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# An Architecture for Modern Nerves: Josef Hoffmann's Purkersdorf Sanatorium

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The photograph depicts the interior of a white room (Figure 1). At the back of the room are white partitions which form individual units, probably containing baths, each concealed by a simple white curtain. The ceiling is supported by square beams, from one of which hangs a large electric lamp; the floor is covered with narrow wooden boards with gaps between them to collect the water from patients' wet feet.

But what the photographer seems to have been most interested in capturing is the strange, throne-like object in the center of the image. It is a sort of chair, with miniature bathtubs in the place of armrests and footstool. The bathtubs are wired and hooked up to a cabinet full of dials and monitors. This mechanism looks to us like a strange kind of electric chair, and indeed that is what it is, except that it was built not to execute but to heal its occupier. It is an apparatus for the hydroelectrotherapeutic healing of disorders of the nervous system, including neurasthenia, depression, and hysteria.

The photograph I have described was originally published in the November 1906 issue of the journal *Innen-Dekoration: illustrierte kunstgewerbliche Zeitschrift für den gesamten inneren Ausbau*. Why was a photograph featuring the latest in electrotherapy instruments included in a journal devoted to modern interior design? The most obvious reason is that the interior depicted was that of the bath facilities of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium, the latest architectural project of Josef Hoffmann and the Wiener Werkstätte, newly erected in the Vienna Woods, near the town of Purkersdorf, just outside of Vienna (Figure 2). But the image's focus on the electrotherapeutic chair—which was not designed by Hoffmann and the Wiener Werkstätte—remains puzzling. In this paper I will discuss the complex and previously unexplored significance of the fact that Hoffmann's famous protomodernist building was built to house a sanatorium dedicated to the treatment of nervous ailments.

The redemptive social goals of modern architecture from William Morris to Le Corbusier are well known. The power of architecture to change people and society for the better could be asserted using medical metaphors: modern architecture, it was proclaimed, could heal a sick society. Le Corbusier's

statement of 1933 is an example: "On the day when contemporary society, at present so sick, has become properly aware that only architecture . . . can provide the exact prescription for its ills, then the time will have come for the great machine to be put in motion."<sup>1</sup> In Le Corbusier's formulation, the equation of architecture with the healer is elided with the more familiar Corbusian metaphor "architecture-as-machine": modern architecture will heal society and will do so not through mysterious artistic or mystical means, but with an "exact prescription," with the scientific precision of machine technology.

This, I believe, is the message of the photograph from *Innen-Dekoration* with which I began. The electrotherapeutic chair represents the empirically provable curative properties of the modern building in which it stands. The sanatorium building did not just symbolize healthiness; it was itself a tool in the scientific treatment of nervous ailments. And as I will show, this function extended beyond the treatment of a finite number of patients with specific illnesses (as would be the case in, for example, a tuberculosis sanatorium). According to the medical theories embraced at Purkersdorf, the modern city dweller was inherently vulnerable to the affliction of nervous ailments such as neurasthenia. Sanatoriums for nervous ailments were seen by their proponents, therefore, not just as specialized private hospitals, but as tools in the project of saving society from itself.

Around 1900, as the foundations of the study of neuroses shifted and the ambiguities of the psychological began to undermine the sureties of the physical, the role of the sanatorium became more complex. The doctors at Purkersdorf (and most doctors in the field of psychiatry at the time) practiced under the presumption that nervous ailments were fundamentally physical, somatic problems. Of course the Viennese psychiatrist we remember from this period, Sigmund Freud, became famous for rejecting this presumption and positing a psychological etiology for neuroses. When we look closely at the treatises of Krafft-Ebing and other proponents of the somatic school of psychiatric thought, we do see a grudging acknowledgment of the role of psychological factors in neuroses. But at a place like the Purkersdorf Sanatorium, the complexities of human psychology were, upon being acknowl-

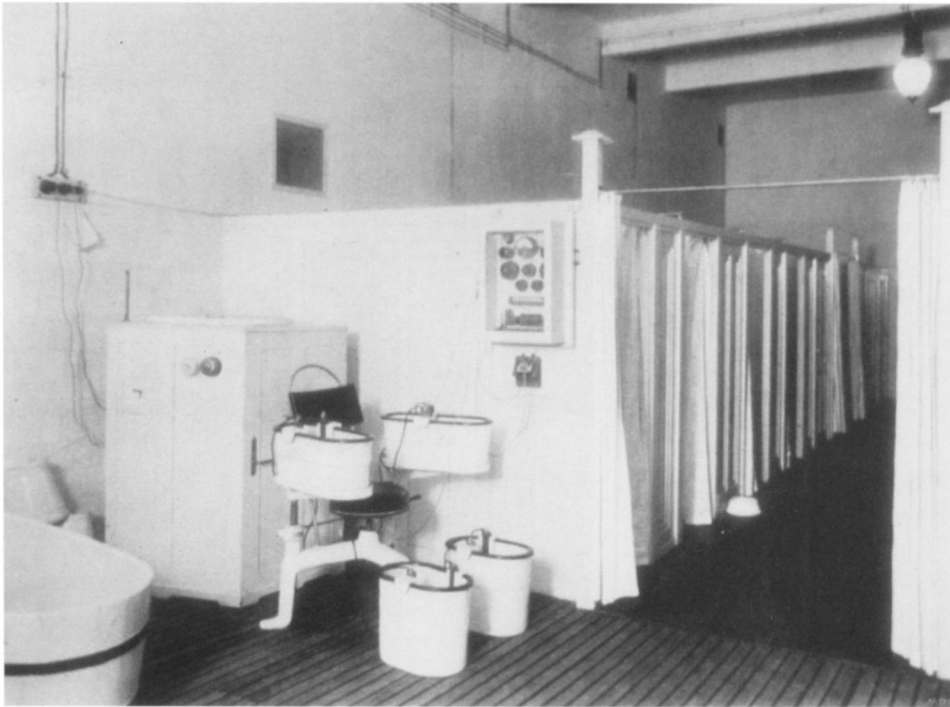


FIGURE 1: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, bath-therapy room

edged, both repressed in favor of constant appeals to the somatic, and regimented in efforts at psychological “reeducation.” Indeed, the Purkersdorf Sanatorium can be seen as a kind of bulwark against the threatening ambiguities of Freud’s

theories. From this perspective, the scientific truths on which the curative properties of Hoffmann’s building were supposedly based turn out on closer examination not to be given a priori but constructed within the self-contained, isolated labo-

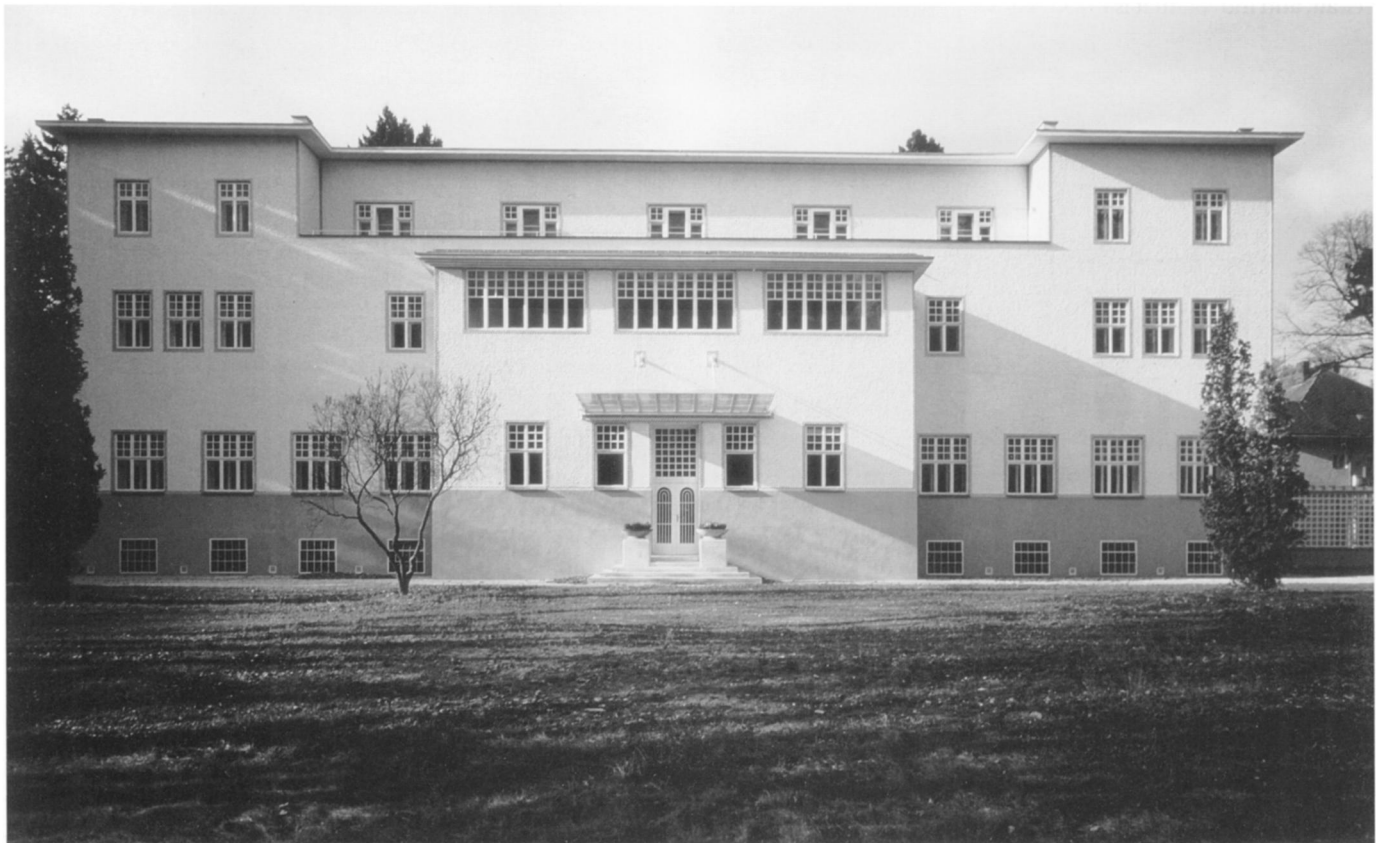


FIGURE 2: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, restored 1995, view from the east

ratory that was the sanatorium. Hoffmann's building, then, becomes not just a tool in the physical cure but a device meant to convince the patient that the cure worked.

#### **RICHARD VON KRAFFT-EBING AND THE PURKERSDORF SANATORIUM**

The Purkersdorf Sanatorium was founded around 1890 by Richard von Krafft-Ebing and Anton Löw as a sanatorium for nervous ailments.<sup>2</sup> As the research of the medical historian Edward Shorter has shown, many such institutions sprang up in Central Europe in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Sanatoriums were private residential clinics usually located in rural settings, to which patients admitted themselves for long stays in order to undergo various types of cures, for the most part involving organic therapy, such as dietary regimes, massage, bath and exercise regimes, sun and air cures, and bed rest. The nervous ailments treated at Purkersdorf included neurasthenia, depression, and hypochondria.<sup>4</sup> As was usual for "nervous" sanatoriums and clinics, "mental illnesses" were strictly excluded; in effect, this meant the exclusion of any patients who would not voluntarily obey the doctors.<sup>5</sup>

The fact that Krafft-Ebing was involved in the founding of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium (and that his methods were still being used there in 1911) is important, for Krafft-Ebing was an extremely prominent figure in Austrian psychiatry, a prolific writer of treatises on nervous disorders, and a strong proponent of the establishment of sanatoriums dedicated to the treatment of nervous ailments.<sup>6</sup> Krafft-Ebing, who lived from 1840 to 1902, has come down to us as the author of the book *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886), in which he coined the term "masochism."<sup>7</sup> His book entitled *Über gesunde und kranke Nerven* (On healthy and diseased nerves), which was published in 1885, gives us a sense of his goals in the establishment of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium and more generally of his theory of the operation of the psyche and of the role of environment in mental health.<sup>8</sup> This book focuses on nervous ailments, such as depression, hysteria, and hypochondria, which Krafft-Ebing distinguishes from more serious and permanent mental illnesses. In Krafft-Ebing's system, the nervous ailment is viewed in mechanical terms; it occurs when a person's reserve of nervous strength is overtaxed by the nervous stimulation to which he or she is subjected. Nervous overstimulation can be caused by sexual excitement, alcohol, and caffeine, and the anxieties and unhygienic conditions of life in the big city—indeed, Krafft-Ebing begins his book with a chapter entitled "our nervous age," in which he groups all of these harmful stimulants into the category of the stresses of modern urban life.<sup>9</sup> In Krafft-Ebing's view, the typical modern individual is almost by definition a nervous case, constantly buffeted as he or she is by fears of "epidemics, revolutions, stock market

crashes, wars, socialism and other awful things."<sup>10</sup> If people appear to enjoy the stimulations of urban life, it is because they are trapped in a vicious circle of nervous overstimulation: the more they are stimulated, the more they crave stimulation, such as that provided by alcohol, caffeine, and sex. Nervous disease finds fertile ground in the city because its inhabitants' organisms are constantly weakened by, among other factors, the unhygienic design of living, leisure, and work spaces. For Krafft-Ebing, this is mainly a question of lack of fresh air. Many people spend their days in unventilated factories and offices; others are exposed to the dangers of bad air in bars, theaters and concert halls; and in the homes of the educated classes, the largest, airiest spaces are given over to the display of wealth and taste, while the family actually has to live and sleep in small, stuffy, minor rooms. The lack of fresh air leads to a general sapping of nervous reserves, making people more vulnerable to nervous disease.<sup>11</sup> But hope exists for modern man: medical science, having diagnosed his illness, can prescribe the cure. A happy society will result from a healthy lifestyle, which will be possible when the old, harmful, chaotic environment is replaced with new surroundings characterized by a regulated simplicity, and planned in every detail according to the recommendations of medical science.

