UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
School of Humanities

Doctor of Philosophy

'With God for Kaiser and Fatherland':
The Commemoration of the Great War in the First Austrian Republic, 1918-1934

By Catherine Edgecombe

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ABSTRACT

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In recent years ground-breaking research on the legacy of the Great War has provided new insights into the aftermath of the conflict. This new approach has had little impact on the history of the Great War in Austria to date. Yet the conflict had a profound effect on the country, leading not only to death and injury for soldiers but also great hardships and bereavement for the civilian population along with defeat and the loss of the vast majority of the territory of the Habsburg Empire.

Based on a range of sources including official records and cultural products this thesis examines the commemoration of the First World War in the new Austrian state. Despite contemporary claims to the contrary, a very large number of tributes to the fallen were produced during the First Republic. By participating in commemorative activities Austrians remembered the sacrifices of the fallen but also sought to comprehend the experiences of war. However, the enormity of the conflict and the disunity of the new state meant that no single, dominant narrative on the experience of war could emerge. Rather a range of sometimes competing and sometimes complementary interpretations of the conflict were in evidence throughout the period of the First Republic. By examining these interpretations this thesis makes a contribution to the cultural history of the Great War and the complex history of Austria during the First Republic.

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List of Abbreviations

AdR	Archiv der Republik
BDA	Bundesdenkmalamt
BKA/I	Bundeskanzleramt, Inneres
BMfHW	Bundesministerium für Heereswesen
BMfLV	Bundesministerium für Landesverteidung
BMfsV	Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung
StAfHW	Staatsamt für Heereswesen
StAfsV	Staatsamt für soziale Verwaltung

Introduction – The Legacy of the Great War and the First Austrian Republic

Twenty years after the outbreak of the First World War, a *Heldendenkmal* (Heroes' Memorial) was inaugurated in central Vienna. The memorial, one of the major projects of the new clerical-fascist *Ständestaat* (corporatist state), was dedicated to the fallen Austrians of the world war, as well as the Habsburg army and the recently assassinated Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss. The unveiling ceremony was the centre piece of a large soldiers' reunion, with key figures from the imperial army and the new state delivering addresses celebrating the deeds of the Habsburg armies during the world war. Kurt Schuschnigg, Dollfuss' successor, delivered a speech at the ceremony in which he proclaimed that the unveiling of the memorial was a turning point. He suggested that during the period of the First Republic the memory of the fallen had been 'besmirched' and their achievements belittled and forgotten but in the new state they would finally be acknowledged and remembered.[1]

Yet the implication that Austrians had forgotten the experience of the world war in the period up to 1934 is deeply misleading. It was inevitable that the war would cast a long shadow over the First Republic. Eight million men fought, in the words of the patriotic slogan, 'with God, for Kaiser and Fatherland' and donned the uniforms of the Habsburg Imperial Army, *Landwehr* and *Honved* during the course of the conflict. Of these men 1,016,200 were killed and 1,691,000 were captured or reported missing.[2] It is clear from these figures that the most basic experience of war for participants and their families was an unprecedented encounter with mass death.[3] After this period of enormous suffering and loss of life, the conflict resulted in not only a crushing defeat for Austria, but also the loss of empire, the imperial family, and a ban on the new, 'rump state' joining Germany. The

[1] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales, *Österreichs Heldenfeier 9. September 1934* (Vienna: Selbstverlag, 1934), p. 16.
[2] These figures do not include the 437,000 men captured on the Italian Front during the last days of the war. Istvan Deak, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 192.
[3] George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 3.

war left a massive practical and psychological legacy which could not be overlooked during the First Republic.

While bereavement was an almost universal experience after the Great War and grief was widespread, it has been recognised that the social expression of grief through mourning is culturally specific to different societies.[4] The mass, violent death of millions of young men during the Great War challenged established mourning practices and changed attitudes to death.[5] The former comrades and families of the fallen struggled to comprehend and memorialise the sacrifices of the fallen. All over Europe and beyond throughout the 1920s and 1930s local communities, veterans' associations, civilian groups and official organisations built memorials, organised commemoration ceremonies, raised funds to support the victims of the war and discussed their wartime experiences. The *Heldendenkmal* was merely the largest of a great number of tributes to the fallen of the world war created by Austrians struggling to deal with the aftermath of the conflict during the First Republic. However, the rhetoric of thanklessness and neglect during the ceremony shows that these attempts were not universally successful and did not resonate with all Austrians.

Attempts by Austrians to comprehend the experience of war during the First Republic are the subject of this thesis. The following chapters reveal the divergent, complicated, sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory interpretations of the world war advanced from 1918 to 1934. The central argument is that despite the end of Empire, the loss of imperial family, the lack of clear national identity and the catastrophic defeat of the Habsburg armies, Austrians sought and found a diverse range of explanations for the great sacrifices made during wartime. Elements of the explanation of the Great War as a conflict 'with God for Kaiser and Fatherland' survived the violence and defeat and still had meaning during the First Republic.

The Legacy of the Great War in History

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[4] Antonious C.G.M. Robben, *Death, Mourning and Burial: A Cross Cultural Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 7.
[5] Lou Taylor, *Mourning Dress: A Costume and Social History* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983), p. 269. Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day 1919-1946.* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), p, 21.

Over the last thirty years, the study of war has moved beyond the boundaries of traditional military history with its focus on technology, tactics and leadership.[6] Several new approaches have emerged. Social historians have attempted to access the experiences of soldiers 'from below,' and to understand the everyday realities of conflict.[7] Practitioners of women's history have interpreted war as a 'gendering activity' and recognised the direct and indirect impact of conflict on women's lives.[8] Of particular relevance to this thesis has been the influence of anthropology on the work of cultural historians of war. Anthropologists have always been interested in practices and material culture and these approaches have impacted greatly on the new history of war, which has offered insights into both the experience and legacy of the Great War.[9]

The pioneering work of Reinhart Koselleck and George Mosse was instrumental in stressing the importance of the legacy of wartime deaths for postwar societies.[10] They showed how, in their struggle to comprehend the losses of the Great War, societies developed 'cults of the fallen.'[11] All former combatant states were forced to search for appropriate means to commemorate their fallen.[12] Yet the purpose and function of these cults has been the subject of much debate. Functionalist studies have stressed the role of the nation state and its leaders in presenting the public image of the conflict. For example Benedict Anderson, one of the key theorists of national

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[6] Martin Evans, 'Opening up the battlefield: War studies and the cultural turn', *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 1/1 (2008), p. 47.
[7] See for example, John Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo and the Somme* (London: Pimlico, 1976).
[8] Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz, 'Introduction' in Margaret Randolph Higonnet et al (eds.), *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (London: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 4.
[9] See for example the monumental work on changing responses to death by Philipe Aries, *The Hour of Our Death* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).
[10] Reinhart Koselleck, 'Kriegerdenkmale als Identitätsstiftungen der Überlebenden,' in Odo Marquard and Karlheinz Stierle (eds.), *Identität* (Munich: Fink, 1979), pp. 255 – 276; George Mosse, 'National Cemeteries and National Revival: The Cult of Fallen Soldiers in Germany,' *Journal of Contemporary History,* 14/1 (1979), pp. 1 – 20.
[11] See for example, Michael Jeismann and Rolf Westheider, "Wofür stirbt der Bürger?' Nationaler Totenkult und Staatsbürgertum in Deutschland und Frankreich seit dem französischen Revolution,' in Reinhart Koselleck and Michael Jeismann (eds.), *Der politische Totenkult: Kriegerdenkmaler in der Moderne* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1994), p. 28. In Russia it was not possible for a public cult of the fallen to develop due to state repression.
[12] Karin Hausen, 'The 'Day of National Mourning' in Germany,' in Gerald Sider and Gavin Smith (eds.), *Between History and Histories: The Making of Silences and Commemorations* (London: University of Toronto Press, 1997), pp. 128.

identity, has emphasised the central role played by war memorials in modern cultures of nationalism.[13] Similarly Koselleck views the construction of war memorials in Germany as part of a process of creating a national identity.[14] By taking the nation as their starting point, these studies and others have interpreted the construction of war memorials as primarily a political act, driven by elites seeking to present a specific image of war linked to a specific image of the nation.[15]

Since the 1990s this approach has been challenged by the work of scholars like Jay Winter, who stressed the psychological imperative behind the construction of war memorials. According to Winter the primary purpose of such projects in the early years after the war was to help the bereaved recover from their losses.[16] Winter took the 'social agency approach' and examined the role of individuals and groups below the level of the state in constructing war memorials.[17] The division between those who view the commemoration of the Great War as primarily a political act and those who view it primarily as part of the mourning process has been one of the key battlegrounds in the historiography of the memory of war. However, this dichotomy has proved to be false and has had a negative effect on the field.[18] Even those memorials which were built in order to process grief could not

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[13] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 9.

