1925 and the admittance of Germany to the League of Nations allowed Germany to become more politically secure (Fullbrook 167-170). Within the context of this cautiously optimistic decade, the *Großmarkthalle* became a chronotope of the progress and promise of a relatively young century in the 1920s prior to the stock market crash in 1929. In the novel, the *Großmarkthalle* is a symbol of progress for its cutting-edge technology of the time. It was even admired from abroad combined with a better economic position helped restore a sense of promise that was almost non-existent under the Treaty of Versailles.

As seen in this context, the intention with which the building was constructed arose from a situation filled with potential and promise. The narrator notes that the citizenry of Frankfurt and all of the Weimar Republic perceived the structure in these terms. At the same time, the narrator also alludes to changes in those perceptions:

Die Großmarkthalle, der Stolz der Frankfurter, war in den Jahren 1926 bis 1929 gebaut worden; in den Zwanzigern galt ihre Technik als einmalig und wegweisend. Der Bau machte im ganzen Reichsgebiet Furore und wurde als Sinnbild für eine neue, freie Zeit gefeiert, doch im Herbst 1941 hätten es auch die Mutigsten nicht mehr gewagt, in der Öffentlichkeit an die Zeit von Hoffnung und Aufbruch zu erinnern. (*Heimkehr* 7-8)

Describing the structure as the „Stolz der Frankfurter“ in the late 1920s, the narrator refers to the collective of the Frankfurt citizenry. This sense of unity is further emphasized by including the “ganze[s] Reichsgebiet.” It makes a statement about Germany being one nation-state with widespread appreciation of the same modern aesthetic values.

The sense of unity evoked by the *Großmarkthalle* can be seen from a German-Jewish perspective. In the passage quoted above from *Heimkehr*, the narrator speaks simply of the *Frankfurter* and does not refer to any differences among them. From the narrative perspective, the only feature that differentiates the Frankfurt citizens from others is the fact that they live within the city limits of Frankfurt am Main. This inclusiveness extends beyond the city of Frankfurt and echoes earlier years of cultural inclusion through the term “Reichsgebiet.”

The *Großmarkthalle*, as a place of collective pride confirms a fusion of aesthetics and practical purposes for all citizens in 1929, a perception that ruptured twelve years later by a transformation of the landmark due to its changed function. Forms of time are also changing in the public sphere, similar to that which is happening in the private sphere: everyday time in the

*Großmarkthalle* is interrupted and hijacked by the National Socialists who make this public place into a site of terror. By 1941, this building became the departure point for the deportations of German Jews to the East. On October 19, 1941, 1,180 German Jews from Frankfurt arrived by foot at the *Großmarkthalle* (<http://www.ffmhist.de>), underwent a harrowing process, in which they were beaten and anything of value belonging to them was stolen, and finally were herded into trains that would soon be departing to the camps or ghettos. It was such a drastic transformation that not even the most courageous would make public reference to the values of unity and pride, for which the *Großmarkthalle* originally once stood. The narrator in Zweig's novel uses three terms that refer to collectives: "[die] Frankfurter, [das ganze] Reichsgebiet, [and] die Mutigsten." While the first two terms are inclusive of all who live in Frankfurt am Main and Germany, including German Jews, the third term differentiates in that it implies some people have more courage than others. Given the context of the passage, the reference to the most courageous would apply to all, who, by this time, would have been beaten down by a series of decrees and laws that isolated them from German society. As a result, freedom of expression was nearly impossible and speaking well, for example, of the democracy in the *Weimar Republik* would have been a dangerous act that could bring about a precarious situation for a person in both the public or private sphere. Individuals who exhibited a lack of support for the NS-regime, especially in public places, risked being persecuted. This shows how radically the public climate had changed in response to a dictatorship and how a government can abuse its power to transform citizens' perceptions of landmarks, such as the *Großmarkthalle*.

A piece of architecture that once inspired *Stolz* [und] *Furore*, and that was *ein Sinnbild für eine neue, freie Zeit* is now part of the NS-machinery used for the mass deportation of those considered undesirable in a new society. The structure itself did not change but the relationships between it and people and the intentions for the utilization of the place underwent a

transformation: “Für die jüdischen Bürger, denen es nicht gelungen war, die Stadt rechtzeitig zu verlassen und Rettung im Ausland zu suchen, war die einst mit Ehrfurcht bestaute Großmarkthalle zur Endstation aller Hoffnung auf Leben geworden” (*Heimkehr* 8). This place has undergone a transformation from wholesale market to a collecting point for the deportations to the concentration camps in Poland. More specifically, this transformation encompasses changes in the intentions pertaining to the use of the space, which was brought about through the shifts in power from the Weimar Republic to National Socialism its racist ideology that is also responsible for the transformations that affect the Jewish people and their view of the *Großmarkthalle*, here specifically the Sternberg family. One phase of the transformation has visibly taken place when the narrator no longer refers to all of Frankfurt citizenry but specifically to the Jewish citizens of Frankfurt. They are no longer just “citizens,” but Jewish citizens indicating a process of change from state of inclusion to one of exclusion. Subjected to terrors in the basement of the *Großmarkthalle* (*Heimkehr* 8), they undergo a further transformation to being simply “Juden,” who from the National Socialist perspective are barred from the category of citizen, whereby removal from society is justified by this regime.

The transformation process to which the Jews are subjected is one of accelerated degradation in a location previously dedicated to trade but now used to treat human beings as if they were of a lesser value than merchandise: “Zunächst wurden sie in den Keller getrieben, zum wiederholten Mal auf Wertsachen untersucht, immer wieder aufs Neue gedemütigt und schikaniert, weder mit Essen noch mit Wasser versorgt, körperlich bestialisch gequält und schließlich in Eisenbahnwaggons nach Osten abtransportiert.” (*Heimkehr* 8) Here, one sees a series of thresholds in the public sphere that leads to the forced deportations of German Jews from the National Socialist state. All of these thresholds lead the Sternbergs away from the *Heimat* of the house in the *Rothschildallee*. First they crossed the threshold from their house to

the *Judenhaus* and then from that one into the public sphere as represented through the street along which they march to the *Großmarkthalle*. The final two in this series consist of entering the former wholesale market and lastly boarding the cattle cars to be taken to the East.

Two processes are at play here. Firstly, the people who arrive at the *Großmarkthalle* are reduced to the status of cattle as represented in the narrator's choice of vocabulary: "[Sie] werden in den Keller getrieben." They are treated as cattle when herded into the basement. Secondly, one sees here that Jews who have been reduced to something lower than cattle. As human beings, Jews have lost their "value," and only their material objects that the Jews may be carrying with them before they are deported

However, the treatment, which German Jews received after being herded into the basement, implies a status lower than that of cattle: "[Sie wurden] weder mit Essen noch mit Wasser versorgt" (*Heimkehr* 8). The Jews are clearly perceived by the National Socialists as having a status below that of cattle, as cattle are more valuable and a farmer would have a vested interest that the cattle are healthy. They would receive enough food and water. Jews are not treated as well; they are also beaten and mistreated. The transformation of German Jews from citizens into individuals stripped of their civil rights and their humanity began months earlier when they were forced to wear a yellow Star of David with the word "Jude" embroidered in the middle of the star: "[Seit dem 19. September 1941] hatte Juden [ab sechs Jahren] den 'gelben Stern' zu tragen und wurden fortan in der Terminologie der Unmenschen als 'Sternträger' bezeichnet" (*Heimkehr* 11). The narrator compares the yellow star to a *Brandzeichen*, which further underscores the transformation from human into subhuman. A *Brandzeichen* usually denotes something of value that belongs to somebody. Cattle and horses are often branded so that they can be easily identified in the case a rustler steals them. For German Jews, the brand does

nothing to denote a positive value. Instead, the brand serves to inform all people living in National Socialist Germany that those who wear the yellow star are undesirables.

Another party that significantly plays into this degrading transformation of human beings is the SA man who “herds” people to the *Großmarkthalle*. It is with this character that Zweig gives the abstract character of National Socialist persecution a human face. His name is Georg Maria Griesinger whom the narrator compares with a farmer who has absolute power over the Sternbergs and the others while they walk to the *Großmarkthalle*:

Die Menschen, die Griesinger von der Innenstadt zur Großmarkthalle zu treiben und dabei – das war ihm schon bei dem zur allgemeinen Zufriedenheit verlaufenen ersten “Transport” von zwei Vorgesetzten eingetrichtert worden - so wenig Aufsehen wie möglich bei der Bevölkerung zu erregen hatte, erschienen ihm wie die Kühe und Schafe vom Bauern. Mit seinen Tieren konnte ein Bauer ja machen, was er wollte. Die lebten nur so lange, wie er sie am Leben lassen wollte, und ebenso konnte der SA-Mann Griesinger mit den Menschen verfahren, die ihm überlassen wurden. (*Heimkehr* 17)

Through the power invested in him by the National Socialist regime, Griesinger acts as “Sonne und Mond, König und Herrscher der Welt” (*Heimkehr* 17) with eyes everywhere and a whip to punish at will, believing himself to be the god of this place, the street leading to the *Großmarkthalle*. He operates under the notion that the power to control the individuals being herded to that place lies with him. The fact that Anna, in a moment of general commotion, dares and succeeds grabbing Fanny away from the marchers undermines his power. However, although his actions are ones contributing to the hostility of the street, another veiled hostility is exposed through Anna's eyes when she tries to conceal her plans to rescue Fanny from the gaping onlookers in the houses along the street that leads to the *Großmarkthalle*. The threshold also



plays a role in the case of the onlookers. They observe the atrocities from their houses and maintain a safe distance by not crossing their thresholds. If these people were to cross their house thresholds, their complicity with the persecutions on their streets would become more visible. Staying within domestic spaces gives the onlookers the illusion that they are not participating in the violence. The only one who is actively doing this is the SA man.

While Griesinger exercises his power through his “satanic voice, the sounds of his boots, and cursing” (*Heimkehr* 11), Anna assumes her power through maintaining silence and observing the situation. In contrast to Griesinger, she manages her emotions (*Heimkehr* 24): “Nach Tagen ohne Ruhe und einer durchwachten Nacht, trotz Anspannung und Todesangst und trotz des Versprechens, das sie ihrem Mann gegeben hatte, war sie noch immer entschlossen zu dem lebensbedrohenden Versuch, wenigstens ein Leben zu retten, dem der Tod bestimmt war” (*Heimkehr* 25). Ironically, Griesinger’s powerful emotions create the very chaos that enables Ann to carry out her rescue plan.

Griesinger is not able to maintain the impression of omnipotence for the reader as the SA man cannot completely control the people he is trying to herd into the basement of the *Großmarkthalle*. For example, Betsy uses the modicum of agency available to her and maneuvers Fanny to the edge of the marchers where Anna can seize her and whisk her away into a quieter side street. In a seemingly hopeless situation, the matriarch of the Sternberg family also maintains a bourgeois standard and thereby some dignity for her and her family. She asks Victoria to cover Salo’s eyes with his cap so he does not have to see all the changes in the place that his hometown (*Heimkehr* 21). Before embarking upon the march to the *Großmarkthalle*, Betsy insists that Fanny cleans her shoes for the trip. Furthermore, she does not give up hope that

Anna will arrive to rescue Fanny and is able to sustain a sense of trust when Betsy says: “Ich spüre es. Unsere Anna hat immer Wort gehalten” (*Heimkehr* 20).