Krafft-Ebing's theories about the nature and causes of nervous ailments were not original at the time. They should be seen in the context of a set of beliefs and practices regarding the nervous system and its diseases which were widely accepted in Europe and America from the mid-nineteenth century until the first decades of the twentieth. Many of Krafft-Ebing's main ideas about the etiology and form of nervous ailments were derived from the work of the American neurologist George Beard (1839–1883).<sup>12</sup> Beard's theories, as described by the medical historian Charles Rosenberg, exemplify the way in which nineteenth-century psychiatry simultaneously stressed the importance of environmental factors in the origins of neuroses and insisted on the somatic, nonpsychological nature of those neuroses.<sup>13</sup> Beard was responsible for "discovering" and naming neurasthenia, or nervous exhaustion, a disease which encompassed a huge range of amorphous symptoms, including "morbid anxiety, unaccountable fatigue, irrational fears, . . . [and] erratic sexual behavior."<sup>14</sup> Whereas many in the medical profession may have tended to dismiss such symptoms as imaginary, Beard sought to give them (and the new field of the study of nervous ailments) legitimacy by asserting that they all had a common physical root as manifestations of a disease which could be observed and treated through rational scientific means. Beard wrote: "Nervousness is a physical not a mental state, and its phenomena do not come from emotional excess or excitability."<sup>15</sup> Undaunted by the fact that he could not provide empirical evidence of the

somatic roots of neurasthenia, Beard borrowed from physics, neurophysiology, and technology to construct “a mechanistic model explaining the pathology of nervous exhaustion.”<sup>16</sup> As Krafft-Ebing would later, Beard held that each person was born with a certain amount of nervous force; when the external demands on a person’s nerves exceeded that amount, nervous exhaustion, or neurasthenia, would result.<sup>17</sup> The model of the nervous system on which this pathology is based is described thus by Rosenberg: “The nervous system . . . was a closed and continuous channel. A fixed quantity of nervous force, assumed to be electrical in nature, filled and coursed through this channel. It is this nervous force which carried messages from one part of the body to another, from the brain to the various organs, and, in addition, served as the raw material of conscious thought.”<sup>18</sup>

Krafft-Ebing’s identification of modern civilization and life in the metropolis as major contributing factors to nervous disease in the late nineteenth century was also presaged in Beard’s theories. For Beard, as for Krafft-Ebing, there was no contradiction in asserting simultaneously that nervous ailments were physical diseases and that they could be caused by nonphysical environmental or social factors.<sup>19</sup> In the systems put forward by Beard and Krafft-Ebing, stimulation, whether sensory or intellectual, was converted into a nervous (i.e., physical) impulse. Life in the big city provided so much stimulation that the result for many was nervous overload, just as if too many lamps were added to an electrical circuit. Krafft-Ebing, it should be noted, departed from Beard in embracing psychotherapy for nervous disorders. But the two main purposes of Krafft-Ebing’s psychotherapy were, first, to inspire confidence in patients by assuring them that they were suffering from a “real,” physical disease (that their suffering was not “all in their heads”) and, second, to encourage the submission of the patients as the doctor subjected them to a therapeutic program that encompassed every aspect of their lives.<sup>20</sup> I will come back to the significance of Krafft-Ebing’s embrace of psychotherapy.

The goal of the treatment of nervous ailments as described in Krafft-Ebing’s *Über gesunde und kranke Nerven* was to achieve nervous equilibrium through the strengthening of the patient and especially through the regulation of external stimuli. The former would be accomplished through physical therapy such as massage, baths, sun and fresh air cures, and the application of electricity. The latter meant the removal of the patient from his or her normal (harmful) surroundings, and the subjection of all aspects of his or her daily life (from sleep, diet, exercise, and sex to reading, emotions, and conversation) to a regime prescribed by the doctor.<sup>21</sup> The ideal environment for such comprehensive treatment was the sanatorium for nervous ailments. There, in a beautiful rural setting, “beyond the bustle of the world,” all the latest in therapeutic equipment

would be provided, and the patient, often for a period of months, could pursue recovery under the constant supervision of the doctor.<sup>22</sup> For Krafft-Ebing, such institutions simultaneously fill medical and social needs. The argument he makes throughout *Über gesunde und kranke Nerven* about the harmful effects of modern metropolitan existence culminates with a call for the widespread establishment of sanatoriums dedicated to the treatment of nervous ailments; he describes them in utopian terms as places which will lead “to the healing of the deep wounds which existence in modern civilization inflicts on countless of our fellow men.”<sup>23</sup> If modern civilization has led to an epidemic of nervous disease, the new institution of the sanatorium stands as the model and starting point for a new, healthier society.

Krafft-Ebing had a hand in establishing at least two such sanatoriums, one of which was the Purkersdorf Sanatorium in the Vienna Woods, which he founded, as we have seen, around 1890.<sup>24</sup> By the time Josef Hoffmann received the commission for a new building for the sanatorium compound, Krafft-Ebing had died and the establishment had changed hands, but Krafft-Ebing’s methods were still being followed for the treatment of nervous ailments. In 1902, a businessman and art collector named Viktor Zuckerkandl had purchased the sanatorium.<sup>25</sup> His sister-in-law, Berta Zuckerkandl, was an art and cultural critic who in 1903 wrote a long article praising the work of Josef Hoffmann. Presumably it was through her that Hoffmann got the job of designing the new building.<sup>26</sup>

#### JOSEF HOFFMANN

In 1904, when construction began, Josef Hoffmann was beginning to achieve significant professional success. Since 1899 he had been on the faculty of the Kunstgewerbeschule (Arts and Crafts School) in Vienna, and he would receive the commission for the Palais Stoclet in Brussels in 1905. In 1903, along with Koloman Moser and Fritz Wärndorfer, Hoffmann had founded the applied arts group known as the Wiener Werkstätte, and many of the artists from this group worked with him on the Purkersdorf Sanatorium.<sup>27</sup> Hoffmann brought to the commission his own set of ideas about the vital role of the built environment in the reform of modern society. Like Krafft-Ebing, he was a passionate opponent of the modern metropolis, and had a vision of a utopian future which would take root outside this metropolis. Also like Krafft-Ebing, he believed that a simply and totally planned environment would be the starting point for a happy and healthy society.

In an article of 1901, Hoffmann railed against the mania for the eclectic revival of past styles which seized architects during the nineteenth century, and claimed that this mania had made cities disgusting and harmful places.<sup>28</sup> Where the nerves of Krafft-Ebing’s modern man are strained by the unpredictable social and political upheavals of the metropolis,



FIGURE 3: Josef Hoffmann, house on the Bergerhöhe for Paul Wittgenstein, Vienna, 1899, living room remodeled by Hoffmann

the taste of Hoffmann's modern man is violated by the cacophony of bad architecture. We have to

hurry through our streets blind with open eyes, or we would die for pain and shame over the insensitivity and barbarism of our buildings and monuments. . . . Someday when our soul awakens we will avoid our cities with disgust and have to erect new ones in untouched regions.<sup>29</sup>

According to Hoffmann, the remedy for this state of affairs was to start from scratch and create simple, regular, beautiful surroundings wherever possible. The total physical renewal of our built environment would be the starting point for general cultural regeneration. Hoffmann wrote, "when it dawns within us, not here and there, but far and wide, as far as the eye can see, when we begin again to surround ourselves everywhere with beauty . . . must we not be inspired by hope again?"<sup>30</sup>

Hoffmann also aligned himself at this stage in his career with those who sought to bring architecture out of the realm of subjective imponderables and into that of logic and science. Like Beard and Krafft-Ebing's psychiatric theories, Hoffmann's architecture around 1904 was, at least in theory, fact-based, rational, and influenced by machine technology. Although Hoffmann for a few years shared Joseph Olbrich's whimsical, ornamental, self-consciously subjective approach (Figure 3), by 1901 he (following his mentor Otto Wagner) opposed architects who emphasized "their personal manner of expression," and he called for absolute honesty in the treatment of function and materials.<sup>31</sup> It was certainly this Josef Hoffmann who appealed to Berta Zuckerkandl when she wrote about him in 1903. For Zuckerkandl, Hoffmann, in his *Sturm und Drang* period around 1898–1900, was following along with the luxuriant, fanciful Jugendstil, represented by

Olbrich, but by 1903 was in the forefront of a movement toward simplification and attention to function in architecture. She characterized his work around 1902–1903 as logical, clean, strong, matter-of-fact, and inspired by "a machine, perfectly balanced in its proportions and efficiency." Using, appropriately, a biological metaphor, she wrote, "it is as if he aimed for the full expression of the anatomy of the thing in its unshakable truth."<sup>32</sup>

Eduard Sekler argues that Hoffmann's building for the Purkersdorf Sanatorium is "an independent achievement that entirely fits the inner structure of his artistic development."<sup>33</sup> Certainly the ideas I have outlined above and the tendency toward geometrical simplification in his earlier work show that Hoffmann brought his own tendencies to the design of the sanatorium, however strongly influenced it was by the rich context of medical ideas I have described. And, as Sekler also points out, the design of Purkersdorf shows the influence of the "modern school" architects around him, especially Otto Wagner.<sup>34</sup> But it is interesting that Hoffmann's architecture became more simple, more formally consistent, more rationally ordered and more imbued with technological imagery than it had been before he received the commission to design a sanatorium for nervous ailments. It is also the case that a sanatorium building had never looked so radically modern or so appropriate to its function.

Until Hoffmann, sanatorium structures had fulfilled their utopian function but maintained a conventional appearance. The buildings that made up the Purkersdorf Sanatorium before 1904, for example, were villas in an eclectic-rustic mode (Figure 4).<sup>35</sup> Before he designed the sanatorium, Hoffmann's buildings had been attempts at a utopian aesthetic within the constraints of traditional building types (Figure 5).<sup>36</sup> The Purkersdorf Sanatorium, I propose, assumed its form under the united influence of complementary medical and architectural discourses and can be interpreted according to both the medical and the architectural ideals imbuing the building.



FIGURE 4: Postcard showing three of the pre-1904 buildings in the Purkersdorf Sanatorium complex, all of which have been destroyed. (Hoffmann's building can be glimpsed at the right.)



FIGURE 5: Josef Hoffmann, double house built for Koloman Moser and Carl Moll on the Hohe Warte, Vienna, 1900–1901

### THE SANATORIUM BUILDING

Hoffmann's building, although built to supplement the pre-existing facilities at Purkersdorf, contained all the elements necessary for a self-contained sanatorium. On the ground floor, on either side of a large entrance hall with a staircase, were rooms for physical therapy (an exercise room full of mechanotherapy equipment and rooms for men's and women's baths) and medical consultation (Figure 6). The first floor consisted of a large dining room and a variety of rooms

designated for specific leisure activities, including billiards, cards, writing, reading, music, and ping-pong (Figure 7). The second floor contained the patients' private rooms (Figure 8). There was a large kitchen in the basement.<sup>37</sup> The main staircase went up through the center of the building connecting the three floors, and a single straight corridor gave access to the rooms on each floor.

The building Hoffmann designed lent itself directly to the aforementioned goals of the sanatorium treatment for nervous ailments advocated by Krafft-Ebing and other "somaticists" and practiced at the Purkersdorf Sanatorium. The building not only housed but was instrumental in some of the physical therapy offered, especially the light and air cures. And the whole design can be seen to participate in the regulation of environmental nervous stimulants, both in the elimination of harmful stimulants and in their replacement by healthy ones.

### SUN AND AIR

In its first issue, dated 1905–1905, the Viennese art journal *Hohe Warte* published an article entitled simply "Sanatorium," written by the editor of the journal, the critic and architectural theorist Joseph August Lux.<sup>38</sup> Its purpose was to explain the potentially jarring simplicity of the exterior of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium to readers; in doing so, Lux focused on the windows as, in his view, the only significant "ornament" on the

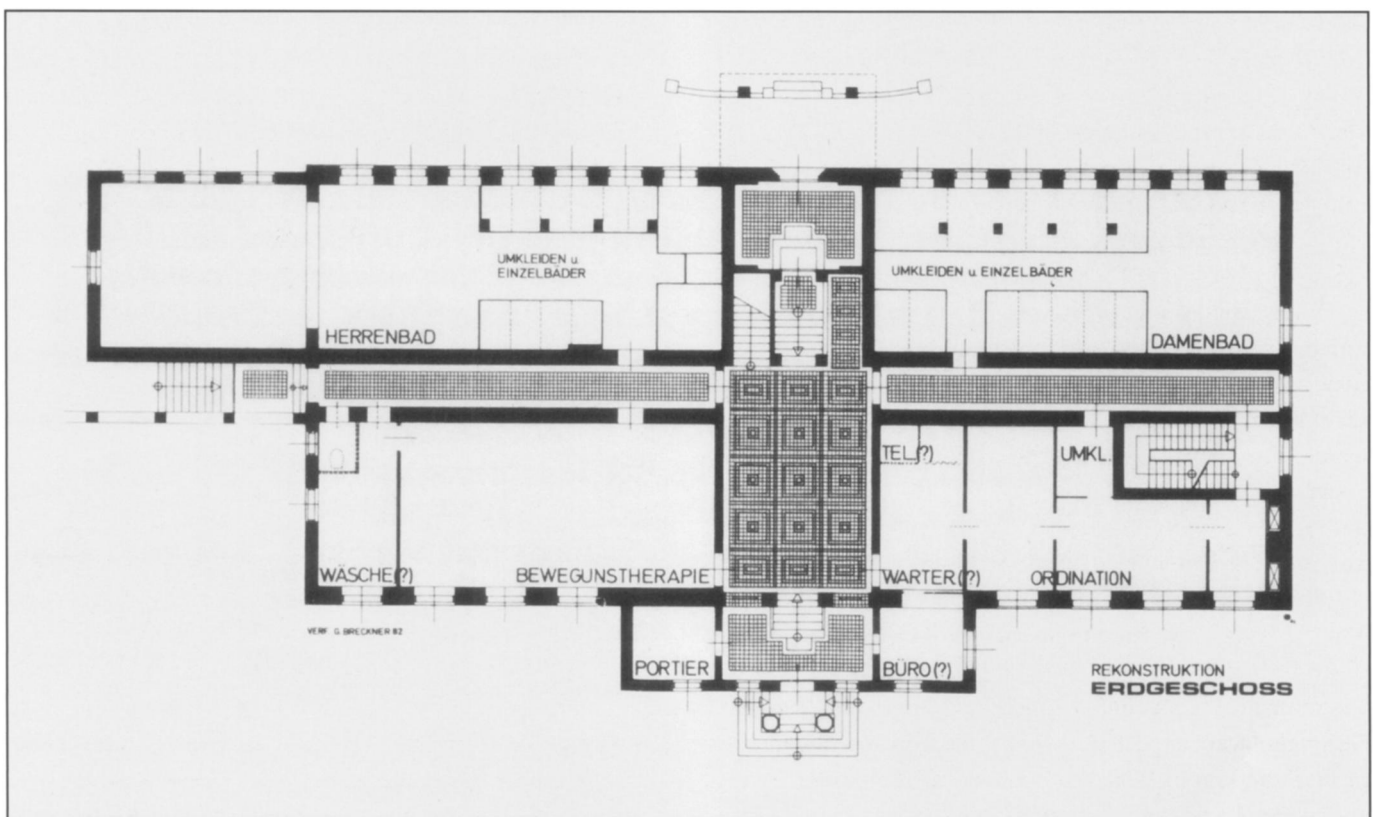


FIGURE 6: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, ground floor plan as reconstructed by Gunter Breckner