[14] In contrast, according to Koselleck war memorials in France were a reflection of national identity. Koselleck 'Einleitung,' in Koselleck and Jeismann (eds.), p.16.

[15] According to George Mosse, the Myth of War Experience was deliberately created and portrayed in war memorials by the Right in order to reinvigorate the *Volk* in Germany. The cult of the fallen was linked to the self representation of the nation. See, George L. Mosse, 'Two World Wars and the Myth of War Experience,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 21/4 (Oct 1986), pp. 491-513.

[16] Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 96.

[17] Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, 'Setting the Framework,' in Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (eds.), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 9. Winter's approach has been extremely influential and others have begun seriously investigating local memorial practices. See for example Dieter Hübener, Kristina Hübener and Julius H. Schoeps (eds.), *Kriegerdenkmaler in Brandenburg* (Berlin: be.bra wissenschaft verlag, 2003). Angela Gaffney has investigated the complexities of memorial construct in interwar Wales: Angela Gaffney, *Aftermath: Remembering the Great War in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1998). Similarly Alex King has examined the local construction of memorials in Great Britain: Alex King, *Memorials of the Great War in Britain: The Symbolism and Politics of Remembrance* (Oxford: Berg, 1998).

[18] T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, 'The politics of war memory and commemoration: context, structures and dynamics' in T.G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper (eds.), *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 8.

avoid making political statements.[19] The bereaved needed to construct a story that made sense of wartime deaths. In doing so they drew on political rhetoric.[20] Put more succinctly, war memorials are revealing of both 'historical and political identity' as well as of the 'search for solace and meaning'.[21] Following recent trends this thesis acknowledges the importance of memorials and wider discussions of the war in processing grief while recognising the centrality of the political statements in the public representation of war.

Yet what were these statements? Paul Fussell, the author of a key early text on the cultural history of the Great War, argued that the conflict was a moment of rupture and the start of 'truth telling' about the realities of war.[22] In 'Rites of Spring' Modris Eksteins argued that the Great War was a moment of total change when older cultural trends were interrupted and replaced with new modernist ideas.[23] These texts offer an interesting commentary on the impact of war on high culture and literature, but their wide scope and sweeping conclusions mean that they now seem somewhat outdated.[24] More focused studies of high culture have revealed divergent responses to the conflict even among cultural practitioners.[25]

More importantly, these 'modernist' interpretations of the Great War overlook the persistence of older cultural modes and fail to acknowledge continuities in the representation of war. The roots of modern war memorials lie in the nineteenth century, when a move away from representing the achievements of military commanders and towards representing the heroic

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[19] Stefan Goebel, 'Re-Membered and Re-Mobilized: The 'Sleeping Dead' in Interwar Germany and Britain,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 39/4 (2004), pp. 487-8.
[20] Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919 – 1946* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), pp. 23-4.
[21] Hübener et al 'Einführung' in Hübener et al, p.8.
[22] Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 8.
[23] Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (London: Bantam Press, 1989). Based on similar sources, Samuel Hynes has also viewed war as a point of massive discontinuity: Samuel Hynes, *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (London: Bodley Head, 1990).
[24] While acknowledging the vital contribution made by Fussell's original text, Leonard V. Smith has criticised his application of the views of a small number of officers onto the whole population of soldiers. Leonard V. Smith, 'Paul Fussell's The Great War and Modern Memory: Twenty Five Years Later', *History and Theory,* 40/2 (2001), p. 242.
[25] Wolfgang J. Mommsen 'German Artists, Writers and Intellectuals and the Meaning of War, 1914 – 1918', in John Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 21 – 38.

actions of soldiers in wartime was made.[26] Despite the differences between the scale and brutality of nineteenth century conflicts and the Great War, the nineteenth century interpretation of conflict proved remarkably resistant. In all former combatant nations memorial constructors avoided representing the horrors of war. Rather, the commemoration of war was a process of masking and forgetting the harsh realities of the conflict as well as remembering the fallen.[27] Using the example of France, John Horne has shown that while many veterans' private images of conflict were marked by pacifism and scepticism about the purpose of conflict, the public representation of war was still dominated by stories of French heroism and German atrocities.[28]

The failure of the realities of modern warfare to destroy traditional ideas of heroism has been repeatedly demonstrated.[29] Even the experience of death itself was masked by euphemism and sanitised in its public representation.[30] War memorials were by no means the only method used to achieve this. Soldiers' letters from the front reflected their private expressions of angst and, as the war progressed, their increasing disillusionment with the conflict. Yet when letters were collected and published they presented a picture of soldierly heroism and filled the *Sinndefizit* (lack of meaning) for the families of the fallen.[31] As we shall see in the following chapters, in Austria traditional images of war survived the conflict largely intact.

However, the scale and brutality of the Great War meant that its commemoration and representation did differ in some important respects from that of earlier conflicts. From the French Revolution onwards there had been a democratic trend in the construction of war memorials, with the names of all

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[26] For an account of nineteenth century memorials in Germany see Stefanie Endlich 'Krieg und Denkmal im 20. Jahrhundert' in Hübener et al, p. 15.
[27] Ken Inglis, 'War memorials: Ten Questions for Historians,' *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains,* 16/7 (1992), p. 8.
[28] John Horne 'Soldiers, Civilians and the Warfare of Attrition: Representations of Combat in France, 1914 – 1918,' in Frans Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee (eds.), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of War* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1995), p. 224 – 9.
[29] See for example, Annette Becker, *War and Death: The Religious Imagination in France, 1914 – 1930* (Oxford: Berg, 1998), p. 116. Sabine Behrenbeck has shown that heroic myths were so successful because they fulfilled longings for 'completeness and redemption.' Sabine Behrenbeck, *Die Kult um die toten Helden: Nationalsozialistische Mythen, Riten und Symbole* (Griefswald: SH-Verlag, 1996), p. 121.
[30] Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996), p. 210.
[31] Bernd Ulrich, *Die Augenzeugen: Deutsche Feldpostbriefe in Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit, 1914 – 1933* (Essen: Klartext, 1997), pp. 35 – 181.

fallen soldiers recorded regardless of rank. This trend was accelerated by the Great War, when the marking of each individual death became crucial. The chaos of the battlefield meant that many of the fallen could never be identified. The bodies of the 'missing' forced the creation of a new kind of memorial.[32] Memorials to the 'Unknown Soldier' were unveiled in 1920 in Britain and France and were swiftly replicated throughout Europe.[33] This new memorial form offered comfort to the relatives of those whose bodies were never recovered and who had no graves to visit or even picture. Memorials also served as 'surrogate graves' for the relatives of those fallen whose graves lay abroad or in inaccessible locations.

It has been established then, that the challenge of commemorating the fallen of the Great War was met with a mixture of traditional interpretations of war coupled with some innovative commemorative practices. Additionally, the ordeal of war led to the reinvigoration of some modes of thought that were regarded as pre-modern. In his crucial monograph 'Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning,' Winter examined the rise of spiritualism during and in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. He convincingly demonstrated that the enormity of loss caused some to seek direct contact with the dead.[34] Winter offered a compelling explanation for the persistence of traditional modes of seeing the war; they 'enabled the bereaved to live with their losses, and perhaps to leave them behind.'[35] The work of cultural historians of war has been vital in understanding how states and individuals dealt with the legacy of wartime sacrifice and their work provides a key basis of the thesis.