In the example of the *Großmarkthalle*, we see how a place as a chronotope of the public sphere undergoes a transformation from one, which was once part of the Sternbergs’ *Heimat*, into one, which becomes instrumental in their and other German Jews’ banishment from public places. Furthermore, we also see how categorizing individuals as animals and marking them with a brand makes it simpler to banish German Jews from the physical and cultural geographies in Germany.

#### **4.1.3 A Place of Threatened *Heimat*: The Tenement at Thüringerstraße 11**

“*Bedrohung and Erlösung*,” the chapter two title, in Zweig’s third novel *Heimkehr* captures the dilemma of the tenement at *Thüringerstr.* 11 when one also considers that this chapter opens with a scene in a *Luftschutzkeller* (bomb shelter) during an Allied air raid. It lies close at hand to connect the idea of threat with this apartment building that in this analysis is a chronotope of threatened *Heimat*. Although, at first glance, a threat in the form of a bomb attack appears to be clear-cut in the respect that a bomb could drop on the tenement at any given time and destroy everything and everyone in it, one sees upon deeper consideration that the idea of a threatened *Heimat* in the historical context of the Zweig novels is extremely complex. On the one hand, there is the external threat of war being waged at their doorstep, which, dependent upon the perspective, can be a reason for hope. On the other hand, there is the internal threat of neighbors spying upon neighbors that could have deadly consequences. Confronted with both external and internal threats, many people who move and act within this chronotopic *Heimat* cannot fully develop a sense of belonging or a solid sense of place.

The internal threat within this chronotope that tries to impose NS-ideology and its idea of *Heimat* onto others is embodied in the married couple Willibald and Gudrun Schmand. In the role of *Blockwart* (block supervisor), the lowest level in the National Socialist Organization (*Heimkehr* 35), Herr Schmand with the help of his wife acts as the “*Bindeglied zwischen Partei und Bevölkerung*” (Schmiechen-Ackermann 575), and it is from this role that he and she derive their sense of belonging. From their perspective, the 40-60 households (584), which would be the average number of residences falling under his jurisdiction as block supervisor, are not just apartments but part of the *Heimatfront* (*Heimkehr* 34). In the context of National Socialist propaganda, the residential neighborhood and the Schmands undergo transformations. Their efforts to denounce their neighbors for critical remarks against the regime or illegal use of their ration check become a battle to enforce the imposed National Socialist view of *Heimat*. The Schmands morph from neighborhood spies into warriors protecting the fatherland. Willibald Schmand is a “*germanischer Recke*” (*Heimkehr* 34), who stands guard over his neighborhood while his wife Gudrun is a loyal servant who holds a burning torch high for her nation (35). People like the Schmands would have constantly been confronted with propaganda that fueled their perception of a *Heimat* under threat as Susan Pine remarks in her book *Nazi Family Policy*:

[Films], posters, pamphlets, books, calendars and diaries were all widely used, incorporating illustrations, mottos, stories and extracts from speeches by Hitler and other Nazi leaders. They depicted positive images of happy families, brave German soldiers, national heroes and the glory of the *Heimat*, and also portrayed quite strong negative images of a threatened Volk, the ‘impure’, ‘inferior’ and ‘asocial’ influences of the ‘Bolsheviks’, Jews and ‘gypsies’, and their alleged aim to destroy the family and the nation. (Pine 56).

In short, the Schmands are driven to maintain the forced homogeneity of their place and to force others to conceal any traces that contradict NS-ideology.

#### **4.2. Places of Personal Survival and Refuge: Anna's Apartments**

In spite of the hostile atmosphere in the house at Thüringer Straße 11, Anna and her husband Hans Dietz manage to make their apartment a place of refuge for their two children and Fanny. Like Betsy, Anna runs her household in a manner which allows the individual family members to be themselves as far as the war time circumstances allow. Furthermore, the Dietz apartment develops into this island of refuge largely due to the double perspective that Anna and Hans both share. Anna's double perspective as the daughter of a German Jew complements the similar perspective of her husband who was sent to a concentration camp due to his communist political beliefs. Sharing this one trait enables the Dietzes to help Fanny come to terms with the fact that she must hide parts of her identity during the war. The three of them must develop strategies that allow them to survive and escape notice of the Schmands' watchful eyes. One strategy that Anna and Hans use consists of devising a biography for Fanny so that she passes as someone who is not Jewish in the eyes of the (Schmands and the other) occupants in the building.

To be believable, the story about Fanny and her arrival at the Dietz household must meet certain criteria, so that it covers up her Jewish background, is plausible and thereby is acceptable to their National Socialist neighbors. Fanny's life story should not include too many details, which could lead to dangerous entanglements for Anna, Hans, and Fanny. The story that Fanny's parents died in an attack in Prague and Hans and Anna took care of the orphan restores for Fanny a place in the center of German society. It allows her to enter a space that is structured according to an ideology that would otherwise deem her as an undesirable.

As a result, Fanny lives in the Dietz home with a double identity, which, to a degree, shapes the minor chronotope of their apartment and plays a significant role in how they create their own sense of *Heimat* within the four walls of their home. They create this sense of *Heimat* by allowing Fanny to be who she is. Anna and Hans do not try to force her to talk about past events or losses that are too painful to confront. Making the apartment into a place where Fanny can be herself is important since they must keep Fanny out of public sight as much as possible. Ironically, in avoiding her school attendance on the grounds that she needs time to recover from the shock of losing her parents, they are close to the truth even if their main concern is to avoid having to provide Fanny's personal documentation. Due to the inherent dangers of the situation and the fictive story about Fanny's background, Fanny is forced to stay within certain physical boundaries. It is only in the insular private sphere of the apartment that she can be herself.

When we contrast the sense of place that the Dietz family creates in their apartment with the sense of place that is found in the Schmands' apartment, we see that each place is based on different values. All the values on which Anna and Hans build their home are expressed in Anna's courageous act of saving Fanny from the deportation at the *Großmarkthalle*. The narrator notes the *Mut, Opferbereitschaft und Liebe* (*Heimkehr* 36) of both Anna and Hans. Not only was courage necessary at the sight of the deportation, but it is also required within the four walls of their apartment, as they must also have the wherewithal to maintain a home in which Fanny is able to be a German Jewish girl whose family has been scattered across the world or sent to the camps.

In contrast to the places of *Heimat* created by the Schmands, the Dietz family creates their sense of home through loving, nurturing emotions expressed in conversations between the family members. For example, Anna tells Fanny about her Uncle Erwin, whose humor Fanny

inherited. By talking to Fanny about the Sternberg family, Fanny is also able to find her place within the family. On the whole, Hans and Anna attempt to live their lives with authenticity in spite of an outer world that is based on the ideology of a dictatorship. From the perspective of the chronotope, one could say that the Dietz apartment as minor chronotope is a bubble of resistance within the major one of the house. As the war turns against the National Socialists and the political circumstances change, this bubble will burst and change the shape the chronotope.

Following the war, the Dietz family moves into the apartment that once belonged to the Schmands, who lose the apartment due to their National Socialist past. By the same token, the Dietz family is able to move into their residence, as Hans and Fanny received official verification that they were victims of the National Socialist regime. When one considers the fact that the apartment once was the home of a German Jewish family, the Wolfsohns, it is a kind of restoration that takes place when Fanny and the Dietzes move into the apartment as Zweig introduces poetic justice here because Anna and Fanny are German Jews.

Described as spacious (*geräumige*) (*Heimkehr* 95), the apartment reflects the new atmosphere since the National Socialists were thrown out of power. The Dietz family and Fanny are also now allowed to have more space since there are no longer any laws, from which they must hide. Overall, moving into the new apartment is the beginning of restoration of *Heimat* for the Sternberg family. Betsy survives the camps and returns to Frankfurt. As the house in the *Rothschildallee* no longer belongs to Sternbergs, Betsy has no home of her own.

The Schmands' and Dietz' apartments like the Sternberg house respond to political developments in the public sphere. In the following section, one sees how traces in an apartment mirror changes in the public sphere. After the Dietz family has moved into their new apartment,

the narrator describes how the Dietz children are fascinated by the spaciousness and other details of their new domestic space:

Auch der riesige weiße Fleck an der Wohnzimmerwand faszinierte Sophie. Über dem Schmand'schen Sofa mit selbstgehäkelten Überdecke hatte das Hitlerbild gehangen, ein Prachtstück, in Öl gemalt und in Nussbaum gerahmt. Unmittelbar vor dem Einmarsch der Amerikaner war der Hausherr allerdings bestürzt aufgebrochen und hatte im Schutz einer mondlosen Nacht die Führerhuldigung unter einer deutschen Eiche in einer deutschen Grünanlage begraben. (*Heimkehr* 95-96)

In an attempt to erase visible traces of his enthusiasm for National Socialism, Herr Schmand digs a hole for the Hitler portrait, a symbolic act that indicates the concealment of his Nazi past. Schmand is also creating a space, as American troops approach Frankfurt. This burial further symbolizes how many people dealt with their National Socialist past creating a blank space on their records.

#### **4.3 Places of Hope and Hopelessness: *Zwischenräume***

*Zwischenraum* can be translated into English as “interstice,” which in English is defined as a “gap or break in something generally continuous” (Merriam-Webster). In relation to Betsy Sternberg and the members of her family, we could speak of a gap or break in her sense of *Heimat* and place. However, when one considers the terms “break” or “gap,” they seem too weak to describe what happened to the Sternbergs and other German Jews. More fitting would be words such as “gash” or “cut.” Given that the notion of *Heimat* is generally perceived as a place that embodies continuity in relationships and provides a sense of unity and harmony, it is

important to remember that this is an ideal, which is fragile and can be destroyed for any number of reasons.

For the Sternbergs, the potential for something continuous or sustainable existed in their lives before the expulsion from home and country. In regard to Betsy, a long life in her house at *Rothschildallee 9* with her husband, children, and grandchildren and with a harmony of different forms of time, such as cyclical, idyllic, and everyday time, would have provided the continuity that corresponds with Betsy's idea of *Heimat*. This unity of time-place was best represented in the chronotope of the Sternbergs' house as *Heimat* that existed from 1900 until the time in 1939 when the Sternbergs were forced to leave their house in the *Rothschildallee*. However, the Sternbergs' perception of *Heimat* started to fracture before 1939 when family members fled into exile. With the subsequent deportation, the Sternbergs were completely separated from their geographical and cultural context. At this moment, one could speak of a traumatic rupture in the lives of the Sternbergs. When, four years later, Betsy returns from Theresienstadt to Frankfurt as a widow, the question presents itself if this wound can be healed. It presents a challenge of restoring broken sense of *Heimat*, of belonging.