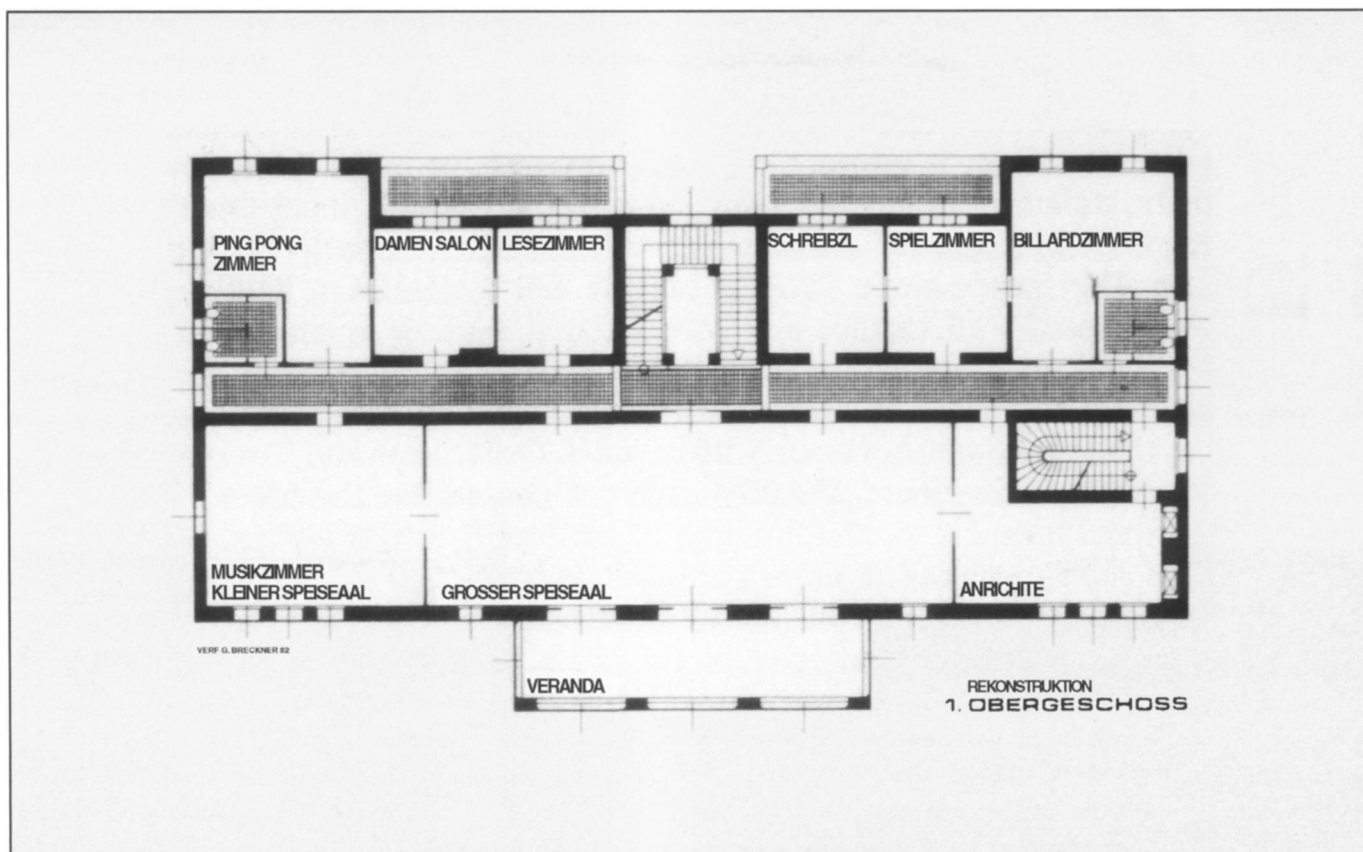


FIGURE 7: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, first floor plan, as reconstructed by Gunter Breckner

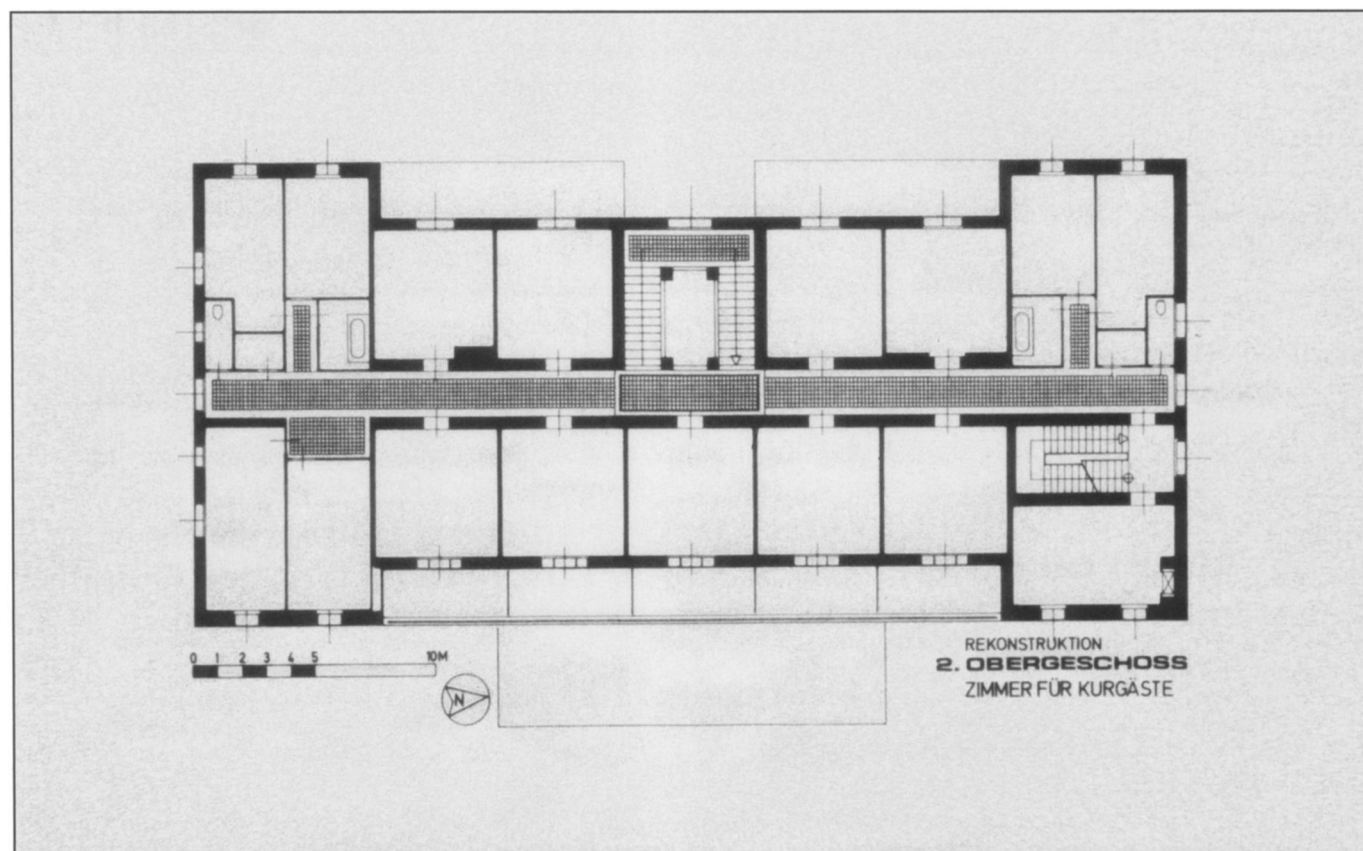


FIGURE 8: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, second floor plan, as reconstructed by Gunter Breckner

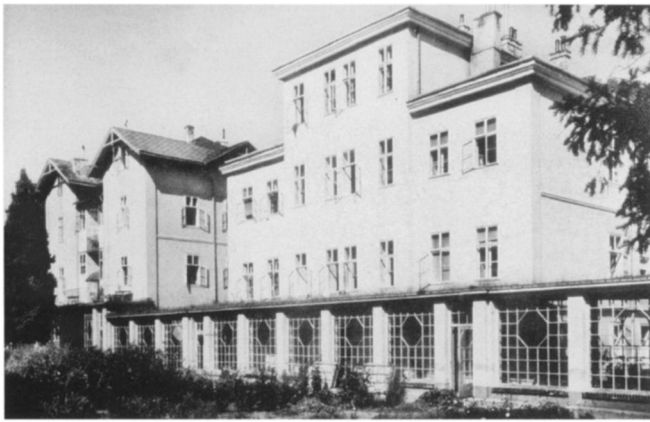


FIGURE 9: Postcard showing two of the pre-1904 buildings in the Purkersdorf Sanatorium complex, Purkersdorf, Austria, now destroyed

building. “A beautiful building,” he wrote, “is a building with simple, flat, light walls, which should only have one ornament and that ornament is the windows. Windows which are well located, wide and commodious, in order to admit as much light and air and sun into the building as possible.”<sup>39</sup> This prominence and breadth of windows is especially appropriate in Hoffmann’s new building, Lux wrote,

for . . . the building is a sanatorium, a house of health, of the lost and recovered, and it is not only the bath facilities and ingenious muscle-strengthening machines which play an important role in this, but also light, air and sun and the beautiful green forest landscape, which stream through the windows into the building and into the [patients’] souls.<sup>40</sup>

The medical report published in 1911 by the Purkersdorf Sanatorium also stressed the therapeutic importance of the large amounts of light and air for which the sanatorium’s design allowed. The chief physician of the sanatorium, Ludwig Stein, wrote that in accounting for the medical successes at Purkersdorf in the past year he did not want to undervalue the influence of “the incomparably beautiful and hygienic facility of the Sanatorium Purkersdorf, the *Leitmotiv* of which is, apart from the hygienic and comfortable accommodation of patients, the generous provision of light and air.”<sup>41</sup> Stein is referring not only to Hoffmann’s building, presumably, but to the whole sanatorium complex. This is significant, since photos of the (now-destroyed) older buildings show that despite their otherwise conventional appearance, most were provided with large windows without surrounding moldings, windows very similar to those used in the Hoffmann’s building (Figure 9). This is to say that Hoffmann’s choice of large, unencumbered windows was not, or not solely, determined by a desire to achieve a modernist aesthetic.

Treatments which involved a regulated exposure of the patient to what were thought to be the healing effects of the sun and of fresh air formed part of the standard armamen-

tarium of physical therapies for nervous disorders.<sup>42</sup> These sun and air cures were borrowed from the set of sanatorium therapies developed for tuberculosis sufferers in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>43</sup> Quintus Miller, in his study of the architecture of tuberculosis sanatoriums, shows how the large and closely regulated amounts of sunlight and fresh air called for in light and air cures had a determining impact on the design of sanatoriums.<sup>44</sup> The most prominent feature of many of these buildings was generous fenestration, with windows often specially designed with individually manipulable sections, allowing for the control of the passage of air through each room. The Karlsruhe doctor Karl Turban designed an ideal tuberculosis sanatorium in 1902 in which the south-facing wall of each of the individual patients’ rooms was composed entirely of movable panels of glass divided by thin metal frames (Figure 10).<sup>45</sup> In Hoffmann’s building, while we do not see glass walls, the windows are large, numerous, and uncurtained.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, with the exception of the windows lighting the main staircase, every window in Hoffmann’s building is divided into two to six discrete panels, each of which can be opened separately and at a range of angles. Ingenious metal rods, levers, and hinges allow for the precise and simultaneous manipulation of the mul-

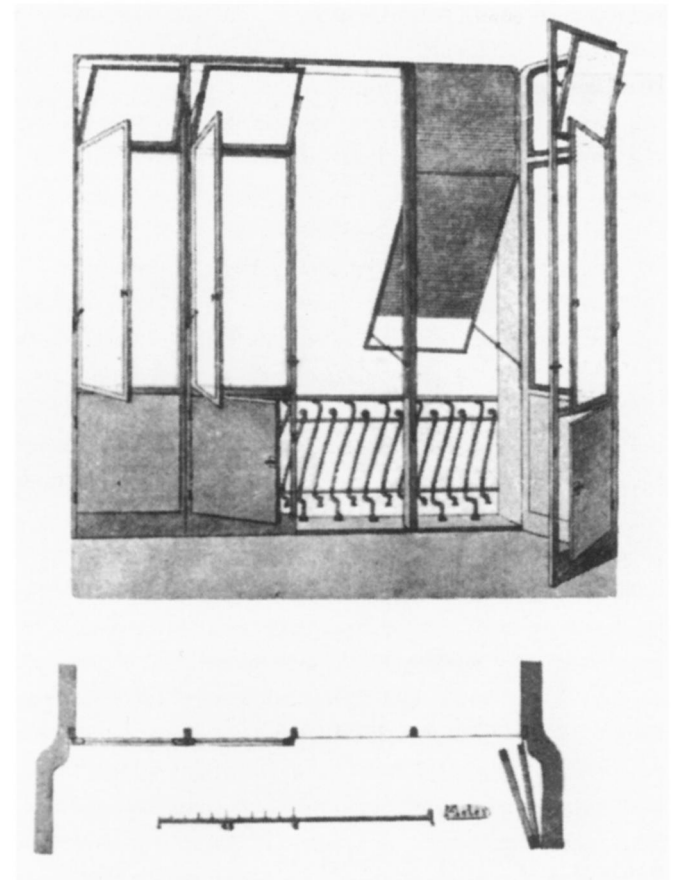


FIGURE 10: Dr. Karl Turban, ideal project for a tuberculosis sanatorium, 1902, window wall



FIGURE 11: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, ladies' salon window, photo 1997

tiple panels of the more complex windows (Figure 11).<sup>47</sup> Thus, in providing its inhabitants with generous and easily regulated amounts of sunlight and fresh air, Hoffmann's building served, alongside baths and special diets, as one more tool in the physical nerve-strengthening therapy offered at Purkersdorf.

#### REGULATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL STIMULANTS

We have seen how, in the theories of George Beard and Krafft-Ebing, the unpredictable modern urban environment constantly threatened the balance of nervous force in its inhabitants. Once nervous disease developed, the initial and most important aspect of the treatment was the patient's removal from his or her usual context and isolation from all unhealthy influences from the outside world. That this aspect of the treatment was seen as a major goal of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium is shown in the 1911 annual report; in two separate articles, the doctors of the sanatorium emphasize the primary importance of getting patients out of their normal unhealthy surroundings and offering them something different and more wholesome in the sanatorium environment.<sup>48</sup> The most striking thing about Hoffmann's building is that all references to history, traditional building types, or architectural conventions are studiously avoided; at the time it was built, it would have been unlike any other physical environment that its patients may have experienced. The critic Karl Marilaun wrote in 1918 that in designing the

Purkersdorf Sanatorium, "Professor Hoffmann was of the view that a sanatorium does not have to resemble a false Swiss-style house or a real Cottage-villa."<sup>49</sup> The art critic Ludwig Hevesi, who wrote an account of his visit to the building in 1905, noted that the simple harmony of the exterior was undisturbed by columns, gables, or any of the standard ornamental elements one was used to seeing on works of architecture.<sup>50</sup> The usual window surrounds were replaced by bands of blue and white tiles, and the peaked roof was rejected in favor of a flat roof with no softening molding (Figure 12). Likewise in the interior, as Hevesi put it, "everything is new, newer, newest."<sup>51</sup>

But if Hoffmann's design was novel, it was not meant to be yet another unpredictable element in the constantly changing picture of modern civilization. The Purkersdorf Sanatorium was different and new in its very rationality. In its organization of space and in its surface articulation the building offered itself, in contrast to the supposedly unplanned and eclectic variety of the metropolis, as a predictable, controlled physical environment, one which would seem to protect its inhabitants from spatial, visual, or experiential shocks to the nerves.

The layout of the building was characterized by a tightly controlled geometry, with its three main functions—physical therapy, communal activities, and sleeping—separated and placed on the three main floors, each of which was arranged symmetrically and bisected by a single corridor. Lux argued

that this arrangement of spaces both reflected and aided the regimentation of sanatorium life:

... Behind the windows [lie] bright spaces ... arranged to correspond best to the human functions and their scheduling [*Tageseinteilung*] and which maintain as it were a correct, organic relationship with the life which takes place in the building.”<sup>52</sup>

Krafft-Ebing, in his prescriptions for the sanatorium treatment, insists on the importance of an “exact schedule” (*eine genaue Tageseinteilung*), a concept to which Lux refers. In order to rectify the nervous weakness caused by an unhealthy, unregimented lifestyle, the doctor must lead the patient back to nervous strength and healthy living by imposing on him or her a strict and repetitive regime, in which each day is divided into segments devoted to sleep, eating, therapy, and simple leisure activities.<sup>53</sup> In Hoffmann’s building, the tightly structured temporal division of the day was made concrete and spatial. The patients could proceed in an equally orderly fashion through the day and through the spaces of the sanatorium, sleeping, eating, being treated, and relaxing at particular times in distinct spaces.<sup>54</sup> The arrangement of spaces also aided surveillance. The doctor’s constant observation of the patients was made easier by the simplicity of the overall layout and more directly by the planning of the corridors and the clear glass in the corridor doors, which made it possible to survey at a glance the entire length of each floor (Figure 13).

