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| **Bahr, Hermann (1863 – 1934)** |
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| IMAGE 1  Hermann Barr was an Austrian author, essayist, critic, editor, dramaturge, and director. His wide-ranging career spanned most of the *fin de siècle*’s major literary trends, such as naturalism, décadence, late *Heimatkunst*, and expressionism. Thanks to his strategic cultural alliances, openness to all things innovative, and multifaceted interests, he became one of the most prominent figures of Viennese modernism.  Following stays in Paris (1888-89) and Berlin as a collaborator at the *Freie Bühne*, Bahr returned to Vienna with a sense of purpose. He began championing aesthetic modernism and associating with protagonists from the Viennese literary scene (Leopold von Andrian, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Arthur Schnitzler). As the self-proclaimed leader of the Young Vienna literary circle, Bahr became a tireless advocate and interpreter of innovative aesthetic movements, trends, and styles.  Bahr’s theatre work included dramaturgy and directing with Max Reinhardt in Berlin (1906-07) and a brief term as lead dramaturge of the *Burgtheater* (1918). His literary work is wide in scope, encompassing many dramas, novels, and an autobiography. From 1894-99 he was the co-founder, art editor, and co-editor-in-chief of the Viennese weekly journal *Die Zeit*. His significance for contemporary readers lies less in his literary *oeuvre* than in his importance as a critic, crusader, practitioner, and networker.  Deeply suspicious of traditional modes of cognition, subjective experience always reigned supreme for Bahr. This also explains Bahr’s radical shifts in thinking: first a proponent of German nationalism, later of socialism, by the 1890s he was restlessly searching for a specifically Austrian form of modernism. Around the turn of the century, anti-modern concepts increasingly informed his work. Bahr turned ever more to Austrian patriotism, while simultaneously returning to Catholicism. His later work reflects a restorative conservatism and was influenced by anti-liberal, racist, and anti-democratic ideologies.  **Key Works**  Comprehensive Bahr bibliography and digitised complete works available online:  <http://www.univie.ac.at/bahr/>  *Zur Kritik der Moderne* (1890)  *Die Überwindung des Naturalismus* (1891)  *Studien zur Kritik der Moderne* (1894) |
| Further reading:  Farkas, Reinhard. (1989) *Hermann Bahr. Dynamik und Dilemma der Moderne*. Vienna: Böhlau. |