

# Holistic Therapy and Overall Design in Two Sanatoria for Nervous Ailments in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1900-1910

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*This article will investigate the overall design schemes of two sanatoria for nervous ailments built in the Austro-Hungarian Empire between 1900 and 1910. I will seek to show that the approaches to design at these sanatoria are linked to holistic treatment methods employed, which themselves could be regarded the product of both developments in psychiatry and neurology and demonstrate strong links to the contemporary cultural phenomenon, Lebensreform (life reform). At the same time, the significance of the geographical location and cultural context of each sanatorium shall also be considered.*

*Around 1900, the mental (and physical) health of the population of the Austrian sector of the Habsburg Empire was a cause for governmental, medical and public concern. Theories on the treatment and cure of nervous ailments, as advocated and practised by private sanatoria doctors, concentrated on effecting change on an afflicted person's entire lifestyle rather than merely treating the symptoms of ailments such as neurasthenia. These doctors, Richard von Krafft-Ebing among others, maintained that the causes of nervous ailments - the rapid and tangible changes occurring in contemporary life and a resulting decline in hygiene - could be tackled using a range of therapy, which they administered at specially established sanatoria. Their holistic approach began with a change of location - removal of the patient from the harmful urban environment -, and consisted further of alterations to diet and sleep habits, an increase in physical exercise, exposure to the sun and air, in addition to a battery of therapeutic techniques involving water, electricity and mechanical apparatus. Later, psychotherapy was also introduced at many sanatoria. Central to sanatorium treatment was the delivery of therapy within a carefully structured daily routine.*

*Contemporaneously, progressive architects in Austria-Hungary were encouraged to produce designs which corresponded to the needs of modern life, including the improvement of hygiene.*

*This article seeks to demonstrate that the overall designs of Josef Hoffmann's famous Purkersdorf Sanatorium near Vienna, 1904 - 05, and Leopold Bauer's Priessnitz Sanatorium in Gräfenberg, Silesia (today Lázně Jeseník in Moravia, Czech Republic), 1909 - 10, were responses to the holistic therapy employed. Moreover, the location of both sanatoria on the site of existing hydrotherapy clinics emphasise the link to holistic therapy. However, Hoffmann's and Bauer's designs contrast sharply: the revolutionary white, rational, proto-modernist Gesamtkunstwerk at Purkersdorf and the massive, grey edifice at Gräfenberg which clearly draws on historical architectural language. Nevertheless, each architect created an overall design, a harmony of exterior and interior features, to provide the framework for the stringent therapeutic regime conducted by the doctors. Furthermore, this article will propose that the geographical location of each building and its cultural environment played a significant role in each overall design created and the marked differences between the two. Above all, in the course of this comparative investigation this article seeks to offer fresh subject matter and analysis to the study of sanatoria for nervous ailments in the Austro-Hungarian empire around 1900.*

Josef Hoffmann's Purkersdorf Sanatorium near Vienna (1904 - 05) (figure 1) and Leopold Bauer's Priessnitz Sanatorium in Gräfenberg, Silesia (today Lázně Jeseník in Moravia, Czech Republic) (1909 - 10) (figure 2) are two examples of sanatoria for nervous ailments built in the first decade of the twentieth century. In the following discussion, approaches to design at these sanatoria are shown to be linked to the holistic treatment methods employed. This approach to therapy can be regarded as a result of developments in psychiatry and neurology and to reflect contemporary reform tendencies seen collectively in what is known today as the *Lebensreform* (life reform) movement. As figures 1 and 2 clearly show, visually these sanatoria differ considerably. Therefore, the significance of

the geographical location, the historical and cultural context and the architects' own beliefs for the design of the two sanatoria shall also be investigated. While Hoffmann's design has been described as the most appropriate form for housing the treatment of modern nervous ailments,<sup>1</sup> it is the intention here to demonstrate that the form of buildings in this era serving the same function need not be analogous; other approaches to design are equally viable.

## **Nervous ailments and their treatment**

Conditions such as neurasthenia (nervous exhaustion) and hysteria were by no means novel in the late nineteenth century. However, what was new was an explanation of the aetiology of nervous ailments,



FIGURE 1: *Purkersdorf Sanatorium, Josef Hoffmann, 1904 – 05. (photographed by the author, June 2005)*



FIGURE 2: *Priessnitz Sanatorium, Leopold Bauer, 1909 – 10. (photographed by the author, July 2005)*

namely the notion that they were caused by the unhealthy, demanding and unregulated lifestyles brought about by urbanisation, industrialisation, technological and scientific progress, and in general a faster pace of life. Following the lead of American doctor and electrotherapy expert, George Miller Beard, who first described the variety of physical indications of neurasthenia,<sup>2</sup> doctors across German-speaking territories, such as Richard von Krafft-Ebing in Vienna, Hermann Oppenheim in Berlin or Paul Julius Möbius in Leipzig, regarded nervous ailments as functional, i.e. considered real physical, nervous conditions. As such, their somatic symptoms were treated

with a corresponding range of physical therapies such as sun and fresh air cures, hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, passive and active exercise (known as mechanotherapy), in addition to alterations to diet and sleep patterns.<sup>3</sup> Therapy was delivered within a strict daily regime in a location far removed from the patients usual environment; mountain and coastal climates were considered particularly beneficial.<sup>4</sup>