The orderly and predictable spatial experience of the building would not have been disturbed by its surface visual articulation. Under Hoffmann and the Wiener Werkstätte’s “total design” approach, all surfaces were methodically united in a self-consciously simple rectilinearity. Berta Zuckerkindl reported that Hoffmann “sought to make the restfulness of

rectilinearity pleasantly emanate” at Purkersdorf.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, A. S. Levetus, writing about Purkersdorf in 1906, described the “lines” of the building as “harmonious and restful.”<sup>56</sup> This systematic coherence of surfaces is introduced in the entrance hall, in which a black and white tile floor with a repeated motif of squares is echoed by the pattern of exposed reinforced concrete beams in the ceiling, and the walls have a wainscoting of shiny white tiles (Figure 14). The hall is furnished with white wooden chairs in the shape of cubes which themselves are furnished with cushions in fabrics with geometric designs. Identical lamps hang at regular intervals from the ceiling, and clear glass doors with geometrically patterned leaded windows above lead into the long straight corridor.<sup>57</sup> In the doctors’ consulting room, the desk, chair, lamp, letter holder, and wastepaper basket are all subjected to the geometric total design (Figure 15). The dining room is a long rectangular volume in which a few simple elements are repeated: large, clear glass doors along the outer wall, mirrored plant holders, uncovered radiators, exposed ceiling beams, and multiple copies of the same bentwood chair arranged around a single long table and along the walls (Figure 16). The other rooms on the second floor received richer, more colorful decorative articulation—various shades of green and red were used, and the more rounded, comfortable furniture was upholstered in patterned fabrics—but we see a continuing standardization and repetition of forms, for instance, in the writing room, which contains a single, central, undecorated module divided into identical writing stations, each of which has an identical chair and lamp (Figure 17). Finally, the patient’s own bedroom rivals the doctor’s consulting room in its calculated geometric simplicity (Figure 18).

Hevesi draws attention to how Hoffmann designed the

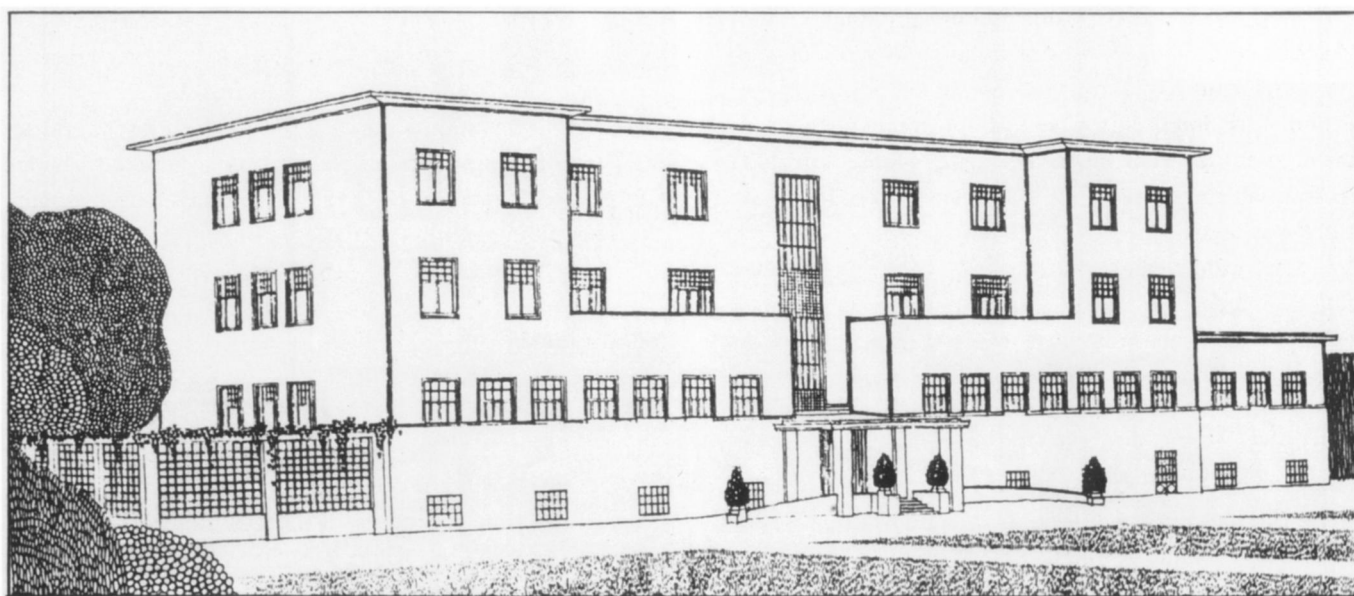


FIGURE 12: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, perspective drawing from the northwest

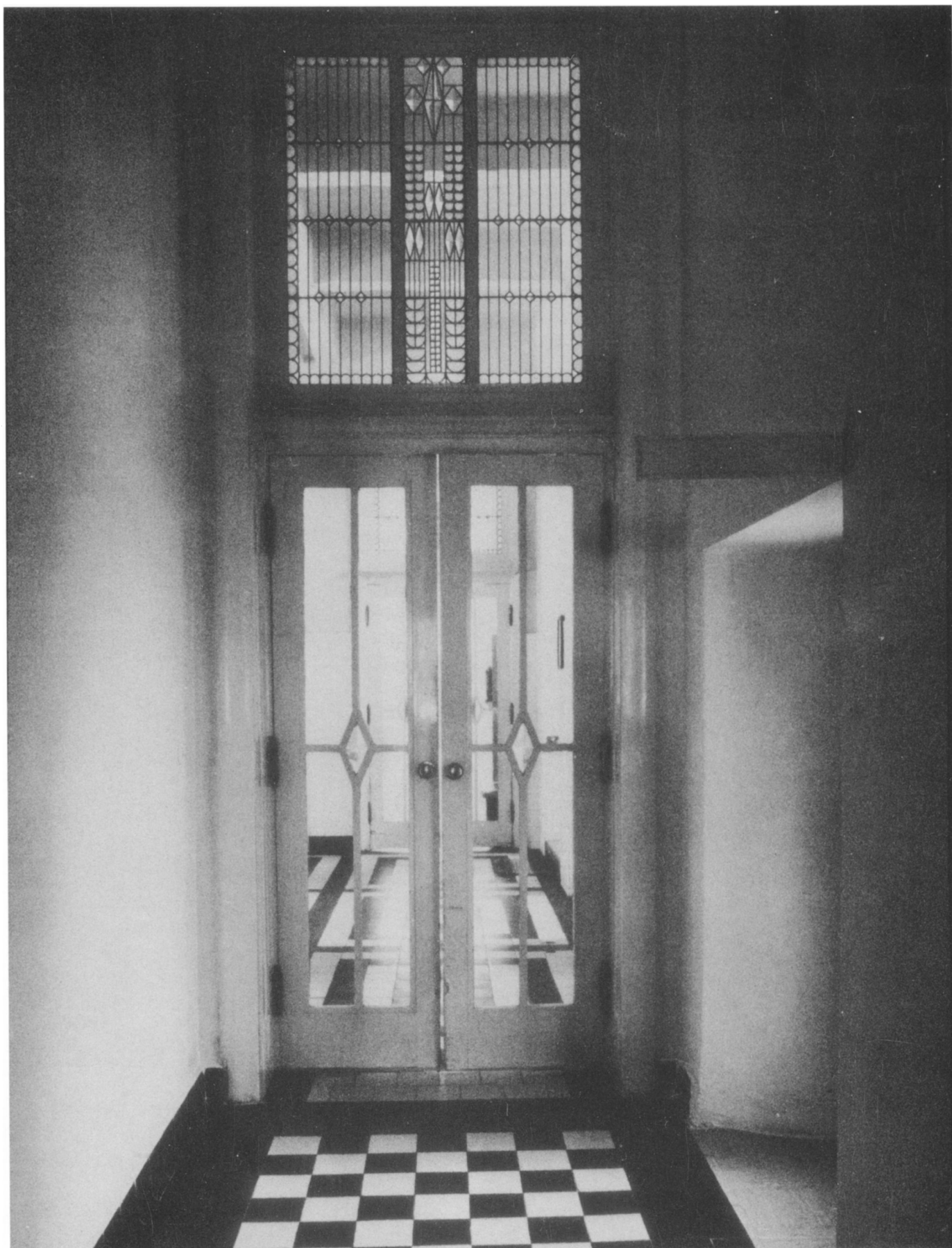


FIGURE 13: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, corridor on ground floor looking through a glass door into the entrance hall



FIGURE 14: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, entrance hall viewed from the east

Purkersdorf environment in such a way as to be free not only of visual discordance but also of the actual physical obstacles with which the modern man and woman apparently struggled in less “modern” settings:

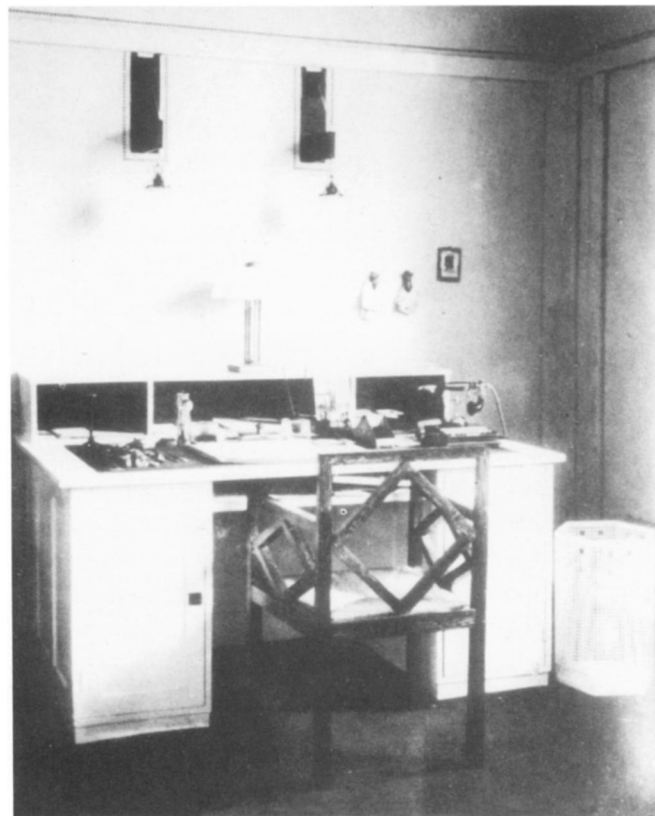


FIGURE 15: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, doctors' consulting room

[Hoffmann] thinks of simply everything. In the Imperial Museum, some of the inscriptions on the doors are buried in everlasting darkness, so that you can only read them by striking a match; in Hoffmann's building, every door has its own electric button specially designed to illuminate the nameplate in the dark. . . . The table lamps in the writing-room have even been designed so as not to come into conflict with the enormous hats of the corresponding ladies. . . . Each lamp is designed so that its light cannot blind you. . . . And it goes without saying that there are no mirrors which are hung so high that they are only of any use to Mrs. Goliath. . . .<sup>58</sup>

Hevesi also points out the way in which Hoffmann prevented his dining room chairs and tables from becoming rickety with use by inserting two small balls at the joints between the legs and the seats or table tops for stability (Figure 19). He even mentions the fact that Hoffmann used paneled banisters on the main staircase so as to ensure that the copious skirts of the “ladies in grand toilette” would not get caught on iron railings (Figure 20).<sup>59</sup> In the Purkersdorf Sanatorium, patients would be spared the annoyance of bad lighting and the aggravations of furniture and fittings which obstructed movement and functioned inefficiently. Thus, at Purkersdorf, working on several levels at once, Hoffmann sought to create the opposite of the nerve-threatening *Grossstadt*—an environment free of spatial ambiguity, visual discordance, and physical inconvenience and discomfort.

#### A DESIGNED TRUTH

In her article of 1903 on Hoffmann, Berta Zuckerkandl wrote: “the art of today is . . . a search for truth, is a confession of



FIGURE 16: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, dining room

truth, and we see in Josef Hoffmann one of the most devoted priests of this realization.”<sup>60</sup> Further on, as we have seen, she characterizes Hoffmann’s work of 1902–1903 as truthful: “it is as if he wanted fully to express the anatomy of things in its unshakable truth.”<sup>61</sup> Unlike Joseph Maria Olbrich’s Vienna Secession building of 1898, which, according to Hermann Bahr and others, embodied the higher truth of art and subjective inspiration in a romantic sense, the design of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium was described by contemporary critics and by Hoffmann himself as rational, honest, logical, and based on the objective analysis of needs.<sup>62</sup> That is, it was seen as truthful in a manner appropriate to the scientific institution it housed. Hevesi described the building as a “logical organism,” unencumbered by “ornamental lies”; Lux admired its “objective, matter-of-fact quality” (*sachliche Selbstverständlichkeit*).<sup>63</sup> Hoffmann himself referred to the building as developing out of “necessity, need and the importance of hygiene.”<sup>64</sup> In the use of the terms “anatomy,” “organism,” and “hygiene” we see the desire to claim a scientific basis for Hoffmann’s architecture and specifically for the Purkersdorf Sanatorium, which, as we have seen, participated as a tool in the medical science practiced there.

But can the architecture of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium be seen as based on science in the modern sense, that is, on “a connected body of demonstrated truths or . . . observed facts systematically classified . . . by being brought under general laws,” as the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it? Is the design actually derived from “observed facts,” or is it from the beginning a manifestation of certain nonobjective values and preconceptions? Perhaps one could say that in this case, since the building houses and participates in the scientific treatment of nervous ailments, its design is legitimately “truthful” in a scientific sense. But that would require confidence in the scientific basis of the medicine practiced at Purkersdorf, a confidence which was being undermined at the very time at which Hoffmann was designing his building.

Reyner Banham, in *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, discusses the confusion surrounding the appropriation of “science” by the proponents of modern architecture. He argues that many modern architects and theoreticians sought to “claim for their theories the prestige of the advanced science of the twentieth century,” that is, science defined as a body of knowledge based on experimental research, while they were actually using the notion of science in the older,

more generalized sense of erudition based on logical method.<sup>65</sup> This confusion is evident in both the presentation of the design of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium and in the theories surrounding nervous ailments. In both cases, a logically coherent structure or system is created on the basis not of facts which have been shown empirically to be true but of a set of presumptions about what a building and a life should ideally be, that is, simple, balanced, organized, and consistent. Hoffmann's architecture and Krafft-Ebing's medical science are not so much engaged in exposing facts as they are in designing new utopian truths.

Indeed, if a work of architecture is never actually fact-based, but involves nonobjective design (aesthetic) decisions from the very beginning, Krafft-Ebing's own system could be called "architectural." Having conjured up (out of a sense of what seemed both logical and morally right) a vision of the subject, he goes about designing illnesses, treatments, and an ideal lifestyle consistent with that preexisting vision. And, as some modern architects, including Hoffmann, would do when they embraced the "engineer's aesthetic," he forges a links between his vision and the fact-based, scientific way of knowing, attempting to imbue his own design with the power and stability of self-evident, factual truth.