This challenge takes on a different form for Betsy compared to her son-in-law Fritz. For Betsy who had been instrumental in creating a home in the *Rothschildallee* and maintaining it for nearly four decades, the *Zwischenraum* in which she finds herself between her departure from the DP camp and her arrival in Frankfurt in June 1945 signals the difficulty of bridging the gap between the place she used to call home and her relocation to this place. As a passenger on an American military bus, in a transitory place, Betsy is not only in a spatial interstice but also experiences a series of flashbacks that take her to different phases of her past, her *Heimat* in the *Rothschildallee*. The memories of these places concentrate on her family life in Frankfurt before



1933, the happiest of her times there. As a chronotope, the bus as a place that travels through the geographical space of Germany is between its starting point and destination. It is an unfixed chronotope reflects the wandering nature of the passengers' thoughts while they travel. Of particular interest are Betsy's thoughts as they oscillate between good memories of her life before deportation and the haunting memories of the camp at *Theresienstadt*

Betsy Sternberg, die dabei war, sich wieder an ihren Familiennamen zu gewöhnen und dass sich Fremde nicht duzten, wie es in Theresienstadt üblich gewesen war, hatte den Eindruck, der Sergeant würde sie anschauen. Einen kurzen, irritierenden Moment hatte sie das Bedürfnis, dem freundlichen jungen Amerikaner zu erzählen, dass sie den Schlager "Don't fence me in" in ihrem ersten Leben gekannt hatte – in einem Leben, in dem es absolut selbstverständlich war, Kaffee aus Mokkatassen zu trinken und Musik zu hören. Der amerikanische Komponist Cole Porter hatte "Don't fence me in" im Jahr 1934 geschrieben. Erwin hatte das Lied geliebt.

"Das braucht keiner zu wissen, Vicky", hörte sich Betsy sagen, "das ist gefährlich.

(*Heimkehr* 60-61)

The good memories by their accumulation over several decades, can serve as a way of reconnecting to Frankfurt as a place of home, even though they are intermingled with memories of danger. As Betsy recalls her conversation with Victoria, who, with her small son Salo, perished in the Holocaust, her second eldest daughter, she speaks to Victoria in the present tense, thus showing the immediacy of the memories.

The closer she gets to her destination the closer she gets to her former identity as Frau Betsy Sternberg from Frankfurt am Main. Betsy must get used to being addressed with her proper name. She's not used to people speaking to her with the formal of "you." This implies

there is also a *Zwischenraum* concerning Betsy's emotional landscape as there is a gap between how she was treated in Theresienstadt and how she is being treated now, after her release.

As a contrasting character to Betsy, her son-in-law Fritz Feuereisen's journey through his personal *Zwischenraum* is not as tumultuous as Betsy's. When one considers that Fritz was neither deported nor in a concentration camp, it is clear that he returns to Frankfurt from a completely different context. This is not to say that Fritz did not suffer or that his life was not in danger, but he was able to maintain more autonomy in his circumstances. First, Fritz Feuereisen made his own decision to leave Germany. Although his life was in danger during his time in Holland, he experienced a different kind of danger than Betsy. In Holland, Fritz would have possibly had more freedom in how he moved about while Betsy was very limited in where and how she could move about. Furthermore, Betsy had knowledge of what would most likely happen to Johann Isidor, Vicky, and the children. Fritz could possibly maintain more hope, as he was more ignorant of what was happening to his family in Germany.

The most significant difference between Betsy and Fritz is that Fritz could still maintain a sense of purpose through finding work:

Der Zivilangestellte der amerikanischen Besatzungsstreitkräfte Friedrich Feuereisen wurde bei seinem Arbeitgeber als staatenloser Dometscher mit 'guten Sprachkenntnissen in Englisch und Niederländisch, fließenden Deutschkenntnissen in Wort und Schrift und abgeschlossenem Jurastudium geführt.' (*Heimkehr* 187)

From the above passage, one can see that Fritz, at points in his exile, could retain and enhance his expertise, for instance by expanding his knowledge of languages with Dutch. The statement that Fritz Feuereisen is written validation from his employer of his profession and the status that he had before he had to flee into exile. The fact that he has been hired by the American

occupying forces validates him as human being, who has something valuable to offer. In a letter to Betsy, he writes about the abundance of *Selbstvertrauen* and *Lebensmut* (*Heimkehr* 188) he has been able to acquire since he started working for the Americans. Another aspect that makes Fritz's transition from refugee to returnee smoother is the access to food and material needs to lead a life with a living standard that was similar to the one he had before the war. In contrast to Betsy, whose pre-Holocaust sense of place was primarily defined through her position in the home and being mother to six children, Fritz Feuereisen more easily connects to his former hometown to the extent that it was mostly a place of his professional achievements. For Betsy, it is matter of being in relationship again with her children and grandchildren.

#### **4.4 A Place of Homecoming: Das Haus in der Rothschildallee**

In the fourth and final novel *Neubeginn in der Rothschildallee*, the surviving Sternbergs return to the family home after 1945 and seek to recover their sense of *Heimat* in terms of the house and in relationships. However, homecoming in the context of survivors returning to Germany was not simple matter. While it is a reunion with dear places and people, traces of this homecoming take on a different dimension when one considers it goes hand-in-hand with confronting neighbors who were complicit with the National Socialist regime and who profited from this complicity through acquiring ownership of your home. Due to the fact that the Sternbergs lost their home through a legal framework in 1939, they must recover it through a different one after 1945.

Reestablishing the house as the Sternberg home happens under the influence of Fritz Feuereisen who as a father figure like Johann Isidor has the knowledge to return the house to Sternberg ownership. From Betsy's perspective, the return of the house to her family is an act of

“re-membering” a lost past: “Unser Haus. Eins Stück von Johann Isidor, ein Stück von mir. Unser Heim. Das, was von der Vergangenheit blieb” (*Heimkehr* 290). Accompanying the restitution of the house are also the material and non-material traces that were part of the Sternberg home: “Unser erster Sonntag daheim“ (*Neubeginn* 7). Emphasizing, it is truly the beginning of a new time for the Sternbergs:

[Betsy] [...] strich die blauweiß karierte Tischdecke glatt, die Anna, ihre geliebte Ziehtochter, zur Wiedereinweihung der alten Wohnung im eigenen Haus aus Küchenhandtüchern und Kissenbezügen genäht hatte. “Wenn mir einer gesagt hätte, ich würde hier sitzen, mit meinem Schwiegersohn und meiner Enkeltochter Fanny über das Gelobte Land reden, echten Bohnenkaffee trinken und zum Fenster rausschauen und unseren alten Kirschbaum sehen, ich hätte kein Wort geglaubt.” (*Neubeginn* 7)

This scene in the kitchen contains some traces that were also present in another kitchen scene in the first novel *Das Haus in der Rothschildallee*. The most noticeable trace that both scenes have in common is the image of Betsy looking out the window, first in 1900 and then in 1948. The character Betsy looking outside the window in 1900 was in harmony with her surroundings and would not have questioned anything about the scene. Betsy in 1948 looks out the same window and is aware of the fact that everything in that scene from the window to the family seated around her table to the coffee can be taken away. The kitchen as a minor chronotope within the house has changed because Betsy has changed. The time form of the ideal that was present in the first novel cannot be recaptured. Instead, there is a form of time that is infused with more knowledge and experience. Another trace is the blue and white tablecloth that was sewn by Anna. Her house-warming present from Anna resembles another house-warming gift given to Betsy by Johann Isidor to commemorate the day, on which they moved into their new house.

Apart from the kitchen, the sunroom, as a refuge, was the one minor chronotope that most reflected Betsy's person:

Die Sonne tauchte den Wintergarten in jenes herbstgoldene Licht, an das sich Betsy in der Hölle von Theresienstadt hatte erinnern müssen. Die großen Fenster des kleinen Raums hatten die Bomben, die die beiden oberen Stockwerke des Hauses zerstört hatten, ohne einen Sprung überstanden. Auch der Kirschbaum im Hinterhof hatte die Feuerbrust überlebt. (*Neubeginn* 14).

Here we have traces that were and are present in 1900 and 1948. The trace of the autumn sunlight filling the room was strong enough that she was able to remember it in Theresienstadt. Even in hell, she could remember that light. That fact that the window did not receive any damage from the bombs that destroyed the third and fourth floors seems to be symbolic of the strength and resilience of the Sternbergs' sense of *Heimat* and place. In both the kitchen and sunroom, Betsy experiences "*Wiedersehensfreude*" (Hermelingmeier 269) with places and people. In the above passages, one sees a restoration of *Heimat* in degrees as traces remind Betsy of the original character of the places and she is with members of her family who were present before the forced departure from the *Rothschildallee* 9. It is especially in the kitchen scene that the reader sees Betsy's joy and skepticism when confronted with the return to and restoration of her home. In other words, the happiness which the survivors experienced in returning to their *Heimat* is tinged with the trauma of the violent events that preceded the reunion with people and places. The emotional intensity that the Sternbergs experienced during the departure is also a characteristic of their return. Both are marked with a "*traumatisches Moment*" (Hermelingmeier 269) and *Heimat* after the rupture can never be restored to its original circumstances, as the

perception of traces and home have been altered through the interim loss of home and life in exile.

One also sees restoration of material and non-material traces at the threshold of the house in the *Rothschildallee* as the Sternberg children return from exile. Concerning the material traces, the front door of the house is restored to its former prominence: “Die Haustür, im Krieg beschädigt, [war] [...] erst seit zwei Monaten in ihrem einstigen Zustand” (*Neubeginn* 32). In this context, the door becomes a metaphor for the continuity of *Heimat* in the *Rothschildallee*, and it also foreshadows the return of the Sternberg children who went into exile during the 1930s. A part of Johann Isidor’s legacy remains in the renovated door with its bold appearance vis-a-vis the understated elegance of the rest of the house. It signals the aspect of boldness; the surviving Sternbergs return to their home and decide to stay in Germany. Furthermore, its material restoration also hints at the restoration of the family.

With the refurbishing of the door, the threshold has also been reestablished. In turn, the chronotope of the threshold, as well, has been put in place again as Erwin, Clara, Claudette, and her daughter Ora arrive from Palestine/Israel in Germany. The act of crossing the threshold into the house is of momentous nature, which overpowers those who watch as the exiles re-enter: “Die Haustür sprengte ihren Rahmen, die Wände stürzten ein” (*Neubeginn* 44). Space at the threshold in the moment of return transforms to reveal the emotional upheaval the Sternbergs experience in this moment of homecoming.

#### 4.5 Chapter Summary

Analysis of *Heimat* in last two novels *Heimkehr in die Rothschildallee* and *Neubeginn in der Rothschildallee* exposes the tenuous character of place from a German Jewish perspective. In these narratives, one sees how an ideology can transform the public sphere into a space of unbridled hostility that eventually encroaches upon the private sphere and in its wake destroys any place of refuge. The dissolution of German-Jewish *Heimat* is analyzed through the transformation of place, as demonstrated in the *Großmarkthalle* and the tenement building. These transformations are connected with human transformations motivated by National Socialist ideology. Only after World War II, as the analysis shows, does one see transformations of place that restore the social and political conditions for a cautious connection to the former German-Jewish *Heimat* and a potential new beginning for the Sternberg family. For them, this restoration of home crystalizes in the chronotope of the house at *Rothschildallee 9*. It is only after political equilibrium has been achieved in the public sphere that the possibility of restoring the private sphere is possible.

