



# Lost in Time: Locating the Stranger in German Modernity

*June J. Hwang*

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## **Lost in Time: Locating the Stranger in German Modernity** June J. Hwang

June J. Hwang's provocative *Lost in Time* explores discourses of timelessness in the works of central figures of German modernity such as Walter Benjamin, Georg Simmel, Siegfried Kracauer, and Helmuth Plessner, as well as those of Alfred Döblin, Joseph Roth, and Hugo Bettauer. Hwang argues that in the Weimar Republic the move toward ahistoricization is itself a historical phenomenon, one that can be understood by exploring the intersections of discourses about urban modernity, the stranger, and German Jewish identity.

These intersections shed light on conceptions of German Jewish identity that rely on a negation of the specific and temporal as a way to legitimize a historical outsider position, creating a dynamic position that simultaneously challenges and acknowledges the limitations of an outsider's agency. She reads these texts as attempts to transcend the particular, attempts that paradoxically reveal the entanglement of the particular and the universal.

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