FIGURE 17: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, desk in writing room

#### AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE PSYCHE: SIGMUND FREUD

Sigmund Freud identified the constructive rather than revelatory character of the somatic school of thought on neuroses. When he started out as a specialist in nervous ailments in the late 1880s and early 1890s, Freud treated patients using the physical therapies we have seen employed at Purkersdorf, specifically electrotherapy. In an autobiographical essay, he described his later disillusionment with such treatments:

In [the area of] electrotherapy, I placed my trust in W. Erb's handbook, which laid out detailed instructions for the treatment of all symptoms of nervous disease. Unfortunately I soon learned that the adherence to these instructions never helped, and that what I had taken as the product of exact observation was a fantastic construction. The insight, that the work of the top figure in German neuropathology had no more relation to reality than an "Egyptian" dream-book, like the ones they sell in our popular bookstores, was painful, but it helped to remove another piece of the belief in authority from which I was not yet free.<sup>66</sup>

Freud here pointed to the disingenuousness of the advocates of physical therapy for nervous ailments and, by extension, of the supporters of the view that neuroses had organic causes. Using their position as academically sanctioned medical au-

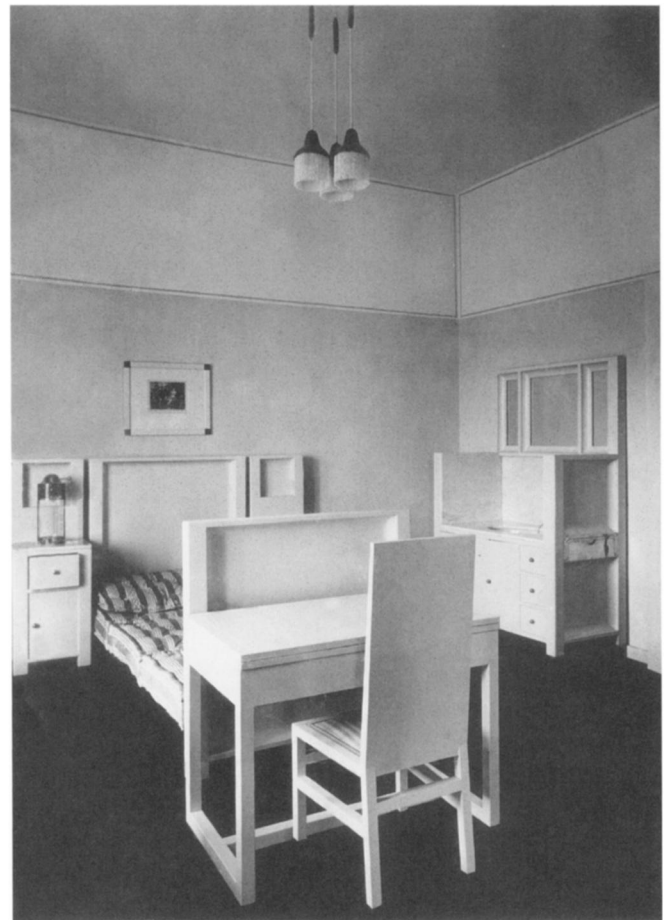


FIGURE 18: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, patient's room

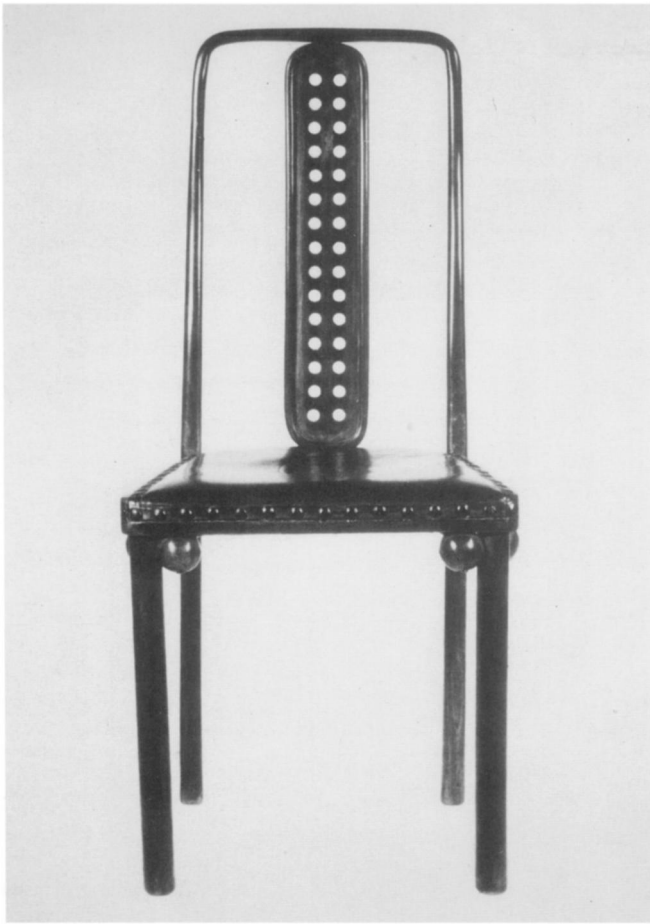


FIGURE 19: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, dining room chair

thorities, they implied that their theories and methods were based on “exact observation” of “reality” when in fact they were “fantastic constructions,” true only when the set of presumptions on which they are built was accepted as true.<sup>67</sup>

Freud chose to equate his own method of research and treatment not with architecture but with archaeology, that is, with the interpretation of the existing and concealed rather than with construction from scratch. “The psychoanalyst,” he told a patient, “like the archaeologist in his excavations, must uncover layer after layer of the patient’s psyche, before coming to the deepest, most valuable treasures.”<sup>68</sup> Freud was dedicated wholeheartedly to “truth,” but it was to truth discovered through persistent excavation of layers, assiduous listening, and interpretation; truth for Freud was, far from being consistent, logical, and predictable, necessarily uncomfortable and uncertain.<sup>69</sup> Freud rejected the model of the subject as a machine with its perfectible technology in favor of the psychological subject, internally divided into unconscious and conscious, embedded in a particular history which is evident only in its distorted traces. In treating the disturbed subject Freud did not prescribe a rigid repressive regime, but encouraged total candor from the patient: he wanted to hear everything

the conscious mind had to offer so that he could seek to understand the workings of the unconscious mind underneath.

The setting in which Freud treated his patients, the consulting room in his apartment at Berggasse 19 in Vienna, could not have been more different from Hoffmann’s building for the Purkersdorf Sanatorium (Figure 21). Freud’s practice was an outpatient clinic, close to the center of Vienna, not a residential institution in the country; patients would usually not be removed from their families and urban surroundings, but would be living among them as treatment progressed. If the Purkersdorf Sanatorium was a totally designed, predictable, simple, self-contained “white-painted or white-tiled ‘washable’ world,” as Hevesi described it, Freud’s consulting room, tucked within his family’s apartment and stuffed with eclectic furnishings and Freud’s art and antiquities collection, was a fragment full of fragments.<sup>70</sup> Where the Sanatorium seemed to exist outside of history as a utopia of technological modernity, history is everywhere in Berggasse 19, as is Freud’s personal presence, in contrast to the suppression of personality in

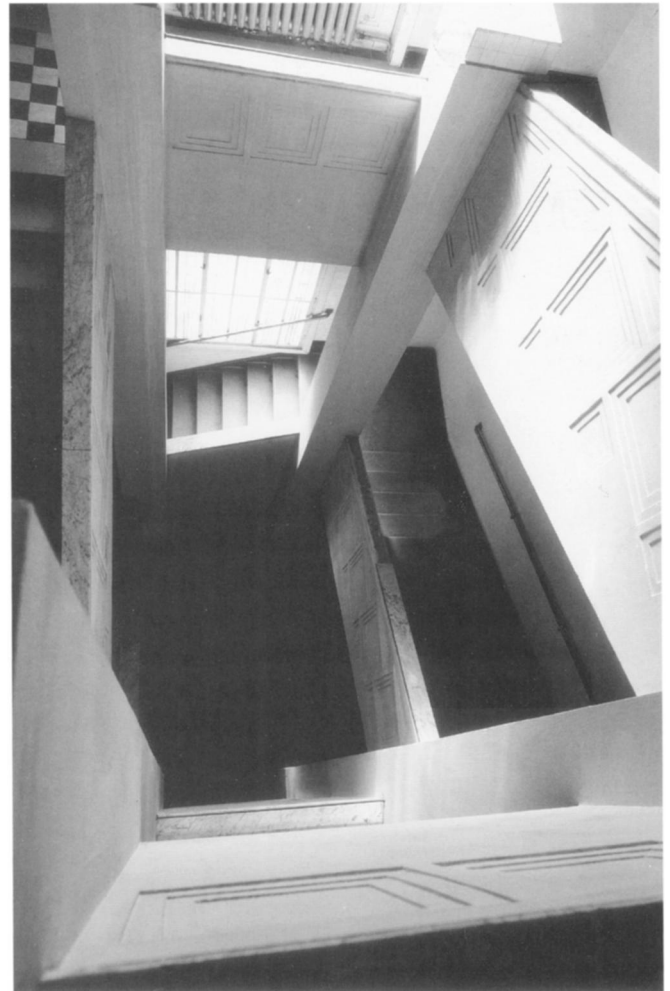


FIGURE 20: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, main staircase



FIGURE 21: Sigmund Freud's consulting room at Berggasse 19, Vienna, photographed in 1938

favor of neutral logic at Purkersdorf. One of Freud's patients wrote that when he first entered Freud's office in 1910 he was reminded not of "a doctor's office but rather of an archaeologist's study."<sup>71</sup>

By arguing for psychological rather than somatic roots for neuroses, Freud gave himself the challenge of working with and exploring material (dreams, memories, fantasies, slips of the tongue) which was hugely varied and almost impossibly unpredictable and slippery. The treatment of patients' neuroses consisted of the analysis itself, which often proceeded along a rocky and crooked path. By contrast, those who insisted on the somatic origin of neuroses could, under the assumption that they had empirical knowledge of the physiological functioning and malfunctioning of the nervous system (of which the psyche was a part), approach treatment as the systematic application of preexisting therapies to a set of generalizable, diagnosed problems (as would be the case in the treatment of heart disease or tuberculosis).

What does this contrast mean for the role of the built environment in the treatment of neuroses? For Freud, it was incidental. Each patient being different, and the goal of

treatment being to analyze over time the complications and repressions of interior mental life, the physical space in which the analysis took place could not be said to have any significant effect on the patient. If Freud's consulting room was evocative, it was for its analogies to his methods and for what it revealed of his personality and interests.<sup>72</sup> For Krafft-Ebing and others, certain types of environments had identifiable, predictable positive or negative affects on the nervous mechanism. Therefore, the physical facilities of an institution like the Purkersdorf Sanatorium could be scientifically designed to help cure nervous ailments and to foster everyone's nervous health.

#### OPENING AND CLOSING THE DOOR ON PSYCHOLOGY

But a question lingered behind the somaticists' conviction: did environmental factors (whether spatial, visual, familial, or societal) actually affect the nerves on a physical level? Or, by acknowledging the role of the environment in nervous health, were neurologists opening the door to the psychological? Recent scholarship in the history of psychiatry has suggested that the latter was at least sometimes the case. Charles Rosen-

berg, in his article on Beard cited above, sees Beard's theories about the effects of city life on nervous health as containing implicitly the suggestion that nervous ailments could have psychological as well as physical roots.<sup>73</sup> Edward Shorter reports that Jean Martin Charcot, the famous French expert on hysteria, shifted in the mid-1880s "away from organicity and toward the dim glimmer that hysteria might be psychogenic."<sup>74</sup> Interestingly, it was precisely the effectiveness of isolation, or sanatorium therapy, which, by showing the effect of a new environment on the psyche, apparently caused Charcot to consider the importance of psychology.

I have already mentioned that Krafft-Ebing believed psychotherapy to be an important tool in the treatment of nervous disorders. In his treatise entitled "*Nervosität und neurasthenische Zustände*" (Nervousness and neurasthenic conditions), he proposed that the ideal treatment for nervous ailments would consist of a three-pronged effort including psychotherapy, diet control, and physical therapy. But Krafft-Ebing's psychotherapy was a far cry from Freud's efforts to uncover repressed and distorted trauma. Indeed, the main purpose of Krafft-Ebing's psychotherapy was to control and repress. Nervous patients were to be counseled and coaxed to give themselves over entirely to the control of the doctor. They were to be distracted from their cares and prevented from entertaining self-destructive thoughts and engaging in intellectual overexertion. The end goal of this type of psychotherapy would be to convince patients to adopt an attitude and a lifestyle more conducive to the smooth operation of their *Nervenmechanismus*, and to make them trust in the belief that their ailment was real and organic, and could be cured through scientific attention to the strengthening and protection of the nervous mechanism.<sup>75</sup> From a skeptical, say Freudian, perspective, Krafft-Ebing's psychotherapy aimed at bringing patients into a frame of mind in which they would believe in the myth of the doctor's somatic diagnosis and therefore in the effectiveness of physical aspects of their treatment.<sup>76</sup>

Significantly, in the section of his treatise devoted to psychotherapy, Krafft-Ebing included a plea for the establishment of sanatoriums for nervous ailments.<sup>77</sup> He argued that for severe nervous cases, the conditions for effective psychotherapy could be met only in self-contained, isolated institutions in which the doctor could keep close track of patients and where patients could live ideal, healthy lives for an extended period of time. When we take Krafft-Ebing's connection between psychotherapy and sanatoriums into account, Josef Hoffmann's design for the Purkersdorf Sanatorium becomes more complicated. The building is at once a tool in the physical therapy offered, as we have seen, and an element of the effort psychologically to convince patients that such a therapy is appropriate and based in scientific truth.

## ENGINEERING THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

Hoffmann's building can be seen to participate in this psychological manipulation through the incorporation of visual metaphors for the modernity of the institution and for the supposedly scientific, pragmatic, almost engineer-like approach to the treatment of nervous ailments. One such metaphor is the glass and steel canopy over the east entrance (Figure 22). An unembellished grid of steel filled in with opaque glass is cocked at a dynamic angle over the door and its flanking windows. Supporting it are two small girders, also at an angle, bolted to the facade (Figure 23). They are like miniature images of the arms of construction cranes, almost totally useless and ornamental in themselves, but conjuring up associations with the engineer's exact calculations of physical forces. The canopy has the look of a mechanical drawbridge, which could be raised or lowered with the flick of a switch.

Modern engineering did play a real role in the building. Hoffmann took advantage of the latest advances in building technology, using reinforced concrete construction for the ceilings and stairs (the facades were of brick construction, covered in stucco).<sup>78</sup> The presence of this new technology in the building was exploited for visual effect. Hevesi, in his article of 1905, made a point of mentioning the building's technological modernity and its visual utilization:

The building is also of great interest structurally. There is no vault in the entire place. "Hennebique" is the key word; that is, construction in concrete and iron. This permits slender pillars and large, honest, undisguised ceilings, such as in the large dining room, where there is nothing art-historical to trick one.<sup>79</sup>

Such "honest" ceilings, consisting of a widely spaced grid of squared, reinforced concrete beams, were featured throughout the building. In the main hall on the ground floor, four pillars, undisguised as columns, also drew attention to the efficient and modern skeletal structure of the building (see Figure 14).