By 1900, a further and highly significant aspect of the treatment of nervous ailments was added: psychotherapy. It was considered fundamental to the therapeutic plan; German psychiatrist Krafft-Ebing, who was responsible for the foundation of the original phase of Purkersdorf Sanatorium, believed that the **Gemüt** (mind and soul) was affected by the somatic symptoms of functional nervous ailments and consequently required comfort, encouragement, guidance and distraction.<sup>5</sup> It is important to point out here that the concept of psychotherapy is different from our understanding of the term today and from Freudian psychoanalysis which was being developed at this time. Psychotherapy meant constant supervision of patients by their doctors, the persuasion or psychological influencing of the patient that his or her programme of physical and dietary therapy would be successful, that recovery and a better, healthy future were possible. Krafft-Ebing represented the views of many nerve doctors in his belief that nervous ailments were universal conditions requiring an overall approach to treatment, an holistic approach which would re-educate patients in the ways of living a more healthy lifestyle and thus preventing future relapse.<sup>6</sup>

My use of the term holistic is an attempt to translate the German word **allgemein**, meaning in this context total, overall, universal. Moreover, the connotations “holistic medicine” carries today are not entirely inapplicable here. First, somatic psychiatry’s approach to treating nervous ailments bore a strong resemblance to the healing methods of naturopathy - at the time a central philosophy of proponents of alternative lifestyles outlined by the term *Lebensreform*<sup>7</sup> - a precursor of today’s alternative medicine. Second, in Austrian culture today, hydrotherapy, dietary measures and other non-orthodox approaches to combat physical and “nervous” conditions (in today’s world stress or burn-out syndrome) at a rural or coastal location far from home are commonplace. To go ‘auf Kur’ for the benefit of one’s health appears to be as popular now as it was one hundred years ago.

### **Holistic approach to therapy practised at sanatoria for nervous ailments**

Evidence of the practice of this holistic approach to the treatment of nervous ailments - and its persistence long into the era of Freudian psychoanalysis – at the time of or after the building of Hoffmann's and Bauer's designs can be found in the Purkersdorf Sanatorium annual report of 1911.<sup>8</sup> A further example can be found in an advertising brochure for the Priessnitz Sanatorium dating from no earlier than 1928.<sup>9</sup> Sanatorium advertisements in guidebooks on Austro-Hungarian spa resorts published in 1909 and 1914 also provide evidence of an holistic therapeutic approach to treatment.<sup>10</sup>

In the 1911 report, Purkersdorf chief doctor Ludwig Stein highlighted the significant influence of the year-round climatic conditions of the location in the *Wienerwald*. He continued by describing the splendid, hygienic therapeutic facilities at the sanatorium, the clean and comfortable accommodation provided for patients, the abundant enjoyment patients could make of light and air, which Stein regarded as the *Leitmotiv* of the sanatorium. Finally, he emphasised the grandeur and beauty of the large park in which the sanatorium (comprising eight buildings in total) was set.<sup>11</sup> In two case studies outlined in the annual report, patients with nervous conditions, depression and nervous sickness, were prescribed combinations of hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, light treatment and carefully supervised dietary regimes.<sup>12</sup> Attention is drawn to the importance of a regulated daily routine; in particular depressed patients incapable of making decisions would require such guidance or 'psychological influencing'.<sup>13</sup> A further stipulation was the removal of patients to a sanatorium far from their usual environment.<sup>14</sup>

In the advertising brochure for the Priessnitz Sanatorium and the spa guidebooks, the wide range of physical therapy available is described. This included light, air and sun baths, artificial light therapy, mechano- and electrotherapy. The climatic conditions in Gräfenberg, the education of the staff and the special attention to and supervision by the doctor of patients' diets were all highlighted in the brochure as providing a therapeutic programme which would lead to the recovery of patients' health.<sup>15</sup> The peace and quiet offered by the gentle, green landscape of the Sudeten mountains and the 'euphoric influence' of the climate were deemed the ideal basis for psychotherapy performed by the specially trained doctors of the sanatorium.<sup>16</sup> It seems likely that psychotherapy was fostered and practised by the doctor in charge of the Priessnitz Sanatorium

in 1910, Dr Rudolf Hatschek. In 1913 he wrote, psychotherapy should 'play the first and foremost role in the treatment of nervous ailments.'<sup>17</sup> Further, he considered psychotherapy to be as old as medicine itself, although in the past it had been instinctively rather than deliberately practised.<sup>18</sup>

The goals of holistic therapy at the Purkersdorf and Priessnitz sanatoria were then first and above all, to restore patients' nervous strength and second, with the assistance of psychotherapy, to reform patients' lifestyles: to return them to the world healthier and equipped with the skills to continue leading a healthy life. In short, sanatoria for nervous ailments can be considered expressions of how psychiatric discourse was becoming increasingly involved in the everyday life of individuals around 1900.

### **The architects' approaches to design**

Now that the common medical basis of Purkersdorf Sanatorium and Priessnitz Sanatorium has been established, the beliefs and approaches of architects Josef Hoffmann and Leopold Bauer will be investigated. The visual differences between the two buildings will be compared and yet it will be suggested that both architects applied an overall design scheme corresponding to the holistic approach taken to treatment inside.