However, the challenge of mourning the fallen and representing the conflict was only one of its legacies. The Great War also left a massive practical inheritance. States were confronted with the care of disabled veterans and the dependants of fallen soldiers. The armistice did not mean the end of uncertainty for millions; prisoners of war remained in captivity beyond the end of the conflict, the families of those 'missing in action' were faced with uncertainty as to the fate of their loved ones and delays in

[32] Koselleck, 'Einführung,' in Koselleck and Jeismann, p. 12 – 15.
[33] For France see Volker Ackermann, "Ceux qui sont pieusement morts pour la France..." Die Identität des Unbekannten Soldaten,' in Koselleck and Jeismann, p. 283. For Britain see Gregory, p. 26.
[34] Winter (1995) esp. pp. 54 – 77 and pp. 119 – 144.
[35] Ibid., p. 5.

receiving pensions and other support.[36] The burden of war weighed heavy on postwar states.

The demobilisation of millions of soldiers returning from the front was an early challenge for postwar states. The extent to which these soldiers could be swiftly and productively reintegrated into civil society was an important factor in their stability. In the past, historians stressed veterans' inability to reintegrate successfully into civilian life. They painted a picture of men, radicalised and brutalised by their wartime experiences, living on the margins of civil society.[37] In recent years this interpretation has been challenged. In his study of French veterans, Antoine Prost stressed former combatants' keenness to reintegrate and leave their wartime experiences behind them.[38] Benjamin Ziemann's study of veterans in Southern Bavaria has revealed similar trends.[39] While not rejecting the idea that a small minority of soldiers were radicalised by their war time experiences, this work has shown that the majority of former combatants tried to return to their prewar lives as soon as possible.

While reintegration was often difficult for those who escaped the conflict relatively unscathed, the challenge for those injured was often insurmountable. The practical and psychological effects of wartime injury have been the subject of important works in recent years.[40] The results of injuries in wartime presented a massive challenge in the postwar years not only to former combatant states but to the individuals affected and their families. The challenge of dealing with the legacy of conflict was undoubtedly more than a challenge of representation.

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[36] Bernd Ulrich, "Als wenn nichts geschehen wäre.' Anmerkungen zur Behandlung der Kriegsopfer während des Ersten Weltkriegs,' in Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich and Irina Renz (eds.), *Keiner fühlt sich hier als Mensch ... Erlebnis und Wirkung des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Essen: Klartext, 1993), p. 115.

[37] Klaus Theweleit traced the transition of former soldiers into the violent, right wing Freikorps paramilitary groups and then into the Nazi party. Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies: Volume I: Women, Floods, Bodies, History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). George Mosse also argued that the brutalisation of war was carried directly into peacetime politics in Germany. See George Mosse (1990), p. 158.

[38] Antoine Prost, *'Les Anciens Combattants' and French Society, 1914 – 1939* (Oxford: Berg, 1992).

[39] Benjamin Ziemann, *Front und Heimat: Ländliche Kriegserfahrungen im südlichen Bayern, 1914 – 1923* (Essen: Klartext, 1997).

[40] For Britain see Joanna Bourke. For Germany see Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds: German Victims of the Great War, 1914 – 1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1984).

The conflict left a direct legacy of the practical aftermath of mass mobilisation and mass injury but it also left an indirect legacy of societal change, the extent of which has been disputed. The conflict undoubtedly had a massively devastating impact on areas which experienced enemy occupation or that were direct sites of combat.[41] It had an unmediated effect on the civilian population of these areas. Yet even in states that did not directly experience occupation or large scale combat on their territory, there was a widely held contemporary perception that the Great War had brought about great and lasting social change.[42] However, recent work has challenged this assumption. One of the most widely held assumptions was that the war dramatically altered women's societal roles and in particular their employment patterns. Historians have shown that female unemployment actually increased at the start of the war and during the course of the conflict women moved from employment in the home to employment in industry rather than entering the workforce for the first time.[43] Many of the changes attributed to the war were in fact already underway and merely accelerated by the conflict.[44] To some extent the war actually reinforced traditional gender roles. While men were acting as soldiers, women were encouraged to produce and care for the next generation and their contraceptive decisions in some cases became the subject of governmental control.[45] It is beyond the scope of this thesis to assess the extent of social change the world war brought about in Austria, yet it is important to recognise that contemporary perceptions of massive change have been challenged by historians.

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[41] See Peter Scholliers and Frank Dodemanns, 'Standards of living and standards of health in wartime Belgium,' in Jay Winter and Richard Wall (eds.), *The Upheaval of War: Family, Work and Welfare in Europe, 1914 – 1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 139 – 158. For the Eastern Front see Vejas G. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in World War One* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[42] Jürgen Reulecke, 'Männerbund versus the family: middle class movement and the family in Germany in the period of the First World War,' in Wall and Winter (eds.), p. 439. For a detailed discussion of the impact of the Great War on youth groups see Jürgen Reulecke, *"Ich möchte einer werden, so wie die...' Männerbünde im 20. Jahrhundert'* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2001) especially, pp. 35 – 150.

[43] Ute Daniel, 'Women's work in industry and family: Germany, 1914 – 1918,' and Deborah Thom 'Women and work in wartime Britain,' in Wall and Winter (eds.), p. 267 and p. 301 respectively.

[44] Thom in Wall and Winter, p. 304.

[45] Cornelie Usborne, "Pregnancy is the woman's active service.' Pronatalism in Germany during the First World War,' in Wall and Winter, p. 391.

This brief overview of historiographical trends in the study of the Great War has shown that the conflict has been understood as both a moment of change but also of continuity. In the year of the ninetieth anniversary of the armistice the study of the conflict remains vibrant and flourishing. The new historiography has opened up fields of study and made huge advances in the understanding of the conflict in Europe and beyond. As we shall see, the impact of this new approach on the historiography of the world war has still been limited. However, the study of commemoration of war is more revealing about the society in which the commemoration takes place than about the event being commemorated. For this reason it is important to outline some key aspects of the history of Austria after the world war.

The History of Austria in the First Republic

At the start of the world war the Austrian 'hereditary lands' were at the centre of a great European empire with the multicultural metropolis Vienna at its centre. By the end of the conflict Austria had been reduced to the status of a small rump state. Although there were weaknesses in the prewar state, in 1914 Austria-Hungary was not on the verge of collapse but was also not strong enough to face the challenge of another unsuccessful war.[46] Despite this the start of the war was greeted with enthusiasm and patriotism by all the major political parties of the state including the Social Democrats.[47] Certain sections of the population undoubtedly shared this enthusiasm but the reaction of the majority to the start of the conflict remains unclear. Manfred Rauchensteiner accepts the existence of 'war enthusiasm' at the start of the conflict and argues that those who greeted the start of the conflict with enthusiasm did so because of a conviction that the war was justified or because of unrealistic expectations of war.[48] However, Jeffrey Verhey's work on Germany has challenged the extent and even the reality of 'the spirit of 1914,' arguing that the range of emotions that greeted the start of the conflict

[46] Lothar Höbelt, "Well tempered discontent.' Austrian domestic politics,' in Mark Cornwall (ed.), *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary. A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth Century Europe* (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2002), p. 70.
[47] Martin Kitchen, *The Coming of Austrian Fascism* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), p. 10.
[48] Manfred Rauchensteiner, 'Austria in the First World War, 1914 – 1918' in Rolf Steiniger, Günther Bischof and Michael Geller (eds.), *Austria in the Twentieth Century* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2002), p. 37.

were obscured by a powerful conservative myth of universal enthusiasm.[49] A similar, detailed analysis of the extent and spread of war enthusiasm at the start of the conflict among Austrians has not yet been undertaken.