This modern structure was also pointedly electrified. The lamps suspended from the ceilings and fixed to the walls throughout the building were designed to show off the fact that they were electric (see Figures 14 and 16). Bare bulbs were often exposed, or their light was diffused by simple glass globes or small shafts of glass encircling the bulb, as in the entrance hall and dining room. The electric cords leading into the lamps were used as essential elements of the design, even in the case of wall lamps. The light bulbs, with their evenly burning filaments surrounded by standardized geometric glass forms, could be seen as allegories for the consistent, controlled operation of the nervous forces within the ideal subject.<sup>80</sup>

In using modern construction techniques and images of modern technology at Purkersdorf, Hoffmann was following a recent but established trend in architecture, and the reader

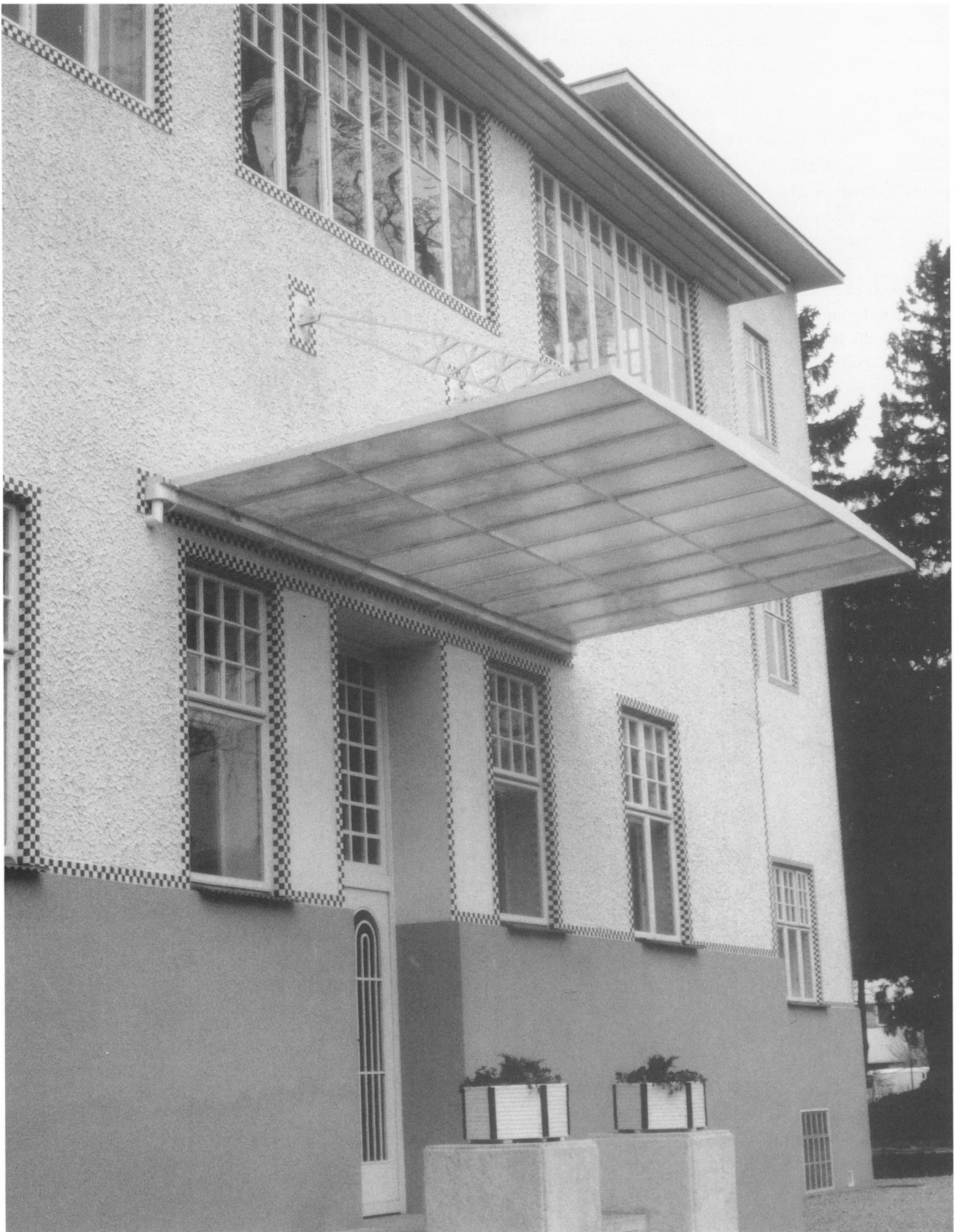


FIGURE 22: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, restored 1995, east entrance showing canopy



FIGURE 23: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, restored 1995, close-up of canopy showing girder

might wonder what this study of the significance of the medical context of the sanatorium could contribute on this front. Indeed, the combination of a limited but self-conscious use of modern construction technology and materials and the “technoid” design of small, essentially decorative features in the building is equally if not more evident in Otto Wagner’s Postal Savings Bank in Vienna, begun in the same year. Hoffmann was perhaps simply following Wagner’s prescription that “all modern creations must correspond to the new materials and demands of the present if they are to suit modern man.”<sup>81</sup>

But there is also something going on here that is specific to the medical context of the institution. A glance back at the photograph of the Purkersdorf bath facilities with which I began may serve to make my point. The sanatorium for nervous ailments, both as a concept and in its embrace of the most advanced therapeutic technologies, would have been as much a prototypically “modern” commission for Hoffmann as the Vienna municipal railway (*Stadtbahn*) was for Wagner. First, while the sanatorium for nervous ailments may have had its roots in the old tradition of the spa, Krafft-Ebing himself thought of it as a quintessentially modern institution established to treat a typically modern disease.<sup>82</sup> Second, the simple, repeated activities of which the therapy at Purkersdorf consisted were punctuated by the latest technology had to offer. A large room on the ground floor was dedicated to what was

called “mechanotherapy,” in which patients were strengthened and their energy restored through exercise on and massage by a variety of electrically powered machines (Figure 24).<sup>83</sup> In a passage from Hevesi’s article the technological modernity of Hoffmann’s architecture is elided with the “latest [therapeutic] systems and facilities,” which fill the rooms of the ground floor.<sup>84</sup> He describes the mechanotherapy room as a “beautiful white room full of man-made machines” in which “a few women stood at the electric massage-machine—everything is electric—and had their backs and stomachs massaged.”<sup>85</sup> Another type of treatment offered at Purkersdorf was electrotherapy, in which patients had voltage applied to various parts of their bodies (sometimes with water used as a mediating element, as we saw in the electric bath in Figure 1) in an attempt to increase the strength of the nerves.

The “high-tech” features of the design of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium, I propose, were on the one hand inspired by the therapeutic machinery which made such an impression on Hevesi and on the photographer from *Innen-Dekoration*. Indeed, in the rest of Hoffmann’s work, which consisted mostly of residential projects, such high-tech features were almost never used. On the other hand, these features served to create a general atmosphere of a technological, or science-based, modernity in the sanatorium. The patient approaching and entering the building would immediately be given the impres-

sion—in the machine-like glass and steel canopy, in the exposed reinforced concrete beams, in the visible electric cords and bulbs—that he or she was being admitted to an up-to-date sanatorium (not to be confused with a spa) where somatically defined ailments would be treated with the best means modern science and technology could offer.<sup>86</sup> The appearance of the architecture and the appearance of the therapeutic machines themselves suggested that an engineer's approach would be taken to the diagnosis and treatment of the sufferer: the problem having been rationally analyzed, science would provide an answer. But of course the contradiction lies precisely here, at the place where the architecture attempts to conceal it; the belief in the measurable somatic origins of nervous ailments is undermined by this very confidence in the power of psychological propaganda to promote nervous health.

#### THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE PURKERSDORF SANATORIUM

It would be a mistake to assume that because of the challenges posed by Freud's radical theories, the therapies practiced at the Purkersdorf Sanatorium were already becoming obsolete by the time Hoffmann's building was completed. The theories about the origins and treatment of nervous ailments devel-

oped by Krafft-Ebing and others in the late nineteenth century were upheld by many doctors for decades. Until 1930, the Purkersdorf Sanatorium thrived financially, and maintained its position at the forefront of the somaticist school of nervous therapy.<sup>87</sup> In the 1930s, economic depression and bad business practices on the part of the then-manager led to a decline in business and reputation. After Germany's annexation of Austria and the coming to power of the Nazis in 1938, the sanatorium was "aryanized"—the Zuckerkandl family, who were Jewish, were forced in 1939 to sell the property and buildings to "Aryan" owners for almost nothing. Many of the staff doctors had already fled the country, as Freud himself did in 1938.<sup>88</sup> A prospectus published by the new owner, Hans Gnad, shows that he aimed to revive the sanatorium to its previous status (and using the same somatic approach to nervous ailments), although wartime conditions prevented him from doing so.<sup>89</sup> In 1952 a religious organization purchased the sanatorium and converted it into a hospital and nursing home.<sup>90</sup>

Hoffmann's building has experienced alteration, deterioration, and renewal. A fourth story and peaked roof were added in 1926 by the architect Leopold Bauer. The religious organization's hospital moved out of the building in the mid-1970s,

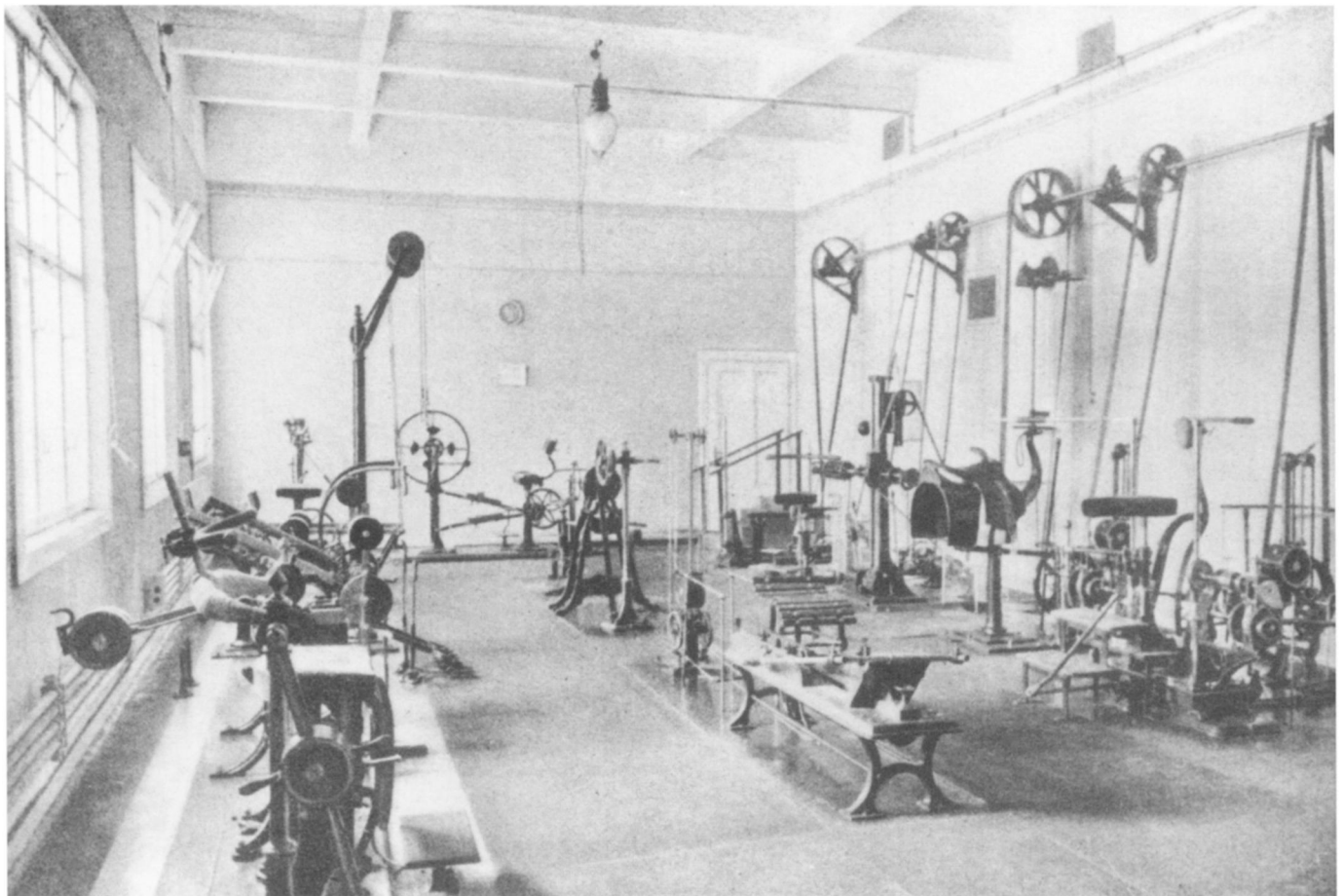


FIGURE 24: Josef Hoffmann, Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Purkersdorf, Austria, 1904–1905, room for mechanotherapy. Prospectus for Sanatorium Purkersdorf, c. 1939–1940.

and for two decades it stood empty and badly in need of repair. In 1995 the exterior was finally restored and the extra story removed.<sup>91</sup> A new use for the building has yet to be found, and its empty state leaves it vulnerable to deterioration once again.

Meanwhile, as Hoffmann's building entered the annals of modern architectural history, its medical context, so important to contemporary commentators such as Hevesi and Lux, dropped away. Like so many early monuments of modern architecture, the Purkersdorf Sanatorium became a formal icon, a model of the stripping away of extraneous ornament and focus on function, although what exactly that function originally was was only vaguely remembered. Both Nikolaus Pevsner and Henry-Russell Hitchcock in their early histories of modern architecture pick the building out for a radical simplicity of volumes and ornament which presages postwar developments, but in both accounts the sanatorium is misidentified as a "convalescent home."<sup>92</sup>

With the revival of interest in turn-of-the-century Vienna and in Hoffmann's work in the last three decades, the Purkersdorf Sanatorium has received increased if cursory attention. Except for an unpublished thesis whose main purpose was to provide documentation for the restoration, no major work has been devoted to the building. In passages on the sanatorium in works on Hoffmann, on the Wiener Werkstätte, and on Vienna in 1900, the emphasis continues to be on the formal qualities of the building, and in most cases authors again stress that the building was ahead of its time.<sup>93</sup> If the precise function of the building is mentioned, it is only in passing, and in all the literature only one or two sentences are devoted to the significance of its medical function for Hoffmann's design. Those who have written about the Purkersdorf Sanatorium have had different priorities from mine in this article. They have aimed to understand how the building fits into the larger body of Hoffmann's work and that of the Wiener Werkstätte, or to use it as an example of a purist or rationalist strain in Viennese design around 1900. This, and the fact that the institution of the sanatorium for nervous ailments has over time become a rather obscure historical phenomenon, have meant that the medical context for Hoffmann's building has been largely glossed over or ignored.<sup>94</sup>

## CONCLUSION

A renewed interest in the specific historical contexts of patronage and use in the field of architectural history has inspired the effort I have made here to explore the influence of turn-of-the-century nerve doctors on the Purkersdorf Sanatorium. But by setting the building among the ideas and debates about mental health in the first decade of the twentieth century, my purpose has not been to cut the building off from later developments in modern architecture. The debate about the causes of and appropriate treatment for mental illness

which was gaining steam in Vienna around 1900 has continued heatedly throughout the twentieth century. Architects and theorists such as Le Corbusier, Sigfried Giedion, Richard Neutra, and Frederick Kiesler continued to concern themselves with the relationship between the built environment and mental health and came to terms with this debate in particular ways.<sup>95</sup>

The history of the rich interaction between architecture and psychiatric theory in the twentieth century is only now beginning to be investigated. The familiar modernist dream of a built environment which would measurably improve its inhabitants' mental well-being needs to be analyzed in particular cases to understand its connection to medical theories about mental health and suffering. This is a debate in which firm, apparently fact-based positions have often been taken, but where the ground is inevitably shaky. In Josef Hoffmann's Purkersdorf Sanatorium we see an early example of the modernist dream of happiness through architecture built on the shifting foundations of psychiatric theory.