In their early writings before and just after 1900, both Hoffmann and Bauer demonstrated a strong interest in reform. As an architect emerging from Otto Wagner's class at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts and within the wider movement of rethinking Historicism, Josef Hoffmann's ideas referred directly to reform in design. Leopold Bauer, also a graduate of Wagner's masterclass, was, on the other hand, at this time more concerned with reform *through* design. The purpose of improving hygiene and living conditions for the residents of rapidly expanding cities such as Vienna was for him the primary consideration in the design process.

#### **Josef Hoffmann**

In 1897, Hoffmann's article "Architektonisches von der Insel Capri" (Architecture on Capri) appeared in the journal *Der Architekt*. In it, he outlined experiences of the 'spontaneous Mediterranean architecture'<sup>19</sup> he encountered during his travels. Evidently, the buildings of Capri and the Austrian Riviera left a lasting impression. He wrote,

The example of vernacular art, as it exists here in these small simple country houses has a great effect upon every impartial mind and further reveals how deficient we are in this at home. The example of Capri and other locations should not however lead to the imitation of this style of architecture, but should serve the purpose of awakening thoughts of living in an unpretentious fashion.<sup>20</sup>

The effect of the simplicity of this vernacular architecture upon Hoffmann was clear: simplicity was something to strive for in design. However, it was not something to be imitated but to be borne in mind as a principle for or in the spirit of the design. In addition to rejecting imitation, Hoffmann revealed he could not abide the disguising of basic structural forms. Ornament, if there was to be any, should remain simple and authentically artistic. The simplicity in the design of this sort of architecture was, however, not just a surface effect. It was much more the 'realisation of the direct correlation between necessity and design.'<sup>21</sup>

With this in mind, in "Einfache Möbel" (Simple Furniture) published in the journal *Das Interieur* in 1901, Hoffmann set out a personal vision of how a building and its furnishings ought to be generated: 'a house should emerge as one piece and that its exterior should inherently reveal its interior to us. [...] Equally essential is the style of every piece of furniture.'<sup>22</sup> Thus, for any design project Hoffmann advocated not only simplicity and authenticity associated with purpose, but also the conception of a design as a whole, where each room of the interior and even the furniture within these rooms could be understood as one integrated entity drawn from the appearance of the exterior. I will analyse how these principles were employed in the design for the Purkersdorf Sanatorium below.

### Leopold Bauer

In his 1899 book *Verschiedene Skizzen, Entwürfe und Studien*, Leopold Bauer was particularly interested in concrete issues with respect to future cultural progress and setting his architectural ideas in a social context. He recounts his experience at a gathering of architects where his serious plea for a decisive improvement of street maintenance in Vienna was met with derisory laughter. The ideal of the 'elimination of dust and dirt' had to be pursued in order to aspire to cultural advancement.<sup>23</sup> It seems that Bauer saw himself not only sharing the concerns of those who were campaigning at the time for sanitary reform, but also

as a pioneer-like figure among architects in his reform efforts. He explained that covering the road surfaces with tarmac, providing adequate sewerage, placing gas pipes and electricity cables under the streets and furnishing vehicles with rubber tyres would effect great change in the level of hygiene on Vienna's streets.<sup>24</sup>

Bauer was also very aware of the benefits of clean air, light and green space. He vigorously disapproved of the advancing urbanisation in Vienna:

It is a scandal, here, where it is inexcusable, to build rooms in perpetual darkness and to sanction them with flawed building regulations. Humane measures would certainly result in aggrieved landowners and speculators. But what is this loss (or better expressed, this thwarted gain) in the face of poor accommodation detrimental to the health of thousands of families?<sup>25</sup>

Around 1900, it appears that Bauer was very much occupied with the improvement of health and welfare issues through design and planning. By the time he came to design the Priessnitz Sanatorium in 1909 however, a second component in his design ethos, strikingly divergent from his once close allegiance to Wagner's teachings, was manifest.<sup>26</sup> At the opening of his Chamber of Commerce in Troppau (today Opava) in 1910, he stated:

Modern architecture is influenced by two powerful factors. On the one hand, every building must epitomise the strict demands imposed [upon it] by the irrefutable necessities of life. On the other, this embodiment should be fashioned in such a manner, that shows its dependence upon and the influence of building methods from previous centuries.<sup>27</sup>

The 'dependence upon and influence of the architecture of the past' opens up a great difference between Bauer's and Hoffmann's approaches to design of their respective sanatoria. This point of disparity provides a point of departure from which to begin the comparison of the Purkersdorf and Priessnitz sanatoria buildings.

### Comparative analysis of the sanatoria buildings

While the Purkersdorf Sanatorium has been the focus of much scholarship, particularly in the last twenty five years, there exists a distinct lack of interpretative research on the design of the Priessnitz Sanatorium.