While the extent of initial war enthusiasm remains unclear, the reality of sharply waning enthusiasm for the conflict after two years is undisputed. This was partly down to Austrian military failings. Military expenditure had failed to keep pace with economic growth in Austria, so even at the start of the conflict the empire was at a material disadvantage that was never overcome.[50] Huge losses in 1914 meant that the prewar, trained army was virtually annihilated. After these losses relatively small numbers of those engaged in frontline combat were properly trained.[51] This slaughter had a hugely demoralising effect on the surviving members of the army.[52] The Habsburg armed forces failed to score any significant victories without the help of their German allies and suffered humiliating defeats that further undermined morale.[53] One historian has damningly summed up this performance as a 'record of chronic failure.'[54] By 1916 it was clear that there was a need for a secondary

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[49] Verhey suggests that the 'spirit of 1914' actually originated in the conservative interpretation of crowds that gathered in July and August 1914 as outpourings of patriotism. His work has shown that the crowds had actually gathered for a range of reasons and that the strength of the myth eclipsed other, contradictory anti-war expressions. Jeffrey Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarization, Myth and Mobilisation in Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 31 – 53. Geinitz and Hinz have also examined the complex reactions to the start of the war in Germany, where the hope of avoiding conflict persisted until the end of the conflict. Christian Geinitz and Uta Hinz ,'Das Augusterlebnis in Südbaden: Ambivalente Reaktionen der deutschen Öffentlichkeit auf den Kriegsbeginn 1914' in Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich, Dieter Langewiesche and Hans-Peter Ullmann (eds.), *Kriegserfahrungen: Studien zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 1997), pp. 23 – 6.

[50] Deak, p. 64. The shortcomings of the prewar Austro-Hungarian army were worse than those of other combatant states. Istvan Deak, 'The Habsburg Army in the First and last Days of World War One: A Comparative Analysis,' in Bela K. Kiraly and Nandor F. Dreisziger (eds.), *War and Society in East Central Europe Volume XIX: East Central European Society in World War One* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 305.

[51] Deak, p. 8, p. 194.

[52] Oswald Überegger, *Der andere Krieg: Die Tiroler Militärgerichtsbarkeit im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Insbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 2002), p. 260.

[53] For a more detailed discussion of the performances of the Habsburg armed forces see chapter four.

[54] Geoffrey Wawro, 'Morale in the Austro-Hungarian Army: The Evidence of Habsburg Army Campaign Reports and Allied Intelligence Officers' in Hugh Cecil and Peter H. Lidell (eds.), *Facing Armageddon: The First World Experienced* (London: Leo Cooper, 1996), p. 400.

mobilisation of the armed forces but this was not achieved.[55] In addition, morale was further eroded by massive shortages of equipment and food.[56]

Conditions at home meant that civilian morale was also worn away during the course of the conflict. In an attempt to address shortages and boost production, industrial workers in some areas were placed under military discipline.[57] These workers were in an almost unique position as, while subject to military discipline, their employer enjoyed the rights of a military commander, leading to extremely harsh working conditions.[58] The war also had a negative impact on other civilians. Failings at the front clearly impacted on morale at home. Recent work has demonstrated that civilians were much more aware of the experiences at the front than has previously been suggested.[59] Undoubtedly the massive losses at the front and the privations of the army had a major impact on the home front. However, the suffering of civilians themselves, particularly due to food shortages in Vienna, had the greatest impact on morale; privations transformed civilians from 'heroic helpers' into 'war victims.' Maureen Healy has shown that while a lack of coherent state identity was a factor in the failure of support for the war at home, it was really food shortages that bred despair and defeatism.[60] Supply problems were by no means a uniquely Viennese experience.[61] However the situation in Vienna was worse than in other major cities, particularly as the Habsburg empire was 'at war with itself' over food.[62] Visiting the countryside around the city in search of food became a regular past-time for families and young people learnt to evade the law in order to obtain food.[63] Massive food

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[55] Mark Cornwall, 'Morale and Patriotism in the Austro-Hungarian Army, 1914 – 1918' in John Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 173 - 190.
[56] Horst Hasselsteiner, 'The Habsburg Empire in World War One: Mobilisation of Food Supplies' in Kiraly and Dreisziger, p. 87.
[57] Ernst Bruckmüller, *Nation Österreich: Kulturelles Bewusstsein und gesellschaftlich-politische Prozesse* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), pp. 450-1.
[58] Jill Lewis, *Fascism and the Working Class in Austria, 1918 – 1934* (Oxford: Berg, 1991), p. 37.
[59] Gary Stark, 'All Quiet on the Home Front: Popular Entertainments, Censorship and Civilian Morale in Germany, 1914 – 1918' in Coetzee and Coetzee, p. 57.
[60] Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1 – 34.
[61] Italian cities also suffered from very low calorie levels during the war. Giovanni Procacci, 'A 'Latecomer' in War: The Case of Italy' in Coetzee and Coetzee, p.17.
[62] Healy, pp. 43 – 47.
[63] Reinhard Seider, 'Behind the Lines: Working class family life in wartime Vienna,' in Wall and Winter, pp. 112 – 113.

queues were one of the hallmarks of wartime Vienna and undermined any pretence of a unified home front.[64] The growing dissatisfaction among civilians with both the continuation of the war and the catastrophic conditions at home erupted into mass protests in January 1918.[65]

Austrian civilians and particularly soldiers endured desperate conditions during the conflict. Many longed for peace but when it finally came the armistice was not a cause for celebration. Austrian soldiers on the Italian front laid down their arms before the Italians had officially ratified the armistice. As a result hundreds of thousands of imperial soldiers were captured by the Italian army at the very end of the war.[66] This final tragedy concluded the questionable Habsburg war effort.

The end of the conflict did not mean the end of Austria's problems. Rather, military defeat and the end of empire brought new challenges. Nationality problems within the Habsburg Empire had worsened throughout the conflict, and constituent parts began to break away towards the end of the war, rendering the collapse of the empire inevitable. The 'Austrian Revolution' that followed was prompted by military defeat and collapse of the empire.[67] Following Emperor Karl's renunciation of the throne, the new Republic of German-Austria, a part of the German Empire, was declared. The revolution was a rejection of both the authority which had taken Austria into the war and of the prevailing social conditions.[68] However, peace did not ease the critical situation as the immediate aftermath of the war was a period of great confusion.[69] Austrian and particularly Viennese food shortages were not solved, and critical hunger shortages continued into 1919.[70] The formation of new states left Austria cut off from key agricultural areas in Hungary and industrial resources in the Czech lands and Silesia.[71] Soldiers returning from all fronts passed through Austria in transit and to protect property and goods

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[64] Healy, p. 81.
[65] Richard Georg Plaschka, 'The Army and Internal Conflict in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1918,' in Kiraly and Dreisziger, p. 340.
[66] Wawro in Cecil and Lidell, p. 409.
[67] Gerhard Botz, *Gewalt in der Politik: Attentäte, Zusammenstösse, Putschversuche, Unruehn in Österreich, 1918 bis 1934* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlage, 1976), p. 27.
[68] John Boyer, 'Silent War and Bitter Peace: The Revolution of 1918 in Austria,' *Austrian History Yearbook* 34 (2003), p. 12.
[69] Elisabeth Barker, *Austria 1918 – 1972* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 8.
[70] Botz (1976), p. 43.
[71] Barker, p. 4.

from the perceived threat posed by these men, self-defence organisations, the forerunners of the *Heimwehren,* were established. Many soldiers returned to Vienna and by the end of the year the city was a hotbed of low-level crime filled with destitute soldiers.[72] The problems of demobilisation and the provision for returning veterans were some of the most pressing facing the new state but the effects of war on the civilian population were also being felt.[73] At New Year 1918 Vienna was full of soldiers still in uniform as a result of clothing shortages. Infant mortality rates had reached twenty per cent and seventy per cent of the residents of the city were malnourished.[74] The already fraught situation was worsened by the Spanish Influenza which ravaged Vienna and the provinces.[75]

During this period the fate of the new state remained unclear. The Austrian revolution took place in three stages. October 1918 to February 1919 was a period of political revolution. The institutions of the old empire were dismantled and a provisional National Assembly, based on the composition of the imperial parliament and founded on cooperation between the Social Democrat and Christian Social parties (with the help of German Nationalist delegates) assumed control of the state.[76] The Social Democrat Party managed to restrain moves towards revolution but there was a real fear of a communist putsch on both the left and the right.[77] The period from March 1919 to July 1919 was one of rising tension when the threat of violent upheaval was ever present.[78] The Red Guard communist group led by Egon Erwin Kisch held regular demonstrations in early postwar Vienna.[79] Planned putsches in April and June 1919 failed but, alongside the establishment of Soviet Republics in neighbouring states, certainly had an impact in increasing