## Notes

I am grateful to Barbara Miller Lane, Despina Stratigakos, Gunter Breckner and Norbert Müller for their comments, suggestions, and assistance in the preparation of this article. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

<sup>1</sup> Le Corbusier, *The Radiant City: Elements of a Doctrine of Urbanism to Be Used as the Basis of Our Machine Age* (New York, 1967), 143.

<sup>2</sup> The exact foundation date is somewhat uncertain. In 1911, the sanatorium's head doctor, Leopold Stein, wrote that the sanatorium had been founded by Krafft-Ebing and Löw "twenty-five years ago," which would have been in 1886. *Jahresbericht des Sanatoriums Purkersdorf bei Wien für das Jahr 1911, nebst literarischem Anhang herausgegeben von Kaiserlichem Rat Dr. Ludwig Stein, Chefarzt des Sanatoriums Purkersdorf bei Wien* (Vienna, 1911), 1. A guide to Vienna published by the Austrian Architects' and Engineers' Association in 1906 also states that the sanatorium was established by Krafft-Ebing and Löw, but puts the date at 1890. Österreichischer Ingenieur- und Architekten-Verein, *Wien am Anfang des XX. Jahrhunderts: Ein Führer in technischer und künstlerischer Richtung*, ed. Paul Korts, 2 vols. (Vienna, 1906), 2: 255. Fragmentary documents in the possession of the current owners, in which Löw registers the sanatorium with the Bezirkshauptmannschaft Hietzing (the governmental body overseeing Purkersdorf at the time) also suggest a foundation date of 1890.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Shorter, "Private Clinics in Central Europe, 1850–1933," *Social History of Medicine* 3, no. 3 (1990): 159–195. In this article Shorter provides a comprehensive account of the phenomenon of the sanatorium, or clinic, for nervous ailments.

<sup>4</sup> *Jahresbericht*, 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 4–5. See also Shorter, "Private Clinics," 161.

<sup>6</sup> The evidence of Krafft-Ebing's key role and ongoing influence at Purkersdorf is this passage from the *Jahresbericht* of 1911: "Was die Behandlung von Nervenkrankheiten betrifft, so gilt, seitdem der Genius unseres Altheisters von Krafft-Ebing über Purkersdorf zu walten begann, der gemeinsam mit weiland Dr. Löw vor 25 Jahren unsere Anstalt ins Leben rief, der Grundsatz des Individualisierens: Anpassung der speziellen Behandlung an die Besonderheit des Falles." [Since the genius of our past director, von Krafft-Ebing (who founded our institution along with the late Dr. Löw 25 years ago) began to rule at Purkersdorf, the principle of individualization has informed the treatment of nervous ailments: the prescription of special treatment according to the particularity of each case.] *Jahresbericht*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> George Frederick Drinka, *The Birth of Neurosis: Myth, Malady and the Victorians* (New York, 1984), 171.

<sup>8</sup> Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Über gesunde und kranke Nerven*, 5th ed. (Tübingen, 1903). See also, on the same themes, Krafft-Ebing, "Nervosität und

neurasthenische Zustände," in *Spezielle Pathologie und Therapie*, ed. Hermann Nothnagel (Vienna, 1903), vol. 12, part 2.

<sup>9</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Gesunde und kranke Nerven*, 1–15.

<sup>10</sup> "... vor Seuchen, politischen Umwälzungen, Börsenkrach's, Kriegen, vor dem Socialismus, u.a. schrecklichen Dingen. ..." Ibid., 4.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 74–76.

<sup>12</sup> Renate I. Hauser, "Sexuality, Neurasthenia and the Law: Richard von Krafft-Ebing (1840–1902)," Ph.D. diss., University College, London, 1992, 125.

<sup>13</sup> Charles E. Rosenberg, "The Place of George M. Beard in Nineteenth-Century Psychiatry," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 36 (1962): 245–259.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted *ibid.*, 249.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 249–250.

<sup>19</sup> Beard gives a concise list of the factors in modern civilization which account for the high incidence of nervous disease there: "The modern differ from the ancient civilizations mainly in these five elements—steam power, the periodical press, the telegraph, the sciences, and the mental activity of women." George M. Beard, *American Nervousness, Its Causes and Consequences* (1881; New York, 1972), 96. Referred to in Rosenberg, "George M. Beard," 254.

<sup>20</sup> Krafft-Ebing, "Nervosität," 125–130.

<sup>21</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Gesunde und kranke Nerven*, 133–173.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 169–173. The same reasons for the establishment of sanatoriums for nervous ailments are given by Dr. [Edwin] Sauberschwarz in "Ueber die Bedeutung der Sanatorien für innere und Nervenkrankheiten bei dem heutigen Stande der medizinischen Wissenschaft," *Medizinisches Correspondenz-Blatt des Württembergischen ärztlichen Landesvereins* 77 (1907): 413–415.

<sup>23</sup> "... zur Heilung der tiefen Wunden, welche die Existenz in der modernen Civilisation unzähligen unserer Mitmenschen ... zufügt. ..." Krafft-Ebing, *Gesunde und kranke Nerven*, 173.

<sup>24</sup> The other sanatorium for nervous ailments in which Krafft-Ebing was involved was the Sanatorium Mariagrün, founded in 1884 in the outskirts of Graz, Austria, by Krafft-Ebing along with Dr. Hugo Gugl and Dr. Anton Stichl. Hauser, "Krafft-Ebing," 116–117.

<sup>25</sup> Viktor Zuckerkindl to the Bezirkshauptmannschaft Hietzing Umgebung, 6 April 1903. Zuckerkindl bought the sanatorium and grounds from a Dr. Julius Rudinger, who had purchased them from Anton Löw in 1893. Julius Rudinger to the Bezirkshauptmannschaft Hietzing Umgebung, 15 April 1893.

<sup>26</sup> Gunter Breckner, *Josef Hoffmann: Sanatorium Purkersdorf* (Vienna and New York, [1985]), 162. Berta Zuckerkindl, "Josef Hoffmann," *Dekorative Kunst* 7 (1 October 1903): 1–17, contained within *Die Kunst* 10 (1903/4). Hoffmann may have had personal in addition to professional reasons for embracing such a commission and for being sympathetic with the goals of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium. According to Eduard Sekler, Hoffmann himself "undertook treatment for nervous conditions" and "undertook several nature and regeneration cures and observed special dietary and sleeping rules." Eduard Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann: The Architectural Work* (Princeton, 1985), 235.

<sup>27</sup> The foremost among the Wiener Werkstätte participants in the design of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium was Koloman Moser. Although we do not know the precise extent of his contribution, some authors argue that he was responsible for the outfitting of the salons on the second floor. Daniele Baroni and Antonio D'Auria, *Josef Hoffmann e la Wiener Werkstätte* (Milan, 1981), 61. A contemporary writer, A. S. Levetus, confirms that Moser designed the salons, and also states that he was responsible for the "fine glass window" in the entrance hall (Levetus is probably referring here to the leaded windows above the doors leading into the corridors.) A. S. Levetus, "Modern Decorative Art in Austria," in *The Art Revival in Austria*, ed. Charles Holme (London, 1906) (special summer number of *The Studio*, 1906): D/iv.

<sup>28</sup> Josef Hoffmann, "Einfache Möbel," *Das Interieur* 2 (1901), repr. and trans. as "Simple Furniture" in Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann*, 483–485.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 483.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 484.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 484. Hoffmann used predominantly organic, Art Nouveau forms from about 1898 to 1900, during which time he designed several Secession exhibitions and executed the interior of the Apollo Soap and Candle Shop, Vienna (1899) and the remodeling of Paul Wittgenstein's House on the Bergerhöhe, Vienna (also 1899).

<sup>32</sup> "Eine in ihren Proportionen, in ihrer Leistungsfähigkeit vollkommen equilibrierte Maschine. ... Es ist als wollte er die Anatomie der Dinge in unerschütterlicher Wahrheit voll und ganz zum Ausdruck bringen." Zuckerkindl, "Josef Hoffmann" (see n. 26), 6. Zuckerkindl was also an active proponent throughout her prolific journalistic career of cultural renewal through the artistic redesigning of the environment. She believed that the Viennese bourgeoisie's identity crisis, caused by its need to imitate aristocratic tastes and values, would only be resolved when its built and designed environment reflected its authentic values of simplicity and modernity. See Renate Redl, "Berta Zuckerkindl und die Wiener Gesellschaft. Ein Beitrag zur österreichischen Kunst- und Gesellschaftskritik," Ph.D. diss., University of Vienna, 1978, especially 105–112.

<sup>33</sup> Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann*, 70.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 70.

<sup>35</sup> The preexisting buildings of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium can be seen in old postcards. Ludwig Hevesi, in an essay of 1905 on Hoffmann's building, describes the old villas, "which in their dingy yellowness and weather-beaten Swiss style, serve as real foils for the naked Hoffmann building" [die in ihrer schmutzigen Gelblichkeit und verwitterten Schweitztümelei als rechte Folie für den blanken Hoffmannschen Bau dienen]. Ludwig Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann" in *Alt- und Neukunst* (1909; Klagenfurt, 1989), 215. Originally published as "Feuilleton: Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," *Fremden-Blatt*, 8 November 1905 (Morgen-Blatt): 13–15.

<sup>36</sup> Hoffmann's major projects before the Purkersdorf Sanatorium were four villas in the garden suburb Hohe Warte in Vienna.

<sup>37</sup> The final official plans for the Purkersdorf Sanatorium have been lost, but Gunter Breckner has reconstructed the original layout of each floor from the evidence of preliminary plans and original photographs (see Figures 6–8). The separation of the main functions of the building and their placement each on its own floor may derive from contemporary notions disseminated in the medical press of the ideal distribution of functions in the sanatorium building. B. Latz, in an article of 1908 on the administration of sanatoriums, advocates the functional and spatial separation of rooms for living, business, and bathing, so that the rooms the patients use remain quiet, and for the sake of simplicity and practicality. B. Latz, "Skizzen über Leitung und Betrieb eines Sanatoriums," *Zeitschrift für Balneologie, Klimatologie und Kurort-hygiene* 1 (1908–1909): 430.

<sup>38</sup> Joseph A. Lux, "Sanatorium," *Hohe Warte* 1 (1904–1905): 406–407.

<sup>39</sup> "Ein schönes Haus ist ein Haus mit einfachen, glatten, lichten Mauern, die nur einen Schmuck haben dürfen, und dieser Schmuck sind die Fenster. Fenster die wohlgesetzt sind, breit und bequem, um so viel Licht und Luft und Sonne ins Haus zu fassen, als immerhin möglich ist." Lux, "Sanatorium," 407.

<sup>40</sup> "Denn ... das Haus ist ein Sanatorium, ein Haus der Gesundheit, der verlorenen und wiedergefundenen, und da spielen nicht nur Badeeinrichtungen und sinnreiche Muskelstärkeapparate, sondern auch Luft, Licht und Sonne und die schöne waldgrüne Berglandschaft, die zu den Fenstern ins Haus und in die Seelen einströmen sollen, eine wichtige Rolle." Lux, "Sanatorium," 407.

<sup>41</sup> "... die unvergleichlich schöne und hygienische Anlage des Sanatoriums Purkersdorf, ... deren Leitmotiv, abgesehen von der hygienischen und komfortablen Unterbringung der Kranken, reichliche Genussmöglichkeit von Licht und Luft ist." Ludwig Stein, introduction to *Jahresbericht*, 4.

<sup>42</sup> As we have seen, Krafft-Ebing believed in the importance of fresh air and good ventilation for the health of the nervous system. Krafft-Ebing, *Gesunde und kranke Nerven*, 74–76.

<sup>43</sup> Shorter, "Private Clinics," 182.

<sup>44</sup> Quintus Miller, *Le sanatorium: architecture d'un isolement sublime* (Lausanne, 1992).

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 16–19.

<sup>46</sup> It should be noted here that two preliminary designs by Hoffmann for the sanatorium did feature much more extensive banded glazing on the ground and first floors. See Gunter Breckner, "Revitalisierung des Sanatoriums Purkersdorf," thesis, Technical University of Vienna, 1982, figs. 86 and 92.

<sup>47</sup> In some of the patients' rooms on the second floor, the windows are equipped with a device which allows the two top panels to be opened at opposite angles so as to prevent a strong draft. This was pointed out to me by Heinrich Glachs, the current manager of the former Purkersdorf Sanatorium, on a visit to the partially restored building in 1995.

<sup>48</sup> August Richter, "Über Anstaltsbehandlung von Herz- und Gefässerkrankungen," *Jahresbericht*, 17, and Max Berliner, "Über Erbrechen auf nervöser Grundlage," *Jahresbericht*, 32. See also Krafft-Ebing, "Nervosität," 127.

<sup>49</sup> "Professor Hoffmann war der Ansicht, dass ein Sanatorium nicht unbedingt wie ein falsches Schweizerhaus oder eine echte Cottagevilla aussehen muss." Quoted in Werner J. Schweiger, *Wiener Werkstätte: Kunst und Handwerk, 1903–1932* (Vienna, 1982), 152. A "Cottagevilla" would have been one of the rustic-eclectic villas built in the nineteenth century in the so-called cottage district of Vienna.

<sup>50</sup> Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 215.

<sup>51</sup> "Da ist nichts als Neues, Neueres, Neuestes." Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> "Und hinter diesen Fenstern lichte Räume, so angelegt . . . in einer Anordnung, die den menschlichen Funktionen und ihrer Tageseinteilung am besten entspricht und mit dem Leben, das sich im Hause abspielt, gleichsam eine richtige organische Beziehung unterhält." Lux, "Sanatorium," 407.

<sup>53</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Gesunde und kranke Nerven*, 147. This prescription for a strict schedule is made often in the literature on nervous ailments. For example, Dr. A. von Schrenck-Notzing, writing in Franz Carl Müller, ed., *Handbuch der Neurasthenie* (Leipzig, 1893), states that for nervous sufferers, "regularity, consistency, perseverance and exact scheduling of time are essential. Such patients must live by the clock." [Regelmässigkeit, Konsequenz und Ausdauer, genaue Zeiteinteilung erweisen sich als unerlässlich. Solche Patienten müssen nach der Uhr leben.] Müller, *Handbuch*, 543.

<sup>54</sup> The sanatorium regime is described using an architectural metaphor in a report by two of Krafft-Ebing's colleagues of their experiences at the Mariagrün sanatorium (see note 24): They refer to the regime as "a protective scaffolding" which supports the patient "until he can re-find himself." Hugo Gugl and Anton Stigl, *Neuropathologische Studien* (1892), 35, quoted in Hauser, "Krafft-Ebing," 120.

<sup>55</sup> "Hier suchte der Künstler die Ruhe der Gradlinigkeit wohlthuend ausströmen zu lassen." Berta Zuckerkandl, "Josef Hoffmann: Meine Arbeit," *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, no. 9868 (22 February 1911): 3.