Thus, it is one aim of this article to alter these circumstances. The most recent work on Purkersdorf Sanatorium by Leslie Topp (1997/2004) and Christian Witt-Döring (2003) has drawn attention to Hoffmann's design in light of the function or purpose of the building, a factor of undoubted significance that had been merely acknowledged in earlier studies.<sup>28</sup> This scholarship provides a background for comparison with Bauer's design and a point from where established ideas on the design of sanatoria for nervous ailments can be developed. Above all, this discussion seeks to challenge Topp's assertion that the function of the Purkersdorf Sanatorium dictated simplicity, order and technological imagery which were new to Hoffmann's design vocabulary, so that 'a sanatorium building had never looked so radically modern or so appropriate to its purpose.'<sup>29</sup>

Despite the disparity of the architects' approaches, a quote from the psychiatrist so inherently linked with Purkersdorf, Krafft-Ebing, demonstrates very well Bauer's approach to design at the Priessnitz Sanatorium. Krafft-Ebing explained that the advantages of a stay in a sanatorium, of the treatment offered there, were that 'they frequently transport the sick into another spiritual atmosphere and so leave the many harmful influences of domestic and professional life behind.'<sup>30</sup> While Witt-Döring suggests that the unfamiliar qualities of Hoffmann's revolutionary design 'removed [patients] from the detrimental affects of reality',<sup>31</sup> it seems possible that at the Priessnitz Sanatorium holistic therapy did not only 'transport the sick into another spiritual atmosphere', but that Bauer's design contributed equally to the psychological element of treatment. In fact, in 1919 in a further demonstration of his divergence from Wagner's theories, Bauer wrote that the creation of a 'mystical atmosphere' was intrinsic to any design.<sup>32</sup> The following quote from Dr Karl Mayr, writing on two sanatoria in Germany in the design journal *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* in 1904, suggests just such an approach to design.

The purpose [of the buildings] had a crucial influence [upon their design]. However, there was something further: progressive doctors have long known, that if the function of an individual organ ever becomes unstable, the human being requires not solely a physical but also a psychological remedy, or as an outstanding doctor ... once stated: a second world must be created for the patient, to where his soul climbs while leaving his body to the knocks of the

earthly world. Soothed, refreshed, courageous once again, the human being is capable of much more energetic resistance to attack.<sup>33</sup>

Mayr's prescription for achieving this desired effect upon patients required 'an embodiment of the whole, the choice of colours, the finish of the wood, the employment of materials with respect to the specific hygienic function.'<sup>34</sup> Thus, a hygiene-conscious, overall design corresponding to the holistic therapy undergone by patients was necessary to create this 'second world' which would assist in the restoration of patients' health and ultimately the reform of their everyday lives.

As figures 1 and 2 show, Bauer's design differs most obviously from the revolutionary newness of Hoffmann's in its reference to familiar historical elements, which, as was mentioned above, was one of two main factors for any design for Bauer at this time. If Hoffmann's building is juxtaposed with those already in existence at Purkersdorf and the Priessnitz Sanatorium with the architecture of spa resort village Gräfenberg, the distinction becomes all the more apparent. Hoffmann's design stands in stark contrast to the kind of imitation, half-timbered architecture he described with detestation in 1897. Bauer's however, draws on elements found in the surrounding buildings, such as the five-bay symmetry of the building immediately in front of the sanatorium, a specific form of roof window, mouldings around door, window and arch apertures, relief pilasters on the façade. While Hoffmann wanted to create a stable, therapeutic island, Bauer deliberately placed his design in its geographical context. Furthermore, Bauer is seen as drawing upon the architecture of the locality in addition to placing the building within an historical context: Gräfenberg was the birthplace of Vincenz Priessnitz the pioneering 'modern' proponent of hydrotherapy. Hydrotherapy was a major aspect of the holistic treatment practised at the Priessnitz Sanatorium. Thus, the sanatorium demonstrates not only dependence upon and the influence of building methods from previous centuries, but also of therapeutic methods from previous centuries. The exterior provides the first component of an overall, 'spiritual atmosphere' linked with the past.

### **Interior spaces of the sanatoria**

Hoffmann's ideal in 1901 was a building created as one entity: the exterior revealing the interior. This concept has certainly been applied at Purkersdorf Sanatorium.

For example, the regular rhythm of dark windows, squares subdivided into smaller squares, puncturing the white surface where openings and façade edges are defined by tiny squares is continued inside to the hall.<sup>35</sup> As Topp and Witt-Döring<sup>36</sup> have demonstrated, the square motif and contrasting black and white create a 'self-referential' space as it were, where furniture and fittings in a variety of materials relate to the form of others and simultaneously refer to the exterior and to spaces further inside. The hall is one element in a very tightly integrated overall design; a reflection, Topp suggests, of the strict daily schedule to which patients lives were organised.<sup>37</sup> The function of the hall, a space for circulation, of onward movement, is defined by its design, e.g. the black and white tiles continue in the corridors leading from the hall, visible through glass doors and up the stairs. At the same time, this design met the highest hygiene standards.<sup>38</sup> At Purkersdorf, the design seems to act on a psychological level by orientating the patients both physically and temporally within their radically new world. However, it does not create a second world as Bauer's design does.

The hall at the Priessnitz Sanatorium does in fact also serve to guide patients through and around the sanatorium. The double row of light grey Corinthian columns and the long carpet, perhaps with a floral pattern, provides an obvious passage through the space towards the dining, music and other social spaces at the rear of the sanatorium. Simultaneously, the columns also divide the hall into three distinct functional areas: in the centre horizontal movement; to one side, with the grand staircase and lift, vertical movement; on the other side a contrasting stationary place for patients to meet and gather around the fireplace. It seems, however, that the design of this space and its functions suggest places outside a sanatorium and thus create a second world or spiritual atmosphere taking the patients away from the worries of their ailments and the healing process. Perhaps the striking rows of columns and the stairs suggest a stately home or a grand hotel, while gathering around a fireplace is perhaps more clearly suggestive of a domestic environment. These spaces are not only dependent upon and influenced by elements of historical architectural vocabulary, but these spiritual atmospheres are also reminiscent of both universal and individual pasts and thus perhaps provided a sense of security in the changing world from which nervous ailments emerged.