Like the *Stolpersteine*, stones with small plaques of biographical data placed into German sidewalks to commemorate German Jews who perished in the Shoah, Zweig's novels memorialize the cultural presence of families such as her own in literary form.

## 5 Preponderance of Place: The Quest for *Heimat* in Jeannine Meerapfel's Film

### *Der deutsche Freund*

Although similar to Zweig's *Rothschildallee* novels in telling a story of *Heimat* from the perspective of two generations, Meerapfel's film *Der deutsche Freund* (2012) begins in the newly found *Heimat* of the exile situation. Consequently, while Meerapfel's film is about establishing a place, its focus on place is not only on Germany but also on Argentina, the country of exile, and primarily from the perspective of the second generation. For example, one sees how the parent generation of the Löwenstein family tries to establish a home for themselves which is similar to the lost *Heimat* of pre-exile life. Their home in Argentina lies in the fashionable suburb of San Isidro, in which Jewish refugee families lived next door to families whose fathers were fugitive Nazis during the 1950s (Bylow). The Löwensteins as members of the upper-middle class, making their living with a small business, choose a means of establishing a home that is similar to that of the Sternbergs in the Zweig novels in that they own a house that speaks of upper-middle class values and status. As parents, especially in an exile situation, the Löwensteins wish to pass their values onto their daughter Sulamit and they are particularly concerned that Sulamit remains within the Jewish community. In spite of this family heritage Sulamit, as a member of the second generation who was already born in her parents' adopted country, has more options and can look beyond the parental boundaries where she meets people that inspire questions and change the course of her life.

In contrast to her parents, Sulamit has other desires and chooses not to be limited to the model, which her parents present to her. The manner in which she chooses to handle her life mirrors a statement made by Meerapfel in an interview from December 2015: "[L]etztlich geht es doch darum, die eigenen Gefühle zu kennen und den selbst gewählten Weg weiterzugehen" (Lewitan). Against her parents' wishes, she becomes acquainted with the Burgs, a German



family that lives across the street from her, and later decides to go to Germany. In this respect, *Der deutsche Freund* is about Sulamit's attempt to find her parents' *Heimat* and then her own in Germany which, however, leads her back to Argentina.

Different from Zweig's novels, where a sense of place is concentrated in one city, one street, and one house, place in Meerapfel's film is more diverse and multifaceted. In the broader narrative of German-Jewish *Heimat*, *Der deutsche Freund* functions as a fifth chapter in that it shows the struggle for home from the perspective of children born in exile. The cinematic narrative picks up issues that Betsy Sternberg's grandchildren might be confronted with.

*Heimat* in the film is depicted from the perspectives of two families, whose children move between Argentina and Germany. At its core, *Der deutsche Freund* "examines the challenges encountered by second-generation Holocaust survivors and addresses the experiences confronting the children of the perpetrators" (Nuriel 107). In this context, the viewer sees how Sulamit and her friend Friedrich Burg try to create places for themselves in Buenos Aires, Frankfurt, Cologne, and Patagonia. Not only do they attempt to create their own places at these different locations but Sulamit and Friedrich must navigate their way through history, both familial and national. Family history is transmitted in the form of "post-memory," which differs from "memory" in that it is of "textual nature [...] [and] relies on images, stories and documents passed down from one generation to the next (Hirsch 11). Post-memory in the form of photographs and jewelry, items that can be easily transported as Sulamit and Friedrich travel between Argentina and Germany, accompanies both protagonists in their pursuit of place.

While Sulamit and Friedrich are in Germany, one sees Sulamit's perspective of German *Heimat* from one who spent her entire life as a German Jew in Argentina. In addition to this perspective, we are also able to see *Heimat* from the position of Friedrich, a non-Jewish German, who confronts the fascist past of his family, especially his father. As they both journey to the

country of their parents, Sulamit and Friedrich want to find their own place between two languages, cultures, and geographies. In addition to these three aspects, they must deal with the burden of their families' histories and they each follow their own path in doing so. Sulamit seeks her place in the study of language and literature while Friedrich wants to make his place in the political fight against fascism. It does not matter to him if this happens in Germany or Argentina. Apart from this difference, they both refuse their parents' views of the world and follow similar trajectories from Argentina to Germany and eventually back to Argentina. This preponderance of place in Meerapfel's film is instrumental in elucidating the struggle for *Heimat* as a struggle for place and relationships.

### **5.1 Buenos Aires: Places of Pretense**

For both the Löwenstein and Burg families, Argentina, more specifically Buenos Aires, should be a place of new beginnings, yet at the same time, it is a continuation of their respective cultural geographies from Germany. However, as the film proceeds, the film narrative discloses how both families keep secrets under the pretense of protecting their children from the burdens of recent historical events that took place in Germany in the 1930s and during World War II. Although it is not to say that the parent generation did not want to protect the next generation, their silence and outright refusal to talk about the past also serve as a means to protect themselves. The silence of the parent generation is emphasized more in the film than in Zweig's novels. In conversations among Sulamit's parents and other relatives, topics of life before the war and of relatives who lost their lives in the Shoah rarely surface. In contrast, the characters in the novels bring up these subjects more frequently; however, unlike the Löwensteins who live in exile, Betsy Sternberg and Fritz Feuereisen in Zweig's tetralogy return to the geographical locus of their *Heimat*. In the context of the *Rothschildallee* narrative, notions of place, although having

suffered ruptures, have more continuity than in the film. This difference between the two narratives points to the power of place. The house in the *Rothschildallee* maintains its anchoring function for the Sternbergs, and when coupled with the fact that Betsy as the Sternberg matriarch survives and returns to her house, it provides a context that is more conducive to addressing the past. The first-generation characters in the film do not return to Germany and, due to the lack of continuity in their geographical locus, face more challenges in addressing aspects of the past. In the following section, one sees how the Burg and Löwenstein houses primarily become chronotopes of pretense in that they do not function as a chronotope of *Heimat* unlike the house in the *Rothschildallee* which, as an anchor of *Heimat* and hope for the Family Sternberg, does not bear the weight of family secrets.

### **5.1.1 Places of Façade: The Löwensteins' and the Burgs' Houses**

The Löwensteins' and the Burgs' houses first appear in an establishing shot at the beginning of Meerapfel's opening sequence in *Der deutsche Freund*. The camera shows two family residences that appear to be well-established homes. In contrast to the first introduction of the Sternbergs' house in Zweig's novels where the structure itself emerges as a chronotope of a *Heimat* being established, we encounter houses in the film whose front entrances attest to an established sense of place through the abundance of green foliage that frames the front gate of each home. Although the houses appear to be similar in these two respects, the camera also shows us various aspects of the shot that reveal their differences and allude to the possible differences that make each home distinct. For example, the front facades of the houses appear to welcome outsiders in varying degrees.

It is important to note that these houses were Friedrich's and Sulamit's childhood homes. Of most significance in the opening shots of their respective houses is the Löwenstein house.

Sulamit's childhood home is important as a chronotope as it reveals the cultural geography of her parents and the context, from which Sulamit comes that later informs her decisions as a young adult. When the Löwenstein house is first introduced, we see a shot of their home that starts from the roof and then drops to the front entrance (*Freund* 4:02-4:06). Architecturally speaking, the style is clearly European with its high-slanted roof, and the house is of generous proportions.

While the viewer sees this shot of the Löwenstein house, one also hears commentary from Sulamit about the family home as she makes a remark about her father building it: "Auch das Haus, das er für uns gebaut hatte, war zu groß und zu teuer" (*Freund* 4:05-4:08). Sulamit makes this statement after she has commented on her father's marzipan factory and the difficulties in selling the finished product because it was too expensive. In this scene, the visual narrative and audio narrative are not taking place simultaneously. The visual narrative shows us Sulamit's childhood in the past while the audio narrative is told to us by an older Sulamit, who has the awareness that all in her home was not as it appeared to be. The voiceover lends her the authority of hindsight to question some of her father's choices in his new home country. The tone of voice in which she addresses the subject of her childhood home does not convey a deep emotional connection to the place. Her emotional attachment to place is located outside this house.

Given the appearance of the house and the father's profession, the spectator learns that the Löwenstein family belongs to the upper-middle class, or, at least, it appears to be the case. However, Sulamit's commentary alerts the viewer to the fact that the home may not be as well established, as it seems to be from the visual aspect of the shot. The voiceover reveals a discrepancy between what is shown as solid and secure and the reality of a precarious financial situation within the home. In this respect, the film echoes the theme of *Schein und Sein* that is present in the analysis of the novels. While Johann Isidor Sternberg does not want the design of

his home to reveal his actual wealth, Herr Löwenstein builds a home that reflects a wealthy lifestyle that he himself cannot maintain financially. Other significant visual aspects of this shot of the Löwenstein house include open windows and an open gate that contrasts with the Burgs' home across from the Löwensteins.

In the establishing shot of the Löwenstein house, the camera focuses on the door from an eye-level angle that is framed by a wooden gate. The house appears to be welcoming due to the warm color tones of the gate that is wide open. No part of the gate obscures the view of the front door of Sulamit's house. While the camera maintains the shot from eye-level, Sulamit enters the scene as she leaves the house with her dog and the family's housekeeper on her way to school. She steps across the threshold of her parents' house, as she does each morning on her way to school, but this routine act takes on more meaning due to the meeting between Sulamit and Friedrich that leads to a life-long friendship. The camera then pans to the left of the shot and from a high angle we see the three walking to the corner. Here, Friedrich first appears and walks through the front gate of his house. In a medium long shot, we see how Sulamit crosses the street towards Friedrich.

In this scene where the young Sulamit ventures across the street, the more mature Sulamit makes the observation that her house "sah ganz ähnlich aus wie das Haus gegenüber" (*Freund* 4:37). At first sight both houses appear to be similar but there are striking differences, especially when one looks at the front gates. Friedrich stands in front of a steel gate that is half-open and partially blocks the path to the front entrance of the house. Unlike the wooden gate of the Löwenstein house, the Burgs have a white steel gate that is taller than Friedrich. In contrast to Sulamit's home, the front door is not visible. Instead one sees three arches framed by large trees. This is indicative of a need for secrecy on the level of Mr. Burg's past in Germany.

This scene at the beginning of the film reveals several telling aspects that inform the relationship between Sulamit and Friedrich. Sulamit moves towards Friedrich. Her moving in his direction is repeated throughout the film. The fact that she must cross the street as a horizontal space is also symbolic of the other spaces she will cross to be with Friedrich. Sulamit crosses the Atlantic when she decides to attend university in Frankfurt and travels across empty landscapes in Patagonia to see him. Furthermore, Sulamit spends more time at Friedrich's childhood home than he does at hers. This tendency on Sulamit's part is representative of her openness toward him as they grow up in Buenos Aires.

### **5.1.2 Places of Imposed *Heimat*: Mr. Löwenstein's and Mr. Burg's Places of Work**

From the Burg and Löwenstein houses, one sees how each family has brought aspects of German architecture from their country of birth into the country of exile. A similar process of transferring traces from Germany to Argentina can be found in how the fathers of Sulamit and Friedrich set up their professional lives. On the one hand, the film presents Herr Löwenstein's professional situation through visual material and Sulamit's narration. Herr Burg's, on the other, is more hidden, insofar as one never learns the exact nature of his professional life in Argentina. Over time in the film, one learns that the Löwensteins must face a lack of money to maintain their lifestyle while it becomes clear that Herr Burg has accumulated financial wealth.