<sup>56</sup> Levetus, "Decorative Art in Austria," D/iv. Thomas Mann's short story "Tristan" (1902) is set in the Einfried Sanatorium, "a long, white, rectilinear building . . . furnished in wonderfully pure Empire style." In one passage, Detlev Spinell, a patient being treated for an undefined nervous ailment, describes the therapeutic influence of the geometric severity of the interiors of the building: "Obviously people feel one way among furniture that is soft and comfortable and voluptuous, and quite another among the straight lines of these tables, chairs and draperies. This brightness and hardness, this cold, austere simplicity and reserved strength . . . —it has upon me the ultimate effect of an inward purification and rebirth." Thomas Mann, "Tristan," in *Death in Venice and Seven Other Stories*, trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York, 1989), 317, 319, 327.

<sup>57</sup> Hevesi comments on the simplified, abstract quality of these leaded glass windows: the main decoration of the entrance hall, he writes, "is formed by large leaded glass pieces, but not with the multicolored genre scenes in the Geysling style or à la Christiansen, but put together simply from small polished or matte white pieces, so that only the relations of spots and forms create the effect." [Seinen Hauptschmuck bilden grosse Bleiverglasungen, aber nicht mit buntscheckigen Genrebildern im Geylingstil oder à la Christiansen, sondern bloss aus weissen, geschiffenen oder matten Partikelchen zusammengesetzt, so dass nur die guten Verhältnisse der Flecken und Formen wirken.] Hevesi, "Neubauten," 216.

<sup>58</sup> "Er denkt einfach an alles. Im kaiserlichen Hofmuseum gibt es einzelne, im ewigen Dunkel begrabene Türaufschriften, die man nur lesen kann, wenn man ein Zündhölzchen ansteckt; bei Hoffmann ist neben jeder Türe ein elektrischer Knopf, um bei Dunkelheit eigens die Türaufschrift zu beleuchten. . . . Es ist sogar daran gedacht, dass die Tischlampen im Schreibzimmer die mächtigen Modehüte der korrespondierenden Damen nicht ins Gedränge bringen. . . . Und dabei ist jede Lampe so entworfen, dass ihr Licht nicht blenden kann. . . . Selbstverständlich gibt es da auch keinen Spiegel, der so hoch hängt, dass er nur für Frau Goliath taugt." Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 215–216. Trans. in Peter Vergo, *Art in Vienna, 1898–1918: Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele and Their Contemporaries* (London, 1975), 137–138, with my own alterations. Hevesi refers repeatedly in his account of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium to female patients—only once does he mention male patients (see also Hevesi's description of the mechanotherapy room from this article, quoted in the text

below). The sanatorium admitted both sexes. I have not been able to discover whether Hevesi's attention to female patients reflected a predominance of women among the patients at Purkersdorf.

<sup>59</sup> Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 216. Hevesi's observations may well reflect the view of the sanatorium building disseminated by the architect and/or client. Hevesi mentions that during his visit to the sanatorium, made just after it was opened, he was taken on a three-hour guided tour, during which, presumably, many of the details he mentions were pointed out to him. Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 217.

<sup>60</sup> "... die Kunst der Jetztzeit ist Suche nach Wahrheit, ist Bekennen von Wahrheit, und in Josef Hoffmann sehen wir einen der ergebensten Priester dieser Erkenntnis." Zuckerkandl, "Josef Hoffmann" (see n. 26), 1.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 6. (See also n. 32.)

<sup>62</sup> Hermann Bahr, "Meister Olbrich" (1898) *Secession* (Vienna, 1900). On the Secession building: "To know the truth and to have created its expression, the only, irreplaceable expression it can have, that is the accomplishment of our young architect" (62).

<sup>63</sup> Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 214–215; Lux, "Sanatorium," 407.

<sup>64</sup> "Das Sanatorium Purkersdorf . . . lediglich aus der Notwendigkeit, dem Bedürfnis und der hygienischen Wichtigkeit entstanden ist." Josef Hoffmann, "Selbstbiographie," *Ver Sacrum: Neue Hefte für Kunst und Literatur* (1972): 116.

<sup>65</sup> Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 18.

<sup>66</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Selbstdarstellung" (1925) in *Gesammelte Werke, chronologisch geordnet* (London, 1948), 14: 40. By "Erb's handbook," Freud probably meant Wilhelm Erb, *Handbuch der Krankheiten des Nervensystems* (Handbook of the diseases of the nervous system) (Leipzig, 1876). My attention was directed to this passage by Edward Shorter's article (Shorter, "Private Clinics," 193, n. 122).

<sup>67</sup> Peter Gay explains how Freud developed his theory of the psychological origins of the neuroses and psychoanalytic therapy in the years around 1900 in direct reaction to the notion embraced by Krafft-Ebing and others that neuroses were physical problems and should be treated with physical therapy. Peter Gay, *Freud, A Life for Our Times* (New York, 1988), 119–124.

<sup>68</sup> Sergei Pankejeff (The Wolf Man), "My Recollections of Sigmund Freud," in *The Wolf Man by the Wolf Man*, ed. Muriel Gardiner (New York, 1971), 139. Quoted in Gay, *Freud, A Life*, 171.

<sup>69</sup> Freud wrote: "Mediocre spirits demand of science a kind of certainty which it cannot give, a sort of religious satisfaction. Only the real, rare, true scientific minds can endure doubt, which is attached to all our knowledge." Quoted in Ernest Jones, *Sigmund Freud, Life and Work* (London, 1955), 2: 466. I was directed to this passage by Peter Gay's "Introduction: Freud, For the Marble Tablet" in *Berggasse 19, Sigmund Freud's Home and Offices, Vienna 1938, The Photographs of Edmund Engelman* (New York, 1976), 47.

<sup>70</sup> "Eine weiss lackierte oder verkachelte, 'waschbare' Welt." Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 216, trans. in Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 135.

<sup>71</sup> Pankejeff, "Recollections," 139. Quoted in Gay, *Freud, A Life*, 170–171.

<sup>72</sup> For an analysis of the spaces of Freud's office and apartment, see Diane Fuss and Joel Sanders, "Berggasse 19: Inside Freud's Office," in *Stud: Architectures of Masculinity* (New York, 1996).

<sup>73</sup> Rosenberg, "George M. Beard," 257–258.

<sup>74</sup> Edward Shorter, *From Paralysis to Fatigue: A History of Psychosomatic Illness in the Modern Era* (New York and Toronto, 1992), 194.

<sup>75</sup> Krafft-Ebing, "Nervosität," 124–126.

<sup>76</sup> In an essay in a comprehensive and often cited anthology of 1895, *Handbuch der Neurasthenie*, A. von Schrenck-Notzing offered a description of psychotherapy for nervous sufferers which anticipated Krafft-Ebing's in many ways. Schrenck-Notzing, however, went on at greater length about the ideal "psychic diet" for the nervous case, writing that "such individuals must get accustomed to living in reality, to taking life as it is, to dealing with the facts of life and not with mere possibilities and unfulfillable wishes." [Solche Individuen müssen sich gewöhnen, in der Wirklichkeit zu leben, das Leben zu nehmen wie es ist, in ihm mit Thatsachen rechnen und nicht mit blossen Möglichkeiten und unerfüllbaren Wünschen.] (Schrenck-Notzing's italics.) Hence all fantasizing and romantic enthusiasms should be avoided. Schrenck-Notzing, in Müller, ed. *Handbuch der Neurasthenie*, 542.

<sup>77</sup> Krafft-Ebing, "Nervosität," 127–129.

<sup>78</sup> Sekler, *Josef Hoffmann*, 285. See also Breckner, "Revitalisierung des Sanatoriums Purkersdorf," section 1.4.

<sup>79</sup> "Auch konstruktiv ist der Bau von grossem Interesse. Es gibt im ganzen Hause kein Gewölbe. 'Hennebiq' ist das Schlagwort; das heisst Konstruktion in Beton und Eisen. Das gestattet auch schlanke Pfeiler und grosse, aufrichtige, lügenlose Saaldecken, wie im grossen Speisesaal, wo einem nichts Kunstgeschichtliches vorgemogelt wird." Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 216. Lux also states (inaccurately) that "the building is made totally out of reinforced concrete" [das Gebäude ganz aus Betoneisen hergestellt ist]. Lux, "Sanatorium," 407.

<sup>80</sup> Electric lighting was seen to be more hygienic and thus more appropriate for medical institutions than the gas lighting it replaced, since it gave off no fumes. Bartholomäus Piekniezek, "Beleuchtung," in Eugen Hofmohl, ed., *Wiener Heilanstalten. Darstellung deren baulichen Anlage und Einrichtung* (Vienna, 1910), 209.

<sup>81</sup> Otto Wagner, *Modern Architecture: A Guidebook for His Students to This Field of Art*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave (Santa Monica, Calif., 1988), 78.

<sup>82</sup> Hauser, "Krafft-Ebing," 131.

<sup>83</sup> This room is labeled on the plan of the ground floor as the "Turnsaal," or "exercise room." The image dates from 1939–1940, but judging from Hevesi's descriptions from 1906 (see note 84) it shows something very close to what would have originally been there. In addition, a photograph taken in 1910 of the mechanotherapy room in the private sanatorium built in 1904–1908 as part of the Lower Austrian Hospital for Mental and Nervous Ailments "Am Steinhof" shows almost identical mechanotherapy equipment. Hofmohl, ed., *Wiener Heilanstalten*, 130 (figure 144).

<sup>84</sup> Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 217.

<sup>85</sup> "... dieser schöne weiss Saal voll künstlerischer Apparate. ... Einige Damen standen gerade am elektrischen Massierapparat—alles elektrisch—und liessen sich das Kreuz und den Magen massieren." Hevesi, "Neubauten von Josef Hoffmann," 217.

<sup>86</sup> A passage from an article on x-ray technology at Purkersdorf in the 1911 *Jahresbericht* shows how the Purkersdorf Sanatorium presented itself as standing, like other sanatoriums, at the cutting edge of medical science: "The amazing advances and triumphs of medical science have had a radical influence on the development and arrangement of sanatoriums." [Die ungeheuren Fortschritte und Errungenschaften der medizinischen Wissenschaft haben auch auf die Entwicklung und Einrichtung der Sanatorien ihren eingreifenden Einfluss genommen.] Alfred Frank, "Radiologisches aus dem Sanatorium Purkersdorf," in *Jahresbericht*, 24.

<sup>87</sup> Irene Etzersdorfer, *Arisiert: Eine Spurensuche im gesellschaftlichen Untergrund der Republik* (Vienna, 1995), 102–104. According to Etzersdorfer's research, a therapy for schizophrenia involving the controlled inducement of comas was developed at Purkersdorf by the psychiatrist Manfred Sakel.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 105–112.

<sup>89</sup> Prospectus for the Sanatorium Purkersdorf, c. 1939, collection of the Heimatmuseum Purkersdorf. *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>90</sup> The organization was the Evangelischer Verein für Innere Mission.

<sup>91</sup> The Sepp Müller architectural firm (Renate Fischl, project architect) was responsible for the restoration, which was financed by the building's new owners, Klaus KG.

<sup>92</sup> Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of the Modern Movement from William Morris to Le Corbusier* (London, 1936), 188–189; Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Baltimore, 1958), 350.

<sup>93</sup> I have already mentioned Eduard Sekler's discussion of the building in his monograph of 1985 on Hoffmann, which focuses on the way in which the design is connected to previous developments in Hoffmann's work and to

contemporaneous architectural trends. The Purkersdorf Sanatorium is also discussed in other monographs on Hoffmann, including Baroni and D'Auria, *Josef Hoffmann*, 58–64; Giovanni Fanelli and Ezio Godoli, *La Vienna di Hoffmann, architetto della qualità* (Rome, 1981), 157–160; Giuliano Greseri, *Josef Hoffmann* (New York, 1985), 12–13, 50; and Franco Borsi and Alessandra Perizzi, *Josef Hoffmann: tempo e geometria* (Rome, 1982), 35–41. Further mentions occur in studies of the Wiener Werkstätte (Schweiger, *Wiener Werkstätte*, 152–154; Jane Kallir, *Viennese Design and the Wiener Werkstätte* [New York, 1986], 52–54), and in surveys of Viennese art and/or architecture (Vergo, *Art in Vienna*, 135–138; Franco Borsi and Ezio Godoli, *Vienna 1900: Architecture and Design* [New York, 1986], 105–106; Ákos Moravánsky, *Die Architektur der Donaumonarchie, 1867–1918* [Berlin, 1988], 106.)

<sup>94</sup> An exception is the brief discussion of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium in Jan Tabor's essay devoted to the importance of sickness in turn-of-the-century culture in Vienna. Jan Tabor, "An dieser Blume gehst du zugrunde: Bleich, purpurrot, weiss—Krankheit als Inspiration," in *Glücklich ist, wer vergisst...? Das andere Wien um 1900*, ed. Hubert Ch. Ehalt et al. (Vienna, 1986), 215–243. Kirk Varnedoe also mentions the influence on the building of hygienic considerations and of what he calls "vitalistic" notions of health. Kirk Varnedoe, *Vienna 1900: Art, Architecture and Design* (New York, 1986), 46. A model for this article was provided by the essay by Peter Haiko, Mara Reissberger, and Harald Leopold-Löwenthal on the Lower Austrian Hospital for Mental and Nervous Ailments "Am Steinhof." The essay extends beyond Otto Wagner's famous church for the hospital and discusses the design of the entire complex from the point of view of theories of mental illness and mental hospital design. "Die weisse Stadt—der 'Steinhof' in Wien; Architektur als Reflex der Einstellung zur Geisteskrankheit," *Kritische Berichte* 9 (1981), no. 6: 3–37.

<sup>95</sup> Sylvia Lavin has shown how, after the Second World War, Neutra's architecture came to be informed by the ideas of the Viennese psychiatrist Wilhelm Reich, who embraced a mixture of physiologically oriented and psychoanalytic views of the subject. Sylvia Lavin, "Open the Box: The Architecture of Psychoanalysis and Other Strange Tales" (paper presented at Hypotheses 2 symposium, Princeton University School of Architecture, March 1996). In a recent essay, Beatriz Colomina explores the recurring desire among modern architects to create an architecture which would foster physical health, but also begins to discuss Le Corbusier's and Kiesler's interest in the effect of architecture on psychological well-being. Beatriz Colomina, "Krankheit als Metapher in der modernen Architektur / The Medical Body in Modern Architecture," *Daidalos: Architektur, Kunst, Kultur* 64 (1997): 60–71.

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Figure 1. *Innen-Dekoration* 17 (1906): 319

Figure 2. Photograph courtesy of Klaus KG

Figures 3, 13. Johanna Fiegl

Figures 4, 9, 24. Heimatmuseum Purkersdorf

Figure 5. *Der Architekt* 9 (1903): 53

Figures 6–8, 20. Gunter Breckner

Figure 10. Quintus Miller, *Le sanatorium: architecture d'un isolement sublime* (Lausanne, 1992), 19

Figures 11, 22, 23. Author

Figure 12. Collection of Professor Johannes Spalt

Figures 14, 16, 17. *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* 18 (1906): 428, 433, 438

Figures 15, 18. Wiener Werkstätte Archive, Österreichische Museum für Angewandte Kunst

Figure 19. Gunter Breckner, *Josef Hoffmann: Sanatorium Purkersdorf* (Vienna and New York, [1985]), 152

Figure 21. Photograph by Edmund Engelman