In contrast to Hoffmann's tightly integrated design of both objects and space, Bauer's approach to overall design seems to highlight differences. In the hall at Purkersdorf black and white squares were found on the chair in raffia and on the floor in ceramic tiles, while at Priessnitz, a differentiation was made in motifs between materials.<sup>39</sup> On walls and on the fascia of the staircase, a naturalistic floral plaster relief can be found. In a window, the floral motif has become more stylised, in glass crystals and frosted glass. In the metal work balustrades of the staircase, the lift cage and outside as balcony and loggia balustrades, which all define visible public spaces, the floral motif has evolved into a series of simple vertical curlicues and rods.

Moving to the dining rooms of each sanatorium (figures 3 and 4), Bauer's interest in differences and Hoffmann's in integration become even more apparent. The coffering and wall panelling in dark wood and the chandeliers of the dining room of the Priessnitz Sanatorium (figure 3) conjure up a spiritual atmosphere quite different to that of the hall. The familiar architectural historical elements present a space reminiscent of a medieval great hall, a place for banquets and entertainment, a contrast to the suggested domesticity and grand promenade of the hall. Once again, there is differentiation in the details: the coffered ceiling and the chandeliers hanging from it are octagonal, while elements in the same materials associated with the walls - panelling and light fixtures - are square. The wallpaper above the panelling also appears to possess a square motif, but again not entirely similar to that of those around it. If the layout of tables seen here was usual, it is possible to conclude that Bauer wished for each individual guest



FIGURE 3: *Priessnitz Sanatorium, dining room, Leopold Bauer, 1909 – 10. (Státní okresní archiv Jeseník, Czech Republic. Priessnitz Sanatorium, Freiwaldau – Gräfenberg, p. 5)*



FIGURE 4: *Purkersdorf Sanatorium, dining room, Josef Hoffmann, 1904 – 05.*  
(OeNB, Vienna. *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration*, no. 18, 1906, p. 433)

to experience the spiritual atmosphere of the dining room in his or her own way, different for each one. Conversely, at Purkersdorf (figure 4), if dining together at one long table was the customary arrangement, as the image shows, the design of Purkersdorf can be understood not only as a means of orientation of when and for how long to engage in particular activities, but also where, as Witt-Döring states, furniture defines the function of spaces.<sup>40</sup> In the dining room, a 'system of vertical and horizontal co-ordinates'<sup>41</sup> exists to guide patients' experience of the space and of how activities should be performed. In gathering patients around one large table for meals, there is a sense of patients being regarded as one single mass entity, themselves integrated into the design of the sanatorium.

This notion can be applied further to the patient bedrooms of both sanatoria (figures 5 and 6). The bedroom ensemble at Purkersdorf, designed by Koloman Moser (figure 5), is once again subject to a fully integrated, strict geometry, its details echoing others within the sanatorium.<sup>42</sup> One could imagine that every patient bedroom was designed in exactly the same manner. The way in which the bed is the focus of the room again defines the function of the space and its sparseness suggests the limited amount of time patients ought to spend there.<sup>43</sup> The design of interior spaces and furniture at Purkersdorf Sanatorium repeatedly reveals how the daily life of patients was organised and how or for how long patients were

expected to carry out each activity within the strict schedule.

Bauer's patient bedroom (figure 6) contrasts starkly with Hoffmann's. Here, the clutter of furniture suggests a multitude of functions, a space in which to sleep, to relax on the chaise longue, to read, write or even work. Through the arrangement of furniture, patients are afforded individual choice in their private space; no one specific function is dictated. In contrast to the ascetic quality of the Purkersdorf bedroom, the Priessnitz bedroom suggests the horror vacui of Historicism. Perhaps the patients would have found this comforting or felt a sense of security through the familiar; perhaps Bauer's objective here was to produce a spiritual atmosphere of domesticity, as he had in the hall. Moreover, further images and documentary evidence prove that not every bedroom in the Priessnitz Sanatorium was decorated identically.<sup>44</sup> While the same furniture design was employed, the colour of wood, wallpaper, painted surfaces and textiles were varied. In this way, the sense of a domestic spiritual atmosphere in the bedrooms is strengthened; in their own homes patients may have possessed similar variations based upon one model.