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[72] Boyer, (2003), p. 6.
[73] Peter Melichar, 'Die Kämpfe merkwürdig Untoter: K.u.k. Offiziere in der Ersten Republik' *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* 9/1 (1998), pp. 52.
[74] Hans Veigl, *Die wilden zwanziger Jahren: Alltagskulturen zwischen zwei Kriegen* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1999), p. 13.
[75] Healy, p. 307. Other diseases also took their toll on the severely weakened inhabitants of the city, including venereal disease and tuberculosis. Helmut Gruber, *Red Vienna: Experiment in Working-Class Culture, 1919 – 1934* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 16.
[76] Botz, (1976), p. 23.
[77] Kitchen, p. 12.
[78] Botz, (1976), p. 23.
[79] Barker, p. 33.

the perceived threat of communism.[80] However, after these failed putsches there was an ebbing of the threat of revolution and from August to October 1920 the situation in Austria stabilised to some extent.[81]

From 1918 to 1920 Austria was ruled by a cross party coalition, but it was the Social Democrat Party that took the lead.[82] After lending their support to the government in 1914 the Social Democrats had been paralysed during the first two years of war. The assassination in 1916 of the unpopular Prime Minister Count Stürgkh by Friedrich Adler, the son of the leading party figure Victor Adler, was the start of a more oppositional posture by the party. At the end of the war they were best prepared to tackle the challenges of the new state and took the opportunity to introduce ambitious social policies which made significant improvements in the lives of workers, particularly in Vienna.[83]

Yet while social conditions for the mass of Austrian workers were gradually improving and the threat of communist revolution was averted, in September 1919 the Treaty of St Germain came as a heavy blow to the politicians and people of the new state.[84] Austria faced an adverse situation during the peace negotiations. The new state faced particular hostility from France and Italy and also from Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, successor states of the former empire.[85] The adverse international situation should perhaps have prepared Austrians for the Treaty of St Germain, yet when the terms were revealed they provoked an outraged reaction from the public.[86] The Allies decided to regard Austria and Hungary as the heirs of the defunct empire and their treatment was accordingly

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[80] Botz, pp. 48 – 61.
[81] Ibid., p. 23.
[82] Social Democrats Karl Renner (chancellor), Otto Bauer (foreign minister) and Julius Deutsch (war minister) held the key posts in the new government: Gruber, p. 21.
[83] Wolfgang Maderthaner, 'Die Sozialdemokratie' in Herbert Dachs, Ernst Hanisch, Anton Staudinger and Emmerich Talos (eds.), *Handbuch des politischen Systems Österreichs: Erste Republik, 1918 – 1933* (Vienna: Manzsche Verlag, 1995), pp. 180 – 190. While acknowledging the short term positive effects of early socialist reforms, Helmut Gruber also sees the period as one of missed opportunity to establish the basis for a more significant socialist experiment: Gruber, p. 22.
[84] Karl Glaubauf, *Die Volkswehr 1918 – 20 und die Gründung der Republik* (Vienna: Verlagsbuchhandlung Stohr, 1993), p. 21.
[85] Barker, pp. 40 – 44.
[86] Karl R. Stadler, *Austria* (London: Ernest Benn, 1971), p. 85.

harsh.[87] The *Anschluss* was forbidden and territory containing ethnic Germans was lost to the newly formed Czechoslovakia and to Italy. In the aftermath of the world war plebiscites were used to solve border conflicts throughout Europe.[88] Yet it was clear to Austrian politicians that they were not in a position to enforce border claims against Czechoslovakia or Italy.[89] The failure to grant a plebiscite to the majority German-speaking population of South Tyrol and the Sudetenland as well as the decision to forbid the *Anschluss* were seen as particularly unjust.[90] The restrictions imposed by the treaty and the loss of territory contributed to a climate of helplessness in early postwar Austria.[91] The treaty, along with the catastrophic social and economic situation and the immediate legacy of the lost war, meant that the outlook for the new state between 1918 and 1920 was extremely bleak.

However, as the following discussion of politics, economics and society demonstrates, after the immediate postwar crises had been overcome Austria achieved some stability. The politics of Republican Austria were dominated by division between three political camps or *Lager*: Christian Social, Social Democrat and German Nationalist. The *Lager* theory was originally advocated by Adam Wandruszka and has remained the dominant explanation of Austrian interwar politics. According to Wandruszka, the divisions between the political parties or camps ran extremely deep and extended beyond simple party politics.[92] The parties, rather than parliament, were the dominant

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[87] Barbara Jelavich, *Modern Austria: Empire and Republic, 1815 – 1986* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 146.
[88] Alan Sharp, 'The genie that would not go back into the bottle: National self-determination and the legacy of the First World War and the Peace Settlement,' in Seamus Dunn and T. J. Fraser (eds.), *Europe and Ethnicity: World War I and Contemporary Ethnic Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 24.
[89] Peter Burian, 'Politische Probleme zwischen der Republik Österreich und den Nachfolgestaaten,' in Richard G. Plaschka and Karlheinz Mack (eds.), *Die Auflösung des Habsburgerreiches: Zusammenbruch und Neuorientierung im Donauraum* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1970), p. 456.
[90] South Tyrol had a population of 250,000, eighty-six per cent of whom were German speaking. Anthony Alcock, 'Trentino and Tyrol: From Austrian Crownland to European Region,' in Dunn and Fraser p. 69. For an detailed account of Austrian attempts to keep South Tyrol within the new Republic of Austria see Richard Schober, *Die Tiroler Frage auf der Friedenskonferenz von St Germain* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1982).
[91] Botz (1976), p. 59.
[92] Adam Wandruszka 'Österreichs politische Struktur,' in Heinrich Benedikt, *Geschichte der Republik Österreich* (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 1954), pp. 289 – 485.

political force.[93] It was only in the first two years of the republic that the major parties cooperated but this early 'democracy of concord' was weakened by the withdrawal of the German Nationalists over the Treaty of St Germain and permanently collapsed in 1920.[94] The Christian Social and Social Democrat parties consistently received the largest share of the vote yet neither ever achieved a share of the vote which was substantial enough to establish a majority government. The new electoral districts conformed to the boundaries of the imperial electoral districts, and so favoured the Christian Social and Social Democrat parties while leaving smaller or newer parties struggling for votes.[95] From 1922, except for a brief 'neutral' government of civil servants led by the chief of police, Johann Schober, the Christian Social party provided every chancellor until the start of the Austrian dictatorship in 1934.[96] Yet these statistics mask political instability; in the sixteen years of the First Republic, twenty four different cabinets had governed Austria and only four of these lasted for more than one year.[97] The First Republic was marked by a struggle between the three major parties.

The Social Democrat party of Austria was one of the best organised in Europe and enjoyed great international prestige. It successfully maintained unity in the face of communism, one of the major challenges for Social Democracy in interwar Central Europe, by forging a third way between reform and revolution.[98] In spite of the attempted coups in 1919, the Communist Party in Austria never presented a serious challenge to the Social Democrat dominance of the working classes.[99] A skilful combination of radical rhetoric from important thinkers such as Otto Bauer and reforming policies meant that the party could encompass a whole range of left-wing views.[100] By 1929 the

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[93] Klemens von Klemperer, *Ignaz Seipel: Christian Statesman in a Time of Crisis* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 144.
[94] Anton Pelinka, 'Parliament' in Dachs et al, pp. 61 – 62.
[95] Dachs in Dachs, p. 145.
[96] Anton Staudiger, Wolfgang C. Müller and Barbara Steininger, 'Die Christlichsoziale Partei,' in Dachs et al, p. 162.
[97] Pelinka in Dachs et al, p. 81.
[98] Maderthaner in Dachs et al, p. 185.
[99] Josef Ehmer, 'Die Kommunistische Partei Österreichs,' in Dachs et al, pp. 219 – 220.
[100] Barker, pp. 14 – 19, 56. For example the Linz Programme of 1926 was Marxist in tone but was not matched by steps towards revolution. Maderthaner in Dachs et al, p. 186. The use of radical rhetoric has also been regarded as damaging in that it alienated and intimidated those who may have been attracted to more moderate left wing ideas. Hanisch in Dachs et al, p. 2.