In regard to Herr Löwenstein, the film establishes his place of work both visually and aurally. Through the medium of a black and white home movie, the viewer sees Sulamit, her father, and one of her father's employees in the Löwenstein marzipan factory. The visual of a black and white home movie has a distancing effect and underscores the fact that Sulamit is remembering moments of her childhood with her father. It also shows that father and daughter had a close relationship. In her voiceover, she describes the process of how he manufactures

marzipan with European ingredients such as French almonds: “In seiner Fabrik stellte mein Vater Marzipan nur mit den teuersten und besten Zutaten her” (*Freund* 3:53) The fact that Sulamit’s father chooses to open a marzipan factory provides the viewer with insight into how he tried to establish a place for himself and his family. Firstly, he chooses to make marzipan, which by the mid-fifties would have been integrated into South American cuisine. It was and is a confection that Argentinians used in Christmas cakes. Marzipan is also an ingredient in both Sephardic and Ashkenazic cuisines.

Herr Löwenstein’s decision to produce this sweet meat in his new home was the opportunity to combine his cultural knowledge about the product from a German perspective with a market that was already familiar with it. One could consider this move to be an appropriate decision to establish a livelihood in a new country. He was not introducing a new product since there was already a cultural context for marzipan. Unfortunately, his efforts to produce marzipan in a new geographical and cultural context fail due to the reason that Löwenstein does not consider using ingredients that are indigenous and less expensive in the new context. He insists on using imported French almonds to make the marzipan. While his insistence on using imported European ingredients underscores his adherence to cultural norms of quality, it makes the marzipan too expensive for people to buy. His choice of ingredients is an example of him imposing aspects of his old *Heimat* onto his new one in Argentina. A more economic choice would have been to make marzipan with peanuts that are an indigenous plant in the region. On the one hand, his choice of product is a trace that transfers easily from Europe to South American as far as the cultural context is concerned; on the other hand, the transfer of this trace is not successful in its execution due to Mr. Löwenstein’s inability to separate himself from a cultural manufacturing practice which holds an emotional rather than a business value for him. It is a product integral to German-Jewish cultural geography as visible in many food traditions.

While Herr Löwenstein's profession is clearly represented in Meerapfel's film, the exact nature of Herr Burg's work is not revealed. As for his work situation in Argentina, the viewer only sees his home office, which is decorated with beer steins and dark wooden furniture. The main focus of this room is a large desk, in which papers and photographs are kept in a drawer. One first sees this drawer as Friedrich enters his father's office in search of money, so that he can buy back Sulamit's stolen dog. Looking left to right, Friedrich opens the desk drawer and takes out the 24 Pesos for the return of Sulamit's pet. Considering the fact that the papers and photographs are contained in a drawer is interesting, as a drawer can be opened and shut. Symbolically, it conceals Herr Burg's past profession as an SS officer. The contents of the drawer is well organized, which when brought into relation to photographs and documents from the past speak for a compartmentalization of the past. Contained and organized in a receptacle that can be opened or closed as the father desires, the contents remain hidden from others in the family. Although the drawer is something that hides, it is also something that can reveal when pulled open. As the contents are brought to light, the minor chronotope of the father's office changes from one of the hidden past and secrecy about it to one of a truth revealed.

In crossing the internal threshold from one room into his father's office, Friedrich enters unknowingly a cultural geographical context of a National Socialist past. Friedrich is also the one whose action of opening the drawer changes the parameters of the chronotope. Where Herr Burg as a person and his office are not easily accessible for his children, Herr Löwenstein has a friendly, supportive relationship with his daughter and his workplace was open to her. Herr Löwenstein, in contrast to Friedrich's father, does not hide any physical traces of his past from his daughter. Sulamit's access to her father's room and place of work is more open than Friedrich's. This sense of openness in the father-daughter relationship is also found with the



family home although there are limitations in how open the Löwensteins are when it comes to relationships outside their home and community.

### 5.1.3 A Place of Expectations: Around the Table

What both families in these houses have in common is the need and desire to keep secret from their children some past events and circumstances, which are connected with a place that was *Heimat* for the parents. The Löwensteins and Burgs try to protect their children from the burden of recent history in Germany. Protection for both families comes in the form of maintaining a silence in respect to certain events that occurred before their arrival in Argentina and maintaining this silence is expected. While shielding their children from history is the primary motivation for not discussing life in Germany, another motivation would be avoidance of the children's potential disappointment in their parents' decisions before leaving Germany. Independent of the reasons for the refusal to talk about the German past, the silence will strongly influence their children's futures and inform Friedrich and Sulamit's decisions as they become adults.

As children, Sulamit and Friedrich were not aware of differences between their families that would have otherwise made it more difficult for the two of them to become friends. With this lack of knowledge, these neighbor children are able to get to know each other as individuals before history intercedes and changes their view of their families, themselves, and place and before it interrupts their sense of place, which is rooted in Buenos Aires.

From the exterior of the two homes and the neighborhood, the camera introduces the interior of the Löwensteins' home with a long shot of the family dining room (*Freund* 5:40). In the first moments of the scene, we see the family gathered around the dining table. This is the centerpiece of the shot. However, Meerapfel utilizes a long shot at the beginning of the scene to give the viewer a look at the visual composition of the room. The table and chairs are made of

dark wood with a mid-twentieth century design. They do not reflect any nostalgia, which one would see in *Biedermeier* furniture. For instance, behind the table, one sees shelving in the same dark tone as the furniture. The shelves serve as a space to display silver pitchers, silver coffee pots, and various colored vases that are tastefully arranged. The walls of the room are decorated with framed pictures. In sum, this collection of objects conveys an aesthetic of the upper middle class.

It is here that one may draw a parallel to that modern yet modest aesthetic to which the Sternbergs aspired, when building their house. The same sentiment is present in the Löwenstein's dining room given the modern design of the furniture and the displayed objects. Similar to the Sternbergs, the Löwensteins, at first sight, have nothing that alludes to their Jewish faith. However, if one looks to the side of the shot as the camera dollies in on the table, a menorah appears on the left-hand side. Representative of their Jewish faith, the menorah shows that Judaism is part of their world, their sense of place, but it is not at the center of it. Given the composition of the shot, the dining room appears to be a space that should represent the family's status as upper middle-class. As the camera moves closer to the family, the viewer loses sight of the décor of the room and sees more of Sulamit and her parents. The sitting arrangement of the family also reflects the values of a traditional bourgeois family as the father sits at the head of the table.

Like the objects on the shelves, the three Löwensteins sit in a constellation that can be interpreted as staged, as Herr Löwenstein sits at the head with Sulamit to the right and Frau Löwenstein to the left from the perspective of the camera. The fact that the father sits at the head of the table implies that he is also the head of the family. In accordance with his position at the table, one would expect him to act as the head of the family by taking action in times of distress, such as the abduction of his daughter's beloved pet.

In fact, the atmosphere around the table in this shot seems strangely unemotional when compared with the previous scene, in which a distraught Sulamit runs to her mother, who is working in the kitchen, and pleads her to do something to recover the family dog that was just stolen by two men in a car. By contrast, the scene around the dining room table shows us the family eating their meal in silence, and it is only after Frau Löwenstein's urging that the father addresses the situation. In a hesitant manner, Herr Löwenstein informs his daughter that he has called the police and that they will look into the situation. The father's passivity in this scene is revealed in two aspects. First, he does not take initiative to find a solution for the missing dog. Second, he expects the police to do something about it. His response to the situation does not fulfill the expectations that are associated with his position at the table. His subdued presence at the Löwenstein table in this scene is not so much indicative of his strength as a person, for one must also consider here that he built a house and a company. More likely, it is a reflection of the burden of maintaining a house and a business that exceed his financial resources.

While the first scene in the Löwenstein dining room establishes the social status of the family, the next scene in the same location shows the family at a Hanukkah celebration. Rather than a trace to the side of a shot, the menorah here is at the center of this establishing shot. It is the first scene which explicitly draws attention to the Löwensteins as a Jewish family. The depiction of a holiday serves as a non-material trace in the cultural geography of the home. Furthermore, it brings other expectations to light that are connected to the family.

The camera moves from the menorah to the dining room table at which one sees Sulamit's mother serving coffee to the guests. One of the guests, who appears to be an older family member remarks that Hanukkah is celebrated with children: "Man feiert Hanukkah nicht ohne Kinder." (*Freund* 14:14) From this context, one sees the expectation of and a desire for continuity of family expressed through the celebration of Hanukkah. This expectation and desire

is represented through the constellation of guests from different generations. In this scene, two generations are present at the table, which include the generation of Sulamit's mother and the one that precedes hers represented by her aunts and uncles. It is striking how the film elucidates the collective pretense that the past can be shut out and not discussed. Any hinting at the Holocaust is relegated to a space outside the dining room when Sulamit's aunt Lisa gives her the ring of her deceased great-aunt Sulamit after whom she was named. The separation between past and present is underscored by the fact that Sulamit who would represent the third generation at the table is leaving the house to celebrate Christmas with Friedrich and his family. Sulamit thus carries her own family's past with her in the form of the ring even though the older generation refuses to break the silence and faults the one member, aunt Lisa, for keeping the Holocaust memory alive. The only way the company at the dining room table alludes to the past is by focusing on the fact that the neighboring Burg family is German. Sulamit's mother refers to the "neighbors," with whom her daughter will celebrate Christmas in a subtle undertone that makes it clear to the other guests that Sulamit will be visiting the Germans on this evening. This is not the first time that the film references the antagonistic relationship that the parent generation of the Löwensteins has with the Burg family. It also appears when Sulamit's parents encounter the Burgs outside the family home. Sulamit notices this antagonism but does not fully understand the reasons for it because her parents do not talk about it. The Hanukkah scene shows that the refusal to discuss the past while subtly alluding to it seems to discourage a genuine exchange across the generations. Between the expectations of continuity and remaining silent, a dilemma arises. The presence of children at the table is a sign of continuity, but more pressure may be placed on the children due to the rupture of the Holocaust in their family history without any explanation, as to why this pressure exists.