### Conclusion

In considering the architecture of Purkersdorf Sanatorium and the Priessnitz Sanatorium, one can draw the convincing conclusion that the overall designs



FIGURE 5: *Purkersdorf Sanatorium, patient bedroom, Koloman Moser, 1904 – 05. (Wiener Werkstätte-Archiv, Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna)*



FIGURE 6: *Priessnitz Sanatorium, patient bedroom, Leopold Bauer, 1909 – 10. (Státní okresní archiv Jeseník, Czech Republic. Priessnitz Sanatorium, Freiwaldau – Gräfenberg, p. 6)*

produced by Josef Hoffmann and Leopold Bauer were influenced by the holistic therapy - the treatment of the whole patient - which would occur within their built structures. However, the ultimate form of these two overall designs was shaped predominantly by the architects' own ideas and ideals. Hoffmann aimed to create a simple, integrated building; Bauer to employ a range of elements of familiar, historical architectural language, to create a mystical atmosphere and to place his buildings firmly within a specific geographical and historical context. In so doing, Hoffmann's tightly structured, physical world suited the highly regimented lifestyle of patients receiving treatment for nervous ailments. Bauer's atmospheric environment afforded patients a spiritual second world in which their souls could be soothed while their bodies were treated for the somatic symptoms of nervous ailments. Finally therefore, one could argue that while no other building may have looked so radically modern, Hoffmann's Purkersdorf Sanatorium is no more appropriate to its purpose than Bauer's Priessnitz Sanatorium. This article has demonstrated that another, equally viable approach to the design of sanatoria for nervous ailments existed which was just as appropriate to its purpose.<sup>45</sup>

Many thanks to my supervisor, Leslie Topp, for her advice and for our discussions about this article, to Markus Kristan at the Architecture Collection at the Albertina, Vienna for allowing me access to the Leopold Bauer estate, to Jindrich Vybíral for answering questions about Bauer's work and to Bohumila Tinzová and her colleagues at the regional archive in Jeseník, Czech Republic for their assistance with my research on the Priessnitz Sanatorium and for their hospitality in the depths of winter.

All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Topp, Leslie, *Architecture and truth in fin-de-siecle Vienna*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Rosenberg, Charles E., "The place of George M. Beard in nineteenth-century psychiatry" in the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. XXXVI, 1962, pp. 247 – 248.

<sup>3</sup> Krafft-Ebing, Dr Richard von, *Ueber gesunde und kranke Nerven*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Tübingen: Verlag der H.Laupp'schen Buchhandlung, 1903, pp. 133 – 173; Möbius, Dr Paul Julius, *Ueber die Behandlung von Nervenkranken und die Errichtung von Nervenheilstätten*, Berlin: S. Karger Verlag, 1896, pp. 20 – 23; Oppenheim, Dr Hermann, *Lehrbuch der Nervenkrankheiten für Lehrer und Studierende*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Berlin: S. Karger Verlag, 1898, pp. 789 – 793 (specifically for



the treatment of neurasthenia).

<sup>4</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Ueber gesunde und kranke Nerven*, p. 147; Möbius, p. 20, p. 22; Oppenheim, p. 791.

<sup>5</sup> Ideas about the importance of psychotherapy can be found in: Krafft-Ebing, Hofrat Dr Richard von, *Nervosität und neurasthenische Zustände*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1903, p. 125; Möbius, p. 14 – 16 outlines the importance of **Suggestion**; Oppenheim, p. 789 comments on the value of psychotherapy in the treatment of neurasthenia. He believes it to be more efficacious in the treatment of hysteria.

Stein notes that Krafft-Ebing and a Dr Löw founded Purkersdorf Sanatorium 25 years previously which would suggest a date of around 1886.

Stein, Dr Ludwig, *Jahresbericht des Sanatoriums Purkersdorf bei Wien für das Jahr 1911 nebst literarischem Anhang*, Vienna: Franz Doll, 1912, p. 5. Stein notes that Krafft-Ebing and a Dr Löw founded Purkersdorf Sanatorium 25 years previously which would suggest a date of around 1886.

On the requirements for treating a **Gemüt** affected by nervous ailments, see: Krafft-Ebing, *Ueber gesunde und kranke Nerven*, p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> On the overall approach to treatment, see: Krafft-Ebing, *Nervosität und neurasthenische Zustände*, p. 125.

‘Der Arzt muss dieser Neurose [neurasthenia] gegenüber sich immer bewußt sein, dass sie eine allgemeine ist, damit er nicht in die Gefahr kommt, eine Erkrankung eines einzelnen Organs zum Gegenstand der Behandlung zu machen...’

On the re-education of patients to live more healthily, see: Krafft-Ebing, *Ueber gesunde und kranke Nerven*, p. 77.

‘dass Staat und Privatier anfangen, die Gesundheitspflege zu berücksichtigen und durch Einflussnahme auf die Gesetzgebung, vor Allem aber durch die Verbreitung in der Masse des Volkes zu einer gesundheitsgemässeren Lebensweise anregen...’

Oppenheim, pp. 785 -786.

<sup>7</sup> see for instance: Krabbe, Wolfgang R., *Gesellschaftsveränderungen durch Lebensreform. Strukturmerkmale einer sozialreformerischen Bewegung im Deutschland der Industrialisierungsperiode*, Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> Stein, Dr Ludwig, *Jahresbericht des Sanatoriums Purkersdorf bei Wien für das Jahr 1911 nebst literarischem Anhang*, Vienna: Franz Doll, 1912.

<sup>9</sup> *Priessnitz Sanatorium, Freiwaldau – Gräfenberg, Ostsudetenland. Klinische geleitete Anstalt für Innere und Nervenkrankheiten*, Teschen an der Elbe, no date (advertising brochure). The date can be determined as no earlier than 1928 as the cover illustration shows an extension to the sanatorium which was completed in 1928.

<sup>10</sup> *Offizielles Jahrbuch 1909 des Zentralverbandes der Kur- und Heilanstalts-Besitzer resp. Leiter in Österreich*, Vienna: Verlag des Zentralverbandes, 1909, p. 47.