party had approximately 700,000 members, meaning that one in six adult Austrians was a member of the party.[101] However, from 1920 the Social Democrats had no national political power.[102] While the negotiations for a new constitution were underway in 1920 the Social Democrats had hopes of extending their influence over the resistant provinces with a centralised political apparatus. However, the Christian Socials, seeking to maximise their power in the provinces, insisted on a devolved constitution.[103] Ironically, it was under the terms of this devolved constitution that Social Democrats were able to carry out their progressive social policies that have been remembered as 'Red Vienna.'[104] The municipal authorities used redistributive taxation to fund social improvements including social housing projects.[105] This socialist experiment went further than merely economic and social reform. Using a network of educational and cultural organisations the leaders of Red Vienna hoped to create a 'comprehensive proletarian counterculture.'[106] Some historians have argued that the Social Democrat leaders were successful in creating a loyalty to the party that was similar to a national consciousness, while others have stressed how the paternalistic attitude of the leaders towards the normal party members undermined their attempts.[107] However, whether the attempts of the leadership to create a subculture of 'new people' were successful, it is undoubtedly true that the Social Democrats were more than a simple political party in Vienna.[108] Evaluations of the party's performance beyond the capital have been more critical. For example, in her

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[101] Maderthaner in Dachs et al, p. 181.
[102] For a discussion of the undermining of Social Democracy in Austria by encroaching fascism from 1927 see Anson Rabinbach, *The Crisis of Austrian Socialism. From Red Vienna to Civil War, 1927 – 1934* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).
[103] Oskar Leitner, 'Verfassungsentwicklung' in Dachs et al p. 49.
[104] For a detailed discussion of the achievements and shortcomings of Red Vienna see Gruber. The achievements of Red Vienna were heralded by early left-wing historians who tackled the history of the First Republic. See Charles A. Gulick, *Austria from Habsburg to Hitler*, 2 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1948).
[105] Ehmer in Dachs et al, pp. 219 – 220.
[106] Gruber, p. 7.
[107] See Pelinka in Dachs et al, p. 105 and Gruber p. 7 respectively. Rabinbach has highlighted the challenge presented to the leadership by a group of disaffected youths centred on the *Jungfront* organisation. See Anson Rabinbach, 'Politics and Pedagogy: The Austrian Social Democrat Youth Movement, 1931-32,' in *Journal of Contemporary History* 13/2 (1978), pp. 337 – 356.
[108] The left-wing theorist Max Adler set down his programme for the establishment of a Socialist society that would lead to the creation of new, socialist people in 1924. Max Adler, *Neue Menschen: Gedanken über sozialistische Erziehung* (Berlin: Laub, 1924).

examination of the working class of Styria, Jill Lewis has shown that the complex policies of Otto Bauer were not suited to the politically inexperienced and economically vulnerable workers of the area.[109] Despite the long-term failure of democracy in Austria and the weaknesses of the party, Social Democracy was undoubtedly an important force that made some extremely significant contributions to interwar politics.

The Christian Social Party was a more diverse group and lacked the organisational strength of the Social Democrat Party.[110] The roots of the party lay in the crisis of the lower middle classes during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the party maintained its lower middle class power base while adding some elite support during the First Republic.[111] The most important Christian Social politicians had experienced their political education under the empire and had an ambivalent relationship with the imperial past, mourning the loss of the leading role of the church and imperial power while recognising that the chances of resurrecting the empire in its original form were slight. The leading Christian Social politician and arguably the leading politician of the First Republic was Ignaz Seipel. He became chancellor in May 1922 and held positions of power in the government until his death in August 1932. For Seipel, an ordained Jesuit priest, the Catholic Church was of central importance to Austrian identity. The anti-clericalism of the Social Democratic Party coupled with Seipel's anti-socialism made cooperation between the two parties virtually impossible under his leadership.[112] In the period 1920 to 1927 the Christian Socials were in government and the Social Democrats were in opposition but it was not until 1927 that these divisions became deeply entrenched.[113] In January 1927 a

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[109] The industrial workers of Styria were largely unskilled and industry was dominated by a single employer, meaning workers were disposable and jobs unstable. Lewis, p. 50. See also Charlie Jeffries, *Social Democracy in the Austrian Provinces, 1918 – 1934: Beyond Red Vienna* (London: Leicester University Press, 1995).

[110] Barker, pp. 20 – 22.

[111] Staudinger et al in Dachs et al, p. 160.

[112] Klemperer, p. 176; Barker, p. 55.

[113] Meysels argues that the divisions between the two parties were unbridgeable from the moment the Social Democrats went into opposition in 1920 but the general historiographical consensus is firmly against him. Lucian O. Meysels, *Der Austrofacismus* (Vienna: Amalthea, 1992), p. 18. The overwhelming consensus is that 1927 was a crucial turning point in political conflict. See Jill Lewis, 'Conservatives and Fascists in Austria, 1918 – 1934,' in Martin Blinkhorn (ed.), *Fascists and Conservatives* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p. 110; Botz (1976), p. 64; Kitchen, p. 20; Klemperer, pp. 273 – 274.

Social Democrat march in the village of Schattendorf descended into violence when marchers were attacked by right-wing paramilitaries. In the violence that followed a war veteran and a young boy were killed. On 15 July 1927, despite convincing evidence to the contrary, a 'not guilty' verdict was announced in the trial of the killers. This verdict was greeted with outrage from the working classes and, following an inflammatory article in the Social Democrat *Arbeiter Zeitung,* violent clashes between security forces and the working classes led to eighty-six deaths, more than one thousand wounded protestors and the burning of the Justice Palace.[114] This outbreak of violence deepened and intensified the political and societal rifts that had been present in Austria since the start of the republic.

After 1927 the Christian Social party began to move to the right. There was closer cooperation between the party and the *Heimwehr* paramilitary group and Seipel repeatedly voiced support for dictatorship as a solution to a crisis.[115] In 1929 the Christian Socials pushed through a revision of the constitution which reduced the power of parliament and increased the power of the president, who had previously been a figurehead rather than a source of real power.[116] After the period of Schober's government, the Christian Social party returned to power and in 1932 under the leadership of Engelbert Dollfuss continued its move to the right. Dollfuss was a decorated former soldier and a 'man of action' rather than an adherent of parliamentary democracy.[117] After Hitler's assumption of power in Germany in January 1933 political tensions in Austria intensified. The beginning of the end of democracy in Austria came in March. In order to resolve a deadlocked vote over a railway strike the *Nationalrat* president and his two deputies resigned and parliament was closed.[118] Dollfuss claimed that parliament had voluntarily dissolved itself and although contemporaries were sceptical of the

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[114] Kitchen, p. 20.
[115] Klemperer, pp. 280 – 285.
[116] Leitner in Dachs et al, p. 52. Pelinka in Dachs et al, p. 75. Economic crisis forced the Social Democrats to accept a weakening of the democratic constitution: Ehmer in Dachs et al, p. 21.
[117] Barker, pp. 71 – 72. For a discussion of Dollfuss' wartime service and political career see Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *Dollfuss* (London: Macmillan, 1961).
[118] Leitner in Dachs et al, p. 53.