While the Löwensteins celebrate Hanukkah with lively conversation and *Apfelstrudel*, the Burgs and Sulamit celebrate Christmas with little interpersonal communication. This scene of the Christmas celebration contrasts the two families in how they celebrate and communicate with each other. The first noticeable trace of the Burg's cultural tradition is the Christmas tree, which in this scene stands more as a fixture than a part of the celebration. Equivalent to the tree is the menorah in the Hanukkah scene, which is lit by Sulamit's uncle at the beginning of the scene. The act of lighting of the eighth candle on the menorah underscores the dynamic atmosphere in the Löwenstein dining room that is filled with voices and laughter. The opening shot in both the Hanukkah and Christmas scenes contains the holiday symbol that is most commonly associated with each respective holiday. In the scene at the Löwenstein house, the camera shows the act the menorah candle bin lit that coincides with laughter of guests seated around the table. By contrast, the Burgs' Christmas tree whose candles have not been lit stands in a corner and reflects a seemingly stagnant mood around their coffee table. The Burgs gathered around the table with Sulamit and Horst, another of Friedrich's friends, talk very little with each other. When compared with the Löwenstein household, in which the guests engage in conversation and through their body language are open with each other, the Burgs sit far apart from each other and appear to lack family unity. Instead, Herr Burg takes on a patriarchal role in that he commands the others to start singing *Silent Night*, which is led by Friedrich's mother. One exchange between father and daughter exemplifies how this situation is controlled by the father's desires for a false sense of harmony, which requires everyone's participation, even if one does not want to participate. As they begin to sing, Friedrich's sister Margarete remains silent and with her body language shows that she has no interest in singing along. To force her participation, Herr Burg slaps his daughter on the arm, which forces her to sing Christmas carols. This behavior with his daughter and the manner in which he demands the others to begin with festivities reveal

Herr Burg's desire for a forced harmony that does not give his daughter the freedom to express her feelings about the holiday. She will later succumb under the pressures of the family's past and drown herself in the Tigre River. Sulamit and Friedrich, on the other hand, escape the father's scrutiny by acting as if they were celebrating with the others, but are actually only looking at each other. As their gazes are directed at each other, they are able to shut out the people and activities going on around them. Their expectations of the holiday, in contrast to the father's, are fulfilled in that they only want to be in each other's presence.

## **5.2 Buenos Aires: Places of Tension**

Up until 1938, Argentina allowed between 30, 000 and 45,000 German Jews to enter the country and find refuge (<https://www.dhm.de/lemo>, <http://www.dw.com>). These émigrés arrived in a country that had had a growing Jewish community since the 1800s. Although Argentina remained neutral during World War II, it became a popular escape destination for National Socialists after the end of the war. Under the rule of Juan Peron from 1946 to 1955, 19,000 Germany immigrated to Argentina (Rein 80). As already seen, these two communities often lived in the same Buenos Aires neighborhoods, such as San Isidro to the north of the city. The Löwenstein and Burg households in Meerapfel's film represent a microcosm of social relations between two different German communities. In the 1950s, it was quite common that children of Jewish refugees and fugitive war criminals played with each other (Bylow), unaware of the differences between their parents. This unawareness of the second generation leads to misunderstanding and confusion when they see how the parents behave in the public sphere as Meerapfel describes here in an interview:

Das war schon sehr merkwürdig, weil meine Eltern haben die Eltern von meiner Freundin Monika aus diesem anderen Haus nicht begrüßt, und es war eine große Distanz. Obwohl beide Gemeinden natürlich deutsch sprachen, haben sie unterschiedliche Klubs gehabt, unterschiedliche Schulen gehabt, unterschiedliche Orte, wo sie hingegangen sind.

Abgesehen davon, dass die Juden natürlich in den Tempel, in die Synagoge gegangen sind und die Deutschen in ihre Kirchen. (Tschirner)

All of the places mentioned in Meerapfel's quote are found in the public sphere, but as each community had some institutions of its own, there was little interaction between the two groups. In other words, these German communities led parallel lives where interpersonal contact would only be visible in the in-between spaces such as shared public places, primarily the streets.

Meerapfel shows the viewer the tension in this type of encounter in the public sphere. The children only gradually gain knowledge about the history between these communities that has led to the antipathy they have witnessed. Whether public or private, it does not take long for the parents' history to bleed into the present and the relationships of the second generation.

### **5.2.1 Places of Jewish Community**

In the above quote, Meerapfel comments on how members of these two communities frequented different places but would see each other on the street. In the film, she shows a similar scene between Sulamit's father and Friedrich's parents. Herr Löwenstein and his daughter have driven to a kosher butcher located on a street corner. Across from the butcher, at the opposite corner, one sees a small super market, which is not distinguished by any particular trace. Interestingly, the kosher butcher and super market are placed in the same way as the Burg and Löwenstein houses. In contrast to the houses where there are no visible differences, the two small businesses clearly cater to different cultural groups. The butcher with the Star of David and its Hebrew

name “*Tobit*” (God is good) on its storefront is for the Jewish community while the market on the other side does not target any one particular group. As Herr Löwenstein leaves the butcher, he accidentally runs into Friedrich’s parents. They try to greet him and he ignores them. The lack of acknowledgment and greeting on Löwenstein’s part is representative of the relations between fugitive Nazis and German Jews who came to Argentina as refugees; however, it also reveals the silence that Sulamit experiences when she asks her parents questions. This encounter brings two different types of tension to light. Firstly, the tension between Jewish and non-Jewish émigrés of the first generation, and secondly, the tension between the first and second generations.

Apart from the silence concerning events during World War II, there is a gap in passing cultural knowledge from one generation to the next, as portrayed in the scene at Herr Löwenstein’s funeral in a synagogue. This scene opens with a long shot of the interior of the synagogue that tilts from top to bottom. The spectator first sees Sulamit, her mother, and female family members in the upper gallery of the synagogue. Here one sees how Sulamit is situated generationally; she stands between an older aunt and her mother, who both are able to follow the *Kaddish*. In the depiction of this ritual, one sees that the first generation has failed to pass on cultural knowledge, as Sulamit is not able to follow the prayer. Although her parents expect her to become part of the Jewish community, they do not provide her with information needed to participate in it.

### **5.2.2 Places of Education**

During the first meeting between Sulamit and Friedrich, they are both wearing navy blue school uniforms, which look similar to each other. As with the houses that appear to be *ganz ähnlich* so do their uniforms although they both go to different schools. Friedrich goes to a private German school while Sulamit goes to a French school that is private. Although they differ in language,



both schools are considered to be prestigious and are part of the *Heimat*, which both fathers seek to create for their children. As seen with the houses, both the Löwensteins and the Burgs wanted to establish a home based on European values, which also played a significant role in the schools chosen for their children. Among the characteristics that were most important to the parents when selecting a school was the language. To Sulamit's parents who still lived within traditions of upper-middle class German families, a French school would have been a viable alternative to a German- or Spanish-speaking one.

Although Sulamit's parents may have wanted to choose a good school for their daughter, the prestige of the institution, which their daughter would attend, was a factor, especially for the father. Here, one thinks of the black and white home movie scenes with Sulamit's narration, as she talks about the house that was too large and the marzipan from father's factory that was too expensive. All of these places become chronotopes of a European model of *Heimat*. The private French school is a chronotope of prestige that fits into this constellation. For the Löwensteins, however, this version of "homeland" is not sustainable after the father passes away. With his death, his dream of home also ends, as mother and daughter cannot afford it.

While the viewer sees school life for Sulamit, one does not have the same opportunity to view that side of Friedrich's life in great detail. The only traces one sees of the private German school he attends are his uniform and a brief mention of the school in a conversation with Sulamit. Given that the main locus of German identity is the Burgs' home as represented in the décor of the father's office with its collection of beer steins and its dark heavy furniture, one can surmise that the German identity propagated by Friedrich's school aligns with the father's notion of German identity, as the father is willing to pay the tuition for this private school.

The most prominent material trace of Friedrich's school is his uniform. In most of the scenes where he and Sulamit appear together as children, Friedrich is wearing his uniform. It is,

however, a superficial trace that has very little to do with Friedrich as a person. Superficial in the sense that he only wears the uniform and his identification with the school does not extend much further. In his conversations with Sulamit, neither he nor she brings up their life at school. The school uniform becomes symbolic of a German identity, which does not allow for questions. In those scenes where Friedrich asks questions about the past, he is not wearing a uniform or the uniform jacket, on which there is the insignia of the school. This is evident in a scene when he and Sulamit are with his family in their summerhouse at the Tigre Delta. In this scene, Sulamit discovers a breadbasket that is decorated with a swastika. In embarrassment, Friedrich's mother tears it from Sulamit's hands and places the basket back into the cupboard. Noticing the commotion, Friedrich finds the basket, takes it out to his father, and asks: "Wo kommt das her? Was ist das?" (13:26). In response to his son's questions about the swastika, Herr Burg answers: "Das ist Dekoration... ein Relikt aus anderen Zeiten" (13:38). The father's answer reduces his secret Nazi past to something as superficial as an embellishment that does not deserve further explanation.

The last scene in which one sees Friedrich in his entire uniform he becomes aware that his school does not speak about the topic of fascism. Sitting in a pizzeria with Sulamit who shows him the anti-fascist newspaper printed at her school, he looks at it critically and tells her to be careful. He is aware of political tension and of the fact that criticism, like that in Sulamit's newspaper, could evoke a violent reaction. His warning to her also foreshadows the attack on her by three classmates. In this conversation, he tells her they would never talk about Nazis at his school. A clear parallel emerges in that both the school and Herr Burg do not discuss the past. Both, this educational institution and his father want to maintain an image of German culture that ignores the history of World War II. By the time, the viewer sees how Friedrich confronts his father about his role in NS-regime, Friedrich is no longer wearing his blazer with the school

insignia. In the next scene, Friedrich appears with absolutely no trace of his uniform and has moved out of the family home.

When compared to their parents, Friedrich and Sulamit have more options while they search for their own idea of *Heimat* in German, Jewish, and Argentinian cultural geographies. They, in contrast to the parents, cross the cultural threshold between Germany and Argentina. As a result, Sulamit and Friedrich have more freedom and space to ask questions about their parents' histories. This becomes clear when one observes changes in Friedrich's position in relation to his parents' house. As long as Friedrich remains at his father's house and attends the German school, it will prove to be more difficult for him to find the answers to his questions. The questions he raised as a boy at the Tigre Delta have not yet been answered by the time Friedrich is on the verge of adulthood. Ultimately, it is his search for the answers that leads to his transformation from the boy in the school uniform to the political activist. The film demonstrates this developing consciousness through Friedrich's confrontation with images.

One important moment in this change of direction comes after Sulamit has shown him the anti-fascist newspaper with its picture of a woman's breast upon which a swastika has been carved with a knife. For the rest of their conversation, he is preoccupied as he continues to look at the image. The fact that his gaze is no longer fixed on Sulamit, as it had been in the past signals a deeper reflection about the situation.

Another critical moment for Friedrich occurs after the discovery of his father's former identity in the war. In one camera shot of the father's desk, one sees photographs of the father in his *Waffen-SS* uniform with what appears to be a document with his post-war identity and further documentation with the SS insignia. The material traces of a National Socialist past answer some of Friedrich's questions that his father does not answer. For example, Friedrich asks his father about one of the pictures: "Bist du das?" (25:15) Instead of giving a yes or no answer, Herr Burg

responds: “Das siehst du ja” (25:19). Finally confronted with his past that was kept secret from his children, the father, as in the conversation at the Tigre Delta, continues to avoid answering his son’s questions directly. There are, however, two points where the father is very direct with Friedrich. Herr Burg tells Friedrich to be proud of his father’s role in the war, but also compares his son to being a rat. The comparison of his son to a rat evokes images of anti-Semitic propaganda posters, which often depicted Jews as rats during the NS period. The last question Friedrich asks his father leads to the son being thrown out. In response to the query: “Wie viele Menschen hast du umgebracht?” (25:31) Herr Burg tells his son to get out.

As a result, Friedrich leaves the chronotope of the family home and enters a new one, which bears little similarity to the Burg house. He moves to a poor neighborhood whose cultural geography is far removed from the one, in which he grew up, with its European influence. One sees through several aspects that Friedrich has moved closer to an Argentinian identity. People in the neighborhood call him “Frederico.” He also uses the pronoun “we” when he tells Sulamit that he and the others made the houses rainproof. Another part of his transformation is found in a change of attitude towards Sulamit as he runs ahead of her to his new home. She tries to catch up, but he does not slow down. Moving too fast and not waiting for her become actions that influence the course of their relationship. These actions speak of his obsession with his father’s past and his inability to deal with his relationship with Sulamit.

### 5.3 A Place of Friendship: Friedrich's Attic

The friendship between Sulamit and Friedrich takes root in the moment Sulamit's dog is stolen and Friedrich tries to get it back for her. However, it is the place of the attic in the Burgs' house where the friendship grows and develops into one that survives separations and reconciliations in different places. Shortly after the loss of her dog, Friedrich stands at the front gate and calls her name. Here, he says to her: "Komm, ich zeige dir meinen Lieblingsort" (*Freund* 8:29). He takes her to the attic that is accessible through a back entrance and is situated further away from the main rooms of the Burg house. The position of the room where the two friends meet is significant as it is symbolically speaking relatively far away from both the Burg and Löwenstein families and their secrets. In contrast, to the other places in both houses where family members spend their time, the attic is free of traces that reference the hidden pasts of the parent generation.

As the camera never shows the viewer Friedrich's room, the attic is the closest the viewer gets to see Friedrich's world in his childhood room. One sees a model sailboat, an animal skin rug and a wooden bench. There is also a record player and records, which are the traces in the attic that tell one the most about Friedrich's character as a child. In choosing to play a record of Argentinian music in this one favorite place of his where he feels more freedom than elsewhere, one sees that Friedrich identifies more with the country of exile than with the country of his parents. Spanish music is not the only trace that signifies Friedrich's cultural closeness with the country of exile, but it is also the trace of the Spanish language that he and Sulamit speak when they are together. This language that is not their parents' German functions in the same manner as the place where they meet. Like the attic that is removed from those rooms of the house that are laden with traces of a German past, Spanish is unburdened with history. Spanish for both Sulamit and Friedrich is a kind of *tabula rasa*, onto which they can write their own history. The version of the film that was shown in Germany is dubbed in German and loses the richness of the

original in which both Spanish and German are spoken. The language spoken in the original depends on the constellation of the characters. When Friedrich and Sulamit are together as children, they speak Spanish with each other. The interactions with parents are different where the parents speak German and the children answer in Spanish.

Apart from the music and language that creates bond between them in the first attic scene, there is also their shared gaze, in which Sulamit and Friedrich looks deeply into each other's eyes. This gaze, with which they regard each other, creates a space between them, upon which no one or nothing can intrude. In later scenes of the film, the gaze is a motif that shows up again and creates a space, in which both are protected from their surroundings.

In the second attic scene, the language and place that helps form the bond of friendship between the two take on deeper meaning. German, the language of their parents and family history, does not impede upon this place that Sulamit and Friedrich have made into their own. Spanish as the language of communication becomes the language of poetry. Sulamit and Friedrich read a poem by Borges that becomes a symbol of their friendship throughout the film: "In den Ruinen eines schweigsamen Palastes, die Erinnerung, suche ich dich. Und hinter Mauern und Spinnweben des Gedächtnisses finde ich dich, und alles ändert sich, die Orte und die Dinge" (10:35-10:48). While the key that Friedrich gives Sulamit to access the attic is a token of their friendship, the Borges poem represents the key to their situation. It symbolizes the ruins of their parents' past and the silence about it that they need to penetrate in order to find the truth and position themselves in relation to it and each other.

Another key scene in the attic after Sulamit's father has died reveals Friedrich's willingness to reach out to Sulamit in her grief as well as a pattern of friendship that is visible throughout their childhood. A sign that says "Siempre estarar juntos" (will always be together) (17:20) hangs on the wall behind the children and foreshadows that the friendship will last a

lifetime. As children, Friedrich pursues the friendship with Sulamit as long as he is not faced with his father's past. The attic becomes a chronotope of childhood friendship in which idyllic time plays a significant role. With an increased awareness of family histories, idyllic time as a form of time cannot be maintained, and the attic becomes an almost forgotten place in the relationship between Sulamit and Friedrich. Sulamit's emotional attachment to the attic is stronger than to her childhood home. While returning to the old neighborhood during a visit to Argentina, Sulamit who by this time lives in Germany pays more attention to the attic than to her former house.

In the final attic scene, one sees a place that is stripped of any traces that remind one of Friedrich. The wooden bench is still in its original place, but the sailboat, the record player, and animal skin rug are gone. One sees the rug crumpled up in a corner. It appears that all of Friedrich's traces were removed in an attempt to erase any memory of him. Most telling of the changes in this place is the wall that stands where the door once stood. Herr Burg had the wall put in after Friedrich had been arrested and sent to prison for anti-regime activities. With the erection of the wall, he created a barrier that speaks of permanent separation between father and son. The wall also symbolizes a barrier between Sulamit and Friedrich. Like his father, Friedrich also erected barriers around the emotions he has for Sulamit. Although she still has the key, she is not able to enter certain places in his life.

#### **5.4 Argentina and Germany: Places of Negotiation**

In the beginning of the film, Sulamit and Friedrich have no need to negotiate their sense of place as they, for the most part, move within a common cultural geography filled with traces from Argentina. After they have become aware of their parents' secrets, Sulamit and Friedrich journey

to Germany to seek the truth and experience their parents' culture. For Friedrich, it is much more of a burden to lift the veil of secrecy that was put in place by his parents when they changed the family name upon immigration to Argentina. In comparison, Sulamit is more concerned with discovering her parents' language as shown through her decision to study literature. Having grown up between two cultures, both Sulamit and Friedrich experience difficulties in establishing a place a *Heimat*.

#### **5.4.1 A Place of Becoming: The Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main**

After the discovery of traces of his father's Nazi past, Friedrich takes on a narrow perspective of place that loses sight of the common cultural geography that he and Sulamit share. Those other traces, such as the conversations with her and the poetry in their common language Spanish, drop into the background. Instead his perspective becomes littered with the traces of his father's past which influences his choice of place and pursuit of politics. While both Friedrich and Sulamit leave Argentina for Germany on scholarships to study at the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main, Friedrich concentrates on political science and Sulamit prioritizes literature and language. The pursuit of academic studies is for Friedrich a pretense as he searches for the truth about the Burg family during the Second World War. As for Sulamit, it is not so easy to determine the reasons for her decision to go to Germany. On the one hand, one could believe that she wanted to follow Friedrich. However, on the other hand, Sulamit decides to go to Germany to pursue her interests. Her studies present a means to discover the former *Heimat* of her parents through the language and its literature. Apart from that, Germany provides another cultural geography in which Sulamit and Friedrich can lay their own traces and create a new place for themselves.



Sulamit's arrival at the Frankfurt airport is a chronotope in that she crosses a figurative threshold into a new cultural geography and into a new life as a student. The temporal aspects involved consist of more than one form of time, momentous for Sulamit because she enters the country her parents originated from, thus entering a place and its past that her parents kept silent about.. In addition to momentous time, everyday time comprises another temporal aspect of this meeting; however, it is a form of time that is attached to Friedrich's movements. What for Sulamit amounts to a momentous occasion is for Friedrich a stop on his way to a political meeting with friends. Delineation of the different forms of time in this chronotope reveals a pattern in that Friedrich prioritizes his political activities over the relationship with Sulamit. This impacts their choice of place and the future of the relationship between Sulamit and Friedrich.

One could also say that Friedrich refuses to create a common cultural geography with Sulamit, which would be defined not so much by material traces, but by non-material traces, such as conversations about their relationship and time spent together, their own everyday time. Under these circumstances, the study of literature and languages offers the possibility for Sulamit to develop her sense of belonging.

In the endeavor they each are caught up in, their respective rooms play a role as a place of belonging. Each room, as a cultural geographical context, is defined primarily through material traces. For example, Sulamit enters a dorm room, in which there are hardly any traces. Only furnished with the necessities for student's life, the room is for Sulamit, at first, a space that, on the one hand, mirrors the new phase in her life. But, on the other hand, it will soon be filled with her material traces, books and photographs, thus making the room into her own place representing Sulamit's own personal cultural geography is similar to her new life as a student in Germany that will be eventually replete with new experiences from her studies.

Friedrich's room in his shared apartment exhibits an abundance of material traces of South American politics. The interior decoration of his room reflects his preoccupation, how he has filled his life with politics. Sulamit points out a potentially destructive element in his interest when he shows her a picture of his father with the blood group tattoo of the *Waffen-SS*. In contrast to Friedrich, she does not allow the past to consume her. Within the context of his life, Sulamit tries to establish a place for herself attending political meetings where he is also to be found, but she stands at the margins of the activity. Although the camera work in these scenes establishes that it is politics that stands in the way of their relationship, the camera perspective does not make light of his desire for political change as the political problems of the time are substantiated by documentary film material of student demonstrations that were taking place in Frankfurt in 1968. Actual film footage from the students' protests also motivates Friedrich to leave Germany and return to Argentina to fight against the military dictatorship and for political change there. Friedrich in this moment believes he is not German, but Argentinian. The film signifies his break with everyday time by showing him destroy traces of his political engagement in Frankfurt. The fact that he also throws away a volume of Borges poetry signals a loss of interest in creating a private place through literature.

#### **5.4.2 In Transit between Cultural Geographies**

With the departure of Friedrich, Sulamit must define her sense of belonging in Germany through her studies of literatures and languages. By establishing a relationship with Michael, a professor of literature who contrasts considerably with Friedrich offering Sulamit his undivided attention, she feels very secure, however, primarily in his sense of place. For these reasons, the relationship allows her to develop emotional and material security. While in the relationship with Michael, he takes care of her financially and also helps her get a teaching position at the university.

Moving into Michael's apartment means that Sulamit moves into a place which has already been established. It is Michael's *Heimat* filled with material traces that reflect an educated, upper middle-class lifestyle. His concept of home is similar to that of her parents before her father died. While one could say that Michael's traces dominate the cultural geography of the Cologne apartment, Sulamit has the opportunity to integrate her own traces into this cultural geography, but refuses to unpack her suitcases and boxes. In part, the pursuit of her studies provides her a sense of place and security, but it does not bring her the sense of belonging, which she so closely identifies with her relationship to Friedrich.

The film demonstrates Sulamit's position between two cultural geographies through her two visits to Argentina. Visiting Friedrich in prison in Patagonia where he was sent after his rebel group had been caught, she, ironically, connects with him through the medium of literature which he had rejected before joining the revolutionaries in Argentina.. The volume of Celan poetry she bribes the guard to give to Friedrich contains a poem that links with the Borges poem of their youth.

In one scene, Friedrich recites the Celan poem "*Mit wechselndem Schlüssel*" aloud to himself as he memorizes it which indicates the importance of it to him:

Mit wechselndem Schlüssel  
 schließt du das Haus auf, darin  
 der Schnee des Verschwiegenen treibt.  
 Je nach dem Blut, das dir quillt  
 aus Aug oder Mund oder Ohr,  
 wechselt dein Schlüssel.  
 Wechselt dein Schlüssel, wechselt das Wort,  
 das treiben darf mit den Flocken.

Je nach dem Wind, der dich fortstößt,

ballt um das Wort sich der Schnee. (*Freund* 120:08-120:42)

Not only does the title echo the gift of the key that Friedrich gave Sulamit when they were children but the poem also reflects a heightened awareness of the silenced past compared to the Borges poem he had shared with Sulamit. While the Borges poem expresses a search in view of silence, the Celan text exposes something that was intentionally muted, but can be accessed through the key of painful remembering and formulated in words. For Friedrich, the poem opens a space in his emotions from which he can communicate with Sulamit after his release from prison and offer her a place of *Heimat* in Patagonia. Even before Friedrich receives the Celan book from Sulamit, Celan is part of the cultural geography of the film narrative as two significant females in Friedrich's life, Sulamit and his sister Margarete, bear the names of the female characters in Celan's poem *Todesfuge*. In the poem Margarete survives Sulamit whereas in the film Sulamit outlives Margarete who takes her own life, succumbing to the burden of her family's history. In the film, Sulamit's agency in the struggle for *Heimat* is more robust than Margarete's.

Sulamit's second visit, this time after Friedrich's release, shows the complexity of the quest for *Heimat*. The place itself is very different with its empty, vast landscape indicating that Patagonia is empty of the historical traces that littered the cultural geography of his childhood home after learning of his father's history in the Third Reich. Additionally, Friedrich has undergone changes because he is no longer a prisoner of his father's past. This is reflected in the house he chose to build as his new home. From its architecture, the new house resembles his family's country house with its European-style architecture in the Tigre Delta. His choice of architecture shows that Friedrich is able to integrate aspects of his family history into his new life. This also indicates that Friedrich has the peace of mind to talk with Sulamit about their

relationship. In the last scene, Friedrich and Sulamit have journeyed to the “House of Condors,” a high plateau from which they can observe the birds flying around in circles. Like the attic, it is elevated and further away from the traces of their parents’ history. Although Friedrich, in the meantime, seems to have found a place through his work with the indigenous people of Patagonia, this sense of place is called into question by the film’s concluding exchange when Sulamit asks: “Gehst du mit mir?” to which Friedrich responds: “Bleibst du hier?” (*Freund* 1:35). This open ending emphasizes the challenge for the second generation in coming to terms with the issue of *Heimat*.

### 5.5 Chapter Summary

Meerapfel depicts the search for place from a dual perspective, which includes that of a refugee German Jewish family and a family whose father is a fugitive Nazi criminal. Her narrative, in contrast to Zweig’s, is set in two cultural geographies, Argentina and Germany. *Der deutsche Freund* illustrates that the struggle for *Heimat* was not only difficult for second-generation survivors but for children of the perpetrators as well. In this way, Meerapfel’s film grapples with the question of *Heimat* for all members of the postwar generation.

In the country of exile, Argentina, a type of *Heimat* has already been established by the first generation, the immigrants. The *Heimat* that was built by this first generation in Argentina reflects their bourgeois values and sets up a certain trajectory which the children should follow. Confronted with the pretense, secrets, and silence of their parents, they seek to uncover the culture of their parents and carve out their own sense of place outside of the trajectory established for them. As a result, the second-generation that was born in exile, Sulamit and Friedrich, must find their own place between two different cultural geographies. Meerapfel’s film offers an open ending which indicates the challenge and complexity of the quest for *Heimat*.

## 6 Conclusion

As authors of the second-generation of Holocaust survivors, Stefanie Zweig and Jeanine Meerapfel offer different narratives depicting the quest for *Heimat* in the context of German-Jewish geographies. They follow narrative strategies that one sees in other works of the second generation. Most of the authors either fill in the gaps of the history of their families and of the Jewish presence in German culture left behind by the rupture of the Holocaust or remain silent concerning the trauma of losing *Heimat*. This dissertation shows how both Zweig and Meerapfel try to fill both gaps of history in different ways that contribute to establishing a more tangible sense of place. Zweig pursues a project through which she establishes a place for a German-Jewish narrative as a solid part within a broader German cultural narrative while Meerapfel seeks to create a *Heimat* in which place but also relationships play a significant role for those who choose to live between two different cultural geographies. Despite their differences, the chronotope of the house emerges as a marker in their narratives for the desired permanence of *Heimat*.

In Zweig's tetralogy of the *Rothschildallee* novels, the values of *Bildungsbürgertum* form the center of German-Jewish *Heimat*. The Sternbergs, as a representative family in Zweig's novels, establish their *Heimat* on the values of *Bildungsbürgertum* which shaped three generations of their family. With a trajectory from 1900 to 1948, Zweig demonstrates the challenges experienced in establishing, losing, and restoring a place that embodies German-Jewish *Heimat* and which had been made possible through a combination of factors. The social climate after emancipation in 1871 gave German Jews the confidence to pursue their idea of *Heimat* as full German citizens. Guided by the values of *Bildungsbürgertum* the Sternbergs built a home in the *Rothschildallee* and raised two generations which provided them with a strong sense of *Heimat*. The manner in which the house was built and designed mirrors the way German

Jews at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had to navigate their quest for *Heimat*: modest on the outside and lavish inside. Throughout the novels, the house becomes a chronotope of *Heimat* that serves as an anchor for the family when faced with the most horrific developments in the public sphere. It maintains a private sphere for German-Jewish traditions in the face of many obstacles to the endeavor of unquestioned public acceptance. Carving out a place for themselves in German society was about identifying niches in which the Sternbergs could be both German and Jewish. One sees this in Johann Isidor's choice of businesses, which would have an appeal to the general public. Another decision on his part that reflects his caution towards any decision pertaining to the public sphere was his choice of Baden-Baden as a holiday destination for his family because it was known as a place that was more accepting of Jews.

Public acceptance, as an essential element in the creation of *Heimat*, appeared to be achievable after the outbreak of World War I through various types of participation: by having a son fight for the *Vaterland* and by helping in the war effort on a business level. In spite of the optimism generated by the Sternbergs' achievements, Zweig emphasizes that German-Jewish *Heimat* is still confronted with certain limitations. Despite the sacrifice of his oldest son who fell in the war, Johann Isidor is not allowed to participate with his businesses in the war effort. Furthermore, it was with the introduction of the *Juden zählung* (Jewish census) of October 1916, a census that counted the number of German-Jewish soldiers who were fighting during World War I, that Johann Isidor recognized the impossibility of full acceptance in German society. In spite of the obstacles placed in his way while pursuing this project, he held on to the decision to maintain his version of *Heimat* under these circumstances.

While the house remains the major chronotope of *Heimat* throughout Zweig's tetralogy, the threshold of the Sternberg home becomes a significant chronotope for the Sternberg children who cross it in their quest to find their own places of belonging. It is the chronotope at which one

sees how the second generation struggles to define their lives in relation to their parents' values and their own desires. While all Sternberg children venture into the public sphere and later return home, each child's crossing of this boundary between the personal and public sphere reflects the values and wishes specific to each character with the exception of Otto, the eldest son. Otto, in accordance with his father's wishes, traverses this ground with the desire to achieve a sense of belonging in Imperial Germany and never returns. Erwin and Clara desire a place in which their intellect and pursuit of a lifestyle outside bourgeois parameters can unfold. Each of them accomplishes this goal in their own way. The youngest child Alice must step across the family threshold in order to survive and establishes a new *Heimat* in exile abroad.

Victoria and Anna are the two daughters who come closest to following the patriarchal model promoted by their parents. Victoria recovers from the trauma of her Berlin trip and decides to live a bourgeois life that meets all of her parents' expectations. Following in the steps of her parents does not bring her fulfillment. In contrast to the other children, Anna crosses the threshold from the outside to the inside of the Sternberg home in order to attain a place of home after losing her mother, since she was the child from Johann Isidor's extramarital relationship with a Christian employee. Anna's ease of mobility between German-Jewish and German spheres indicates a sense of belonging and *Heimat* in which there is no rupture between these spheres. What is natural for her appears to be shown as a model for German-Jewish *Heimat*. Furthermore, the agility with which Anna crosses the threshold speaks for her robust sense of *Heimat* that becomes apparent in her courageous actions when faced with the increasingly difficult circumstances of life under National Socialism.

As in the novels, the threshold in *Der deutsche Freund* marks the place between home and society; however, this chronotope appears at multiple places in Meerapfel's narrative. In contrast to Zweig's novels where a single threshold serves as the gateway to *Heimat*, the film



shows a preponderance of places with cultural thresholds that serve as transitions to the *Heimat* found in the relationship between Sulamit and Friedrich. In addition to the representation of physical thresholds in both the novels and films, figurative ones in the form of experiences and national boundaries exist and inform the narratives of the struggle for *Heimat*.

Apart from chronotopes found in the domestic sphere, others which are located in the public sphere often undergo transformations in response to changes in the balance of political power. Frankfurt's *Großmarkthalle* changes from a wholesale market into the point of the deportation where Jewish people are no longer treated like human beings and are herded onto trains. Transformations of public places under the NS-regime coincide with the National Socialist redefinition of who is human. The transformation of the *Großmarkthalle* is indicative of the larger changes in the public sphere at the time which eventually destroys the private sphere for German Jews, as demonstrated, when the Sternbergs are evicted from their home. After the end of the NS-dictatorship, one sees in the last novel of the tetralogy that restoration of *Heimat* is possible centered on the house in the *Rothschildallee*.

Meerapfel's film *Der deutsche Freund* also portrays a quest for *Heimat* using the chronotope of the house. Unlike Zweig, she depicts the search for place from a dual perspective, which includes that of a refugee German Jewish family and a family whose father is a fugitive Nazi criminal. Her narrative, in contrast to Zweig's, is set in two cultural geographies, Argentina and Germany. In the country of exile, Argentina, a type of *Heimat* has already been established by the first generation. This *Heimat* reflects the bourgeois values and sets up a certain trajectory which the children should follow. In opposition to the house in the *Rothschildallee*, the houses in the film are ambiguous chronotopes of *Heimat* as they fall under the weight of pretense, silence, and secrets. Under these circumstances, the children of both families must seek their own place

outside of the trajectory given to them by their parents. As a result, the second generation, Sulamit and Friedrich, must find their own place between two different cultural geographies.

This analysis contributes to the study of *Heimat* from a German-Jewish perspective and points to developments in German-Jewish literature that have again become part of scholarly discourse in post-World War II literature and cinema. Zweig's novels commemorate the German-Jewish *Bildungsbürgertum* and its role in the larger narrative of the German bourgeoisie. Meerapfel's film treats the pursuit of a German-Jewish *Heimat* as one strand of a much broader story about the post-war quest for a home in countries like Germany and Argentina faced with the aftermath of exile and war crimes. Finally, this dissertation demonstrates how second-generation authors like Stefanie Zweig and Jeanine Meerapfel reveal the complexities faced by German Jews in their quest for *Heimat and* thereby expand German cultural narrative of the role of place and belonging.

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