*Österreichisches Bäderbuch. Offizielles Handbuch der Bäder*. Berlin, Vienna: Urban & Schwarzenberg, 1914, p. 722.

<sup>11</sup> Stein, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Stein, p. 15.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Stein, pp. 32 – 33.

<sup>15</sup> *Priessnitz Sanatorium, Freiwaldau – Gräfenberg,*

*Ostsudetenland*, pp. 2 – 3

<sup>16</sup> *Priessnitz Sanatorium, Freiwaldau – Gräfenberg, Ostsudetenland*, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> Hatschek, Sanitätsrat Dr Rudolf, ‘Zur Praxis der Psychotherapie’ in *Wiener klinische Wochenschrift*, 25, 1913, pp. 1015.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Sekler, Eduard F, *Josef Hoffmann*. Salzburg & Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 1982, p. 479

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

‘Das Beispiel von Volkskunst, wie solche thatsächlich hier in diesen einfachen Landhäusern besteht, ist auf jedes unbefangene Gemüth von großer Wirkung und läßt immer mehr fühlen, wie sehr wir bei uns zu Hause daran Mangel leiden....Das Beispiel Capris und einiger anderen Orte [...] soll aber nicht zur Nachahmung dieser Bauweise führen, sondern es soll nur zum Zweck haben, in uns einen anheimelnden Wohngedanken zu wecken, der nicht in Verdecorierung des schlechten Baugerippes mit lächerlichen, fabriksmäßig hergestellten Cementgußornamenten oder in aufocroierten Schweizer- und Giebelhausarchitekturen besteht, sondern in einer einfachen, [...] verständnis- und stimmungsvollen Gruppierung gleichmäßiger, natürlicher Farbe, wo es der Reichtum gestattet, in lieber weniger, aber dafür von wirklicher Künstlerhand stammender Plastik.’

<sup>21</sup> Sekler, p. 23.

‘die Bauten [führten] einen direkten Zusammenhang zwischen Bedürfnis und Architektur als dessen Erfüllung vor Augen...’

<sup>22</sup> Sekler, p. 484.

‘Ich glaube, daß ein Haus wie aus einem Guß dastehen sollte und daß uns sein Äußeres auch schon sein Inneres verraten müßte. Wohl gebe ich eine Steigerung der Mittel zu, flehe aber um Einheitlichkeit der Räume untereinander. Ebenso notwendig ist der Stil jedes einzelnen Möbels.’

<sup>23</sup> Bauer, Leopold, *Verschiedene Skizzen, Entwürfe und Studien*, Vienna: Anton Schroll, 1899, p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Bauer, *Verschiedene Skizzen, Entwürfe und Studien*, p. 25.

<sup>25</sup> Bauer, *Verschiedene Skizzen, Entwürfe und Studien*, p. 29.

‘es ist eine große Schande, hier, wo es durch nichts entschuldbar ist, Räume mit ewiger Finsternis zu bauen, ja sie durch eine schlechte Bauordnung zu sanctionieren. Gewiss würden durch volksfreundliche Maßregeln einige Baugrundbesitzer und Speculanten geschädigt werden. Was ist aber dieser Verlust (oder besser gesagt, entgangene Gewinn) gegen das schlechte, gesundheitsschädliche Wohnen von tausenden Familien?’

<sup>26</sup> Jindrich Vybíral’s second chapter on the work of Leopold Bauer “Auf der Suche nach Kontinuität und Ordnung” (The Search for Continuity and Order) in his book *Junge Meister. Architekten aus der Schule Otto Wagners in Mähren und Schlesien*, begins by addressing the matter of Bauer’s style taking the dramatic turn from modernist to historically influenced between 1903 and 1910; his striking divergence from the teachings of Otto Wagner. Vybíral explains that neither the time when the difference of opinion and approach between Bauer and Wagner occurred can be pinpointed with any certainty nor can the question posed by Marco Pozzetto, in Pozzetto’s 1980 book, on the cause of the Bauer/Wagner controversy be answered. However, he

suggests that Bauer's stylistic u-turn rather than the row with Wagner itself provoked the greatest discussions. Vybiral also highlights a letter from Bauer dated January 1910, in which he announces his departure from the Austrian Association of Architects (Oesterreichischer Architektenbund) to Wagner, president of the association. Among the reasons Bauer cited for his departure were, in Bauer's opinion, Wagner's 'despotic behaviour' and the 'imposition' of Wagner's own points of view and that Wagner's 'extreme modernism [was] as damaging as thoughtless imitation of historical architectural styles.'

See: Vybiral, Jindrich, translation from Czech to German: Stefan Bartilla & Jürgen Ostmeier, *Junge Meister. Architekten aus der Schule Otto Wagners in Mähren und Schlesien*, Vienna, Cologne, Weimar: Böhlau, 2007, pp 171 – 174.

Reference to Marco Pozzetto: Pozzetto, Marco, translation from Italian to German: Michaela Reden, *Die Schule Otto Wagners*, Vienna, Munich: Schroll, 1980, p. 213.

<sup>27</sup> Bauer, Leopold. *Leopold Bauer, zum 60. Geburtstag*. 1932, pp. 23 – 24.