'voluntary' element of the dissolution, it did not reconvene and Dollfuss' actions were not met with any significant resistance.[119]

Despite the left-wing shortcomings outlined above, it is important to remember that the destruction of democracy came from the right.[120] In May 1933 Dollfuss set up the 'Fatherland Front,' an unsuccessful attempt to compensate for flagging Christian Social popularity and to rally public support for the new regime.[121] At the same time he banned the Communist and National Socialist parties.[122] In February 1934 Dollfuss announced the replacement of political parties with six corporate groups or *Stände.*[123] At the same time he moved against the Social Democrat party, authorising the *Heimwehr* to begin searches for Social Democrat weapons. The Republican *Schutzbund* resisted and the resulting civil war caused 137 left-wing deaths and 105 casualties on the government side.[124] Later in 1934 further violence erupted after an attempted National Socialist coup during which Dollfuss himself was assassinated.[125] After the failure of the coup, Dollfuss was replaced by another former soldier, Kurt Schuschnigg.[126] There has been much controversy in Austrian historiography about the nature of the new state. It has been variously described as 'Austrofascist', 'clerical fascist' and 'Catholic authoritarian.' However, the emerging historiographical consensus is that the new state was fascist; attempts to deny this are based on an overly narrow definition of fascism.[127] The leaders of the new state attempted to gain some ideological respectability from adopting the ideas of the

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[119] Franz Mathis, '1,000 years of Austria and Austrian identity: Founding Myths,' in Günter Bischof and Anton Pelinka (eds.), *Austrian Historical Memory and National Identity* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1997), p. 20.
[120] Ernst Hanisch, 'Einleitung,' in Dachs et al, p. 6.
[121] Staudinger et al in Dachs et al, p. 169.
[122] Lewis in Blinkhorn, p. 94.
[123] The six occupational groups were never realised. Ibid., p. 94 – 100.
[124] Barker, p. 84 – 88.
[125] Ibid., p. 94.
[126] Meysels, p. 22. Kurt Schuschnigg's account of his period in power is contained in his 1937 account. Kurt Schuschnigg, *Dreimal Österreich* (Vienna: Thomas-Verlag Jakob Hegner, 1937).
[127] Lewis in Blinkhorn, p. 102. Tim Kirk argues that both Heimwehr and National Socialist forms of fascism were both forms of Austrian fascism and shared many features including the rejection of parliament, democracy, Marxism and liberal capitalism. Both also shared a vision of a society free of class conflict that was termed a *Volksgemeinschaft* by the National Socialists and a *Ständestaat* by the Austrian fascists. See Tim Kirk, 'Fascism and Austrofascism' in Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka and Alexander Lassner (eds.), *The Dollfuss Schuschnigg Era in Austria: A Reassessment* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 2003), pp. 15 - 16.

conservative theorist Othmar Spann.[128] He espoused a brand of 'missionary nationalism' based on Austrian culture and the Catholic religion.[129] However, the new state failed to secure the necessary popular support to combat the momentum of National Socialism.[130] By the 1930s, the Christian Socials and the other mainstream right-wing party, the German Nationalists had lost significant support to National Socialism.

The German Nationalist party was at the centre of the third *Lager*. The roots of the German Nationalist movement lay in the imperial period. Even during this period there were divisions in the movement, particularly between those who felt the German nation was racially defined and excluded Jews and those who adopted a cultural or linguistic definition.[131] The importance of the German Nationalist Party during the First Republic has been disputed. The loss of the German populations of the Bohemian Lands, one of the party's prewar strong holds, severely weakened the party in 1918. The German Nationalist Party was actually a collection of smaller nationalist groups, amalgamated into a party on 8 August 1920.[132] The role of the smallest *Lager* has been disputed, with some suggesting the size of the other groups meant that the party never achieved much influence while others suggest that the unbridgeable gap between the Social Democrats and the Christian Socials after 1920 and particularly after 1927 gave the party a disproportionate influence on politics.[133] The party undoubtedly lacked the organisational unity enjoyed by the Social Democrats and was marred by divisions between the German Nationalists in Vienna and the provinces.[134] The members of the party, estimated as far below 100,000, shared anti-liberalism and anti-clericalism inherited from the monarchy and a new anti-socialism inspired by the Republic, but could not agree on a plan for Austria beyond unification with

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[128] Karl R. Stadler, *Austria* (London: Ernest Benn, 1971), p. 132.
[129] Lewis in Blinkhorn, p. 105.
[130] Botz (1976), p. 32.
[131] Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848 – 1914* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 226 – 230.
[132] Thomas Dorstal, 'Die Grossdeutsche Volkspartei' in Dachs et al, p. 195.
[133] Klemperer argues that the weakness of the German Nationalist party meant that Austria effectively had a one party system whereas Dorstal argues that the party enjoyed undue influence because of the divisions between the other parties. See Klemperer, p. 226. and Dorstal in Dachs et al, p. 196.
[134] Dorstal in Dachs et al, pp. 198 – 200.

Germany.[135] After 1930 the German Nationalists began to lose votes and support to the radical right in the form of the *Heimwehr* and more importantly to the National Socialists.[136]

In the 1920s the National Socialist party was relatively weak in Austria, counting only 5,000 members in 1929. Yet after 1931 the party was reorganised under Theodor Habicht, a new leader sent by Hitler, and began to draw support away from the German Nationalists and the *Heimwehr.*[137] In April 1932 National Socialists won fifteen seats on Vienna city council and from mid-summer 1933 a German propaganda offensive was launched against Austria.[138] Dollfuss recognised the threat of National Socialism, fearing the party's dismissal of Catholicism and scorn for the Habsburg legacy, but still made repeated attempts to bring them into a coalition government.[139] The ultimate failure of these attempts resulted in the banning of the party, the second round of violence in 1934 and Dollfuss' assassination. By 1934 the end of parliamentary democracy and the multi-party system in Austria had been confirmed. The deep divisions between the parties and the increasing ideological polarisation from 1927 were undoubtedly important factors in this failure.

Yet the failings of political parties alone cannot explain the end of democracy in Austria. It is impossible to understand the collapse of democracy without also considering the role of repeated economic crises in undermining the new state.[140] In 1918 Austria was undoubtedly in an unfavourable economic position when compared to the economies of Western Europe.[141] Economic development in the First Republic can be divided into four periods. From 1918 to 1922 Austria suffered from inflation and the hyperinflation which was only overcome by the Geneva Protocols. 1923 to 1929 was a period of relative stability, brought to an end by the world economic crisis in 1930 which had a devastating effect on Austria. After 1933

[135] Ibid., p. 201.
[136] Botz (1976), p. 32.
[137] Kitchen, p. 67 - 68.
[138] Barker, pp. 73 – 79.
[139] Kitchen, pp. 72.
[140] Hanisch in Dachs et al, p. 3.
[141] Fritz Weber, 'Die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung,' in Dachs et al, p. 27.

a period of restrained recovery began.[142] However this broad chronology masks the underlying problems of the Austrian economy.

As we shall see in chapter two, in 1918 few Austrians had faith in their new state. High rates of emigration were a concrete expression of this lack of faith.[143] Part of this lack of faith was rooted in the belief that the new, small state was economically unviable. In fact, Austria's economic problems were not as severe as many contemporaries and historians believed them to be. Other states in similar positions had far more confidence in their economic futures. However, a belief in the unviability of the Austrian economy was an inauspicious start for the new state. The end of the empire left Austria with major difficulties; key industrial and agricultural lands were lost, the capital city and bureaucracy were too large for the small state and the new state had to bear the burden of the lost war and the casualties of the conflict. These problems were compounded by the mismanaged transition from multinational empire to small state.

As we have seen, in the first years of the republic Social Democrat reforms improved the conditions of the struggling working classes in Austria. Yet these achievements came at an economic price.[144] Social welfare provisions were funded by printing money, which caused inflation then hyperinflation and brought the economy to the verge of economic collapse in 1922.[145] Disaster was averted by loans of £30 million from the League of Nations (the Geneva Protocols) which stabilised the currency and balanced the budget, but led to high unemployment and economic stagnation.[146] Unemployment was a serious problem throughout the 1920s and reached 25% between 1930 and 1934.[147] Consistent high structural unemployment made labour disposable and reduced the power of trade unions to improve workers' conditions and exert political influence.[148]

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[142] Ibid., p. 28.
[143] Heinz Fassmann, 'Der Wandel der Bevölkerungs- und Sozialstruktur in der Ersten Republik,' in Dachs et al, p. 17.
[144] Weber in Dachs et al, p. 29 – 33.
[145] Kitchen, pp. 81 – 82.
[146] Barker, pp. 53 – 54.
[147] Fassmann in Dachs et al, p.20.
[148] Lewis, pp. 110, 166.

The Austrian economy was over-reliant on international loans, beginning with the Geneva Protocols and further increasing with the Lausanne Protocols in 1931.[149] A condition of the loans was an element of international control over the Austrian economy and foreign policy. The controls imposed after the Geneva Protocols led to the introduction of strict budgetary controls that impacted particularly on the lives of the working class. A major condition of the Lausanne Protocols was the abandonment of a planned Customs' Union between Austria and Germany in 1931.[150] Yet loans were not the only way in which international factors impacted on the Austrian economy. Successor states of the Habsburg Empire introduced protectionist trade policies and cut Austria off from its former internal trading markets.[151] By 1933 the indirect negative effect of the trade policies of Austria's neighbours had, in one case, become actively aggressive. In response to the expulsion of the high-ranking Nazi functionary Hans Frank, Hitler's government introduced a one thousand *Reichsmark* tax on any German citizens wishing to visit Austria that had a devastating impact on Austria's tourist industry and severely depleted foreign currency reserves. Austria's most important trading partner was using its economic weakness as a weapon.

By far the most serious economic crises in the interwar period happened in the banking sector. A very small number of traders made great fortunes by currency speculation but in the long-term speculation undermined the financial sector and caused the collapse of the *Creditanstalt* bank in 1931.[152] Although by this stage international economic problems were taking their toll on Austria, the *Creditanstalt* collapse accelerated and deepened the effects of the Great Depression.[153] As well as causing massive damage to

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[149] Kitchen, p. 80.
[150] Barker, p. 69.
[151] Weber in Dachs et al, p. 31.
[152] For a detailed discussion of the financial history of the First Republic see Karl Ausch, *Als die Banken fielen* (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1968) and on the roots of the crisis Eduard März, *Austria's Banking and Financial Policy: Creditanstalt at a Turning Point, 1913 – 1923* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1984). Iago Gil Aguado has recently discovered new records which suggest that France artificially accentuated the run on the Schilling that contributed to the fall of the bank in order to enforce the abandonment of the planned customs union with Germany. See Iago Gil Aguado, 'The Creditanstalt crisis of 1931 and the failure of the Austro-German custom's union project,' *The Historical Journal* 44/1 (2001), pp. 199 – 221, 215.
[153] Kitchen, pp. 92 – 93.

the economy, financial scandals undermined democracy and furthered eroded faith in the economic viability of the state.[154] While the economic picture was not as bleak as contemporaries believed in 1918, the weakened economy could not withstand the repeated crises. In 1929 industrial production was still 2% below 1913 levels and it failed to climb beyond this before the end of the Republic.[155] Economic weakness fuelled political radicalism and undermined faith in the state which, as the next paragraphs illustrate, increased societal divisions.

Austrian society was divided along deep fault lines. Among the most important rifts were divisions between workers and the owners of production facilities; the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors; the state and the church; and Vienna and the provinces.[156] While societal divisions are not unusual, the splits were brought into stark relief by the presence and actions of paramilitary groups. Before examining the rifts between groups it is worth noting that the focus on divisions between groups has perhaps led to an overstatement of the group homogeneity. The war and the end of empire had had a massive impact on the middle classes. While the many members of the imperial middle classes continued to identify themselves as such and remain aloof from the organisations of the industrial working classes, upheavals at the end of the war and inflation in the early 1920s undermined their economic status and led to Austria becoming a *Land ohne Mitte* (a state without a middle).[157] During the First Republic the term middle class did not necessarily imply the relative economic prosperity normally understood by the label.

A focus on working-class loyalty to the Social Democrats has also led to an impression of class homogeneity. However, the term actually encompassed a wide range of workers during the First Republic. After the violent confrontations in Schattendorf in 1927 the youth of the party began to move away from the leadership. The party elites tended to make paternalistic distinctions between 'good' and 'bad' proletarians and the label 'worker' was applied to people ranging from those who rented beds by the day to the

[154] Klemperer, p. 250.
[155] Kitchen, p. 89.
[156] Herbert Dachs, 'Das Parteiensystem,' in Dachs et al, p. 157.
[157] Stadler, p. 125.

relatively prosperous.[158] Unskilled workers outside the capital, such as those of the *Alpinmontangesellschaft* in Styria, were overlooked by the trade unions and party leadership.[159] Despite economic adversity Social Democrat investment in housing and the extensive party organisation undoubtedly improved the lives of many members of the Austrian working classes, but these changes did not affect all members of the working classes to the same degree.[160] While this thesis is not concerned with the detailed composition of the working or middle classes it is important to recognise that there were divisions within these groups as well as between them.

Austrian societal divisions were intensified and amplified by the existence and growth of paramilitary organisations during the First Republic. As noted above, the roots of the right wing *Heimwehr* were the self-defence organisations formed at the end of the war to defend communities from looting by returning soldiers. The Treaty of St Germain restricted the number of soldiers allowed by Austria, but economic problems meant that even those low numbers were never reached.[161] Therefore the professional army was dwarfed by the presence of large and high profile paramilitary organisations.[162] The *Heimwehr* was the most important group on the right. While its membership has been estimated at between 50,000 and 800,000 it is likely that a number closer to the lower estimate is correct.[163] Throughout the 1920s and in the early 1930s the *Heimwehr* was a collection of individual organisations rather than a coordinated movement. At this stage it was not accurate to speak of one, single *Heimwehr* but rather a group of

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[158] For example 'good' proletarians being workers who sought self improvement and participated in party life, 'bad' workers being those who favoured public houses and alcohol as past-times. Robert J. Wegs, *Growing up Working Class: Continuity and Change Among Viennese Youth, 1890 – 1938* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 1989), pp. 3 – 28.

[159] Lewis, pp. 10 – 11.

[160] Ibid., 75 – 90.

[161] For a discussion of the role of the army in the First Republic see Ludwig Jedlicka, *Ein Heer im Schatten der Parteien: Die militärpolitische Lage Österreichs, 1918 – 1938* (Graz: Böhlau, 1955).

[162] C. Earl Edmondsen, *The Heimwehr and Austrian Politics, 1918 – 1936* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978), p. 17.

[163] Franziska Schneeberger, *Sozialstruktur der Heimwehr in Österreich. Eine vergleichend-politische Sozialgeschichte der Heimwehrbewegung* (PhD Thesis, Salzburg, 1988), p. 7. For a discussion of the role of the *Heimwehr* see Edmondsen; F. L. Carsten, *Fascist Movements in Austria: From Schönerer to Hitler* (London: Sage, 1977); Walter Wiltschegg, *Die Heimwehr* (Munich: R Oldenbourg, 1985).

organisations. The groups lacked real unifying principles or a programme beyond virulent anti-Marxism.[164] However, it is important to remember that a fear of Marxism was prevalent in Austria, particularly in the provinces, and this could be exploited.[165] The leaders of the *Heimwehr* were a mixture of former officers and aristocrats, while the foot soldiers were drawn from among the peasantry and included some veterans of the war.[166] The *Heimwehr* was initially formed as a defensive organisation.[167] However as time passed the movement sought to exert an influence on politics and eventually developed its own ambitions of power.[168] The economic improvements of the 1920s led to a decline in *Heimwehr* power but successes as a strike breaking force in the 1927 led to a new lease of life and an upsurge in popularity.[169] Additionally, the radical rhetoric of the Social Democrat Linz Programme of 1926 stoked fears of a left-wing coup and boosted membership numbers.[170] After 1927 conflict between the *Heimwehr* and the left-wing *Schutzbund* raged and the organisation began to march in Social Democrat territory in order to deliberately provoke controversy but the group still had little impact on national politics.[171] The 1930 Korneuburg Oath was a key moment in the history of the *Heimwehr* as those members who took the oath accepted the principles of fascism.[172] However in the 1930s the movement declined. The more radical elements in the movement were frustrated by the failure to push the movement further to the right and in 1931 after much talk of a 'march on Vienna' a putsch attempt was led by the *Heimwehr* leader Walter Pfirmer. Despite the failure of the putsch no prosecutions were made. However, the failure of the putsch pushed many *Heimwehr* members towards National Socialism.[173] The Nazi challenge to the *