'die moderne Baukunst wird also zwei mächtige Faktoren haben, auf die sie sich hauptsächlich gründet. Einerseits erheben die unabweislich Lebensnotwendigkeiten, die jeder Bau verkörpern muß, strenge Forderungen, andererseits soll diese Verkörperung in einer Weise erfolgen, welche abhängig ist und beeinflusst wird von den Bauweisen frühere Jahrhunderte.'

<sup>28</sup> Topp, Leslie, "The Purkersdorf Sanatorium and the Appearance of Science" in *Architecture and truth in fin-de-siecle Vienna*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 63 – 95. This chapter appeared previously as the article "An architecture for modern nerves: Josef Hoffmann's Purkersdorf Sanatorium" in *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 56, no.4, December 1997, pp. 414- 437.

Witt-Döring, Christian, "Der therapeutische Innenraum" in *kunst.buwog.at & Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur* (ed.) *Josef Hoffmans Sanatorium Purkersdorf bei Wien*, Vienna: Agens, 2003, pp. 28 – 34.

The formal aspects of Hoffmann's design for Purkersdorf Sanatorium were examined but only very few words were devoted to a description of what purpose the building served. See: Sekler's monograph on Hoffmann in particular and Kallir, Jane, *Viennese Design and the Wiener Werkstätte*, publication accompanying exhibition, Galerie St Etienne, New York: George Brazillien, 1986

<sup>29</sup> Topp, p. 71.

<sup>30</sup> Krafft-Ebing, *Nervosität und neurasthenische Zustände*, p. 127.

'Der Aufenthalt in solchen [Kuranstalten] wirkt aber dadurch günstig, dass hier alle sonstigen [zusätzlich zu Psychotherapie] in der Regel zu Gebote stehen, ferner dass der Kranke aus den bisherigen häuslichen, familiären und beruflichen Verhältnissen losgelöst ist, wo oft die krankmachenden Schädlichkeiten zu finden sind...'

<sup>31</sup> Witt-Döring, p. 29.

<sup>32</sup> Bauer, Leopold, "Otto Wagner" in *Der Architekt*, XXII, 1919, p. 10.

<sup>33</sup> Mayr, Dr Karl, "Zwei Sanatorien in Badenweiler" in *Deutsch Kunst und Dekoration*, vol. 1, 1904, p. 52.

'Diese Zweck-Bestimmungen mussten von entscheidendem Einfluss sein. Es kam aber noch dazu ein anderes: Fortgeschrittenen Ärzte haben längst erkannt, dass der Mensch, wenn die Funktion einzelner Organe einmal dauernd in Schwankung gerät, nicht bloß einer physikalischen, sondern auch einer psychischen Diätetik bedarf oder wie ein hervorragender Arzt ... einmal ausgedrückt hat: es muss für den Kranken eine zweite Welt geschaffen werden, auf die seine Seele gleichsam aufsteigt, während sie den Körper den Stößen der Erde lässt. Beruhigt, erfrischt, wieder mutig gemacht, vermag alsdann der Mensch den Angriffen um so energischeren Widerstand entgegenzusetzen.'

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

'Es handelte sich darum, die Gesamt-Erscheinung, die Farben-Wahl, die Holz-Behandlung, die Material-Verwendung aus dem besonderen, hygienischen Zwecke zu entwickeln.'

<sup>35</sup> Kallir, p. 52.

<sup>36</sup> Topp, p. 79; Witt-Döring, p. 30.

<sup>37</sup> Topp, p. 79.

<sup>38</sup> Witt-Döring, p. 30.

<sup>39</sup> Thanks to Leslie Topp for drawing my attention to this.

<sup>40</sup> Witt-Döring, p. 31.

<sup>41</sup> Witt-Döring, p. 33.

'In den Speisesaal nützt Hoffmann die sichtbare Rasterstruktur der Stahlbeton aus, um den gesamten Raum in einem harmonischen Koordinatensystem von Horizontalen und Vertikalen zu verspannen.'

<sup>42</sup> For information on the design of the patient bedroom furniture, see: Witt-Döring, p. 30; see also object information in Noever, Peter (ed.), *Der Preis der Schönheit. 100 Jahre Wiener Werkstätte*, exhibition catalogue, MAK, Vienna, Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2003.

Regarding a fully integrated design, see: Topp, p. 81; Witt-Döring, p. 33.

<sup>43</sup> Topp, p. 79.

<sup>44</sup> A second image of a patient bedroom, in this case a double room, in *Priessnitz Sanatorium, Freiwaldau – Gräfenberg, Ostsudetenland. Klinische geleitete Anstalt für Innere und Nervenkrankheiten*, Teschen an der Elbe, no date (advertising brochure) shows the same model of dressing table and chair and chairs by the table as in figure 6, only in a light wood. The rug on the floor has a different pattern. The dark armchair and the bed covering are the same in both rooms.

In the Leopold Bauer estate (*Nachlass*) in the Architecture Collection of the Albertina in Vienna, there are several sheets of tables dating from the 1909 – 10 which outline the type and number of pieces of furniture, colour of wood, wallpaper, rugs and paintwork in each room.

<sup>45</sup> This article forms part of the first chapter of my PhD thesis, *The architecture and culture of sanatoria for nervous ailments in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1890 – 1914*. In the following chapters, I examine the architecture of four more sanatoria for nervous ailments, which demonstrate further approaches to design within this building type and socio-economic and cultural issues influencing their creation. My thesis will be completed by spring 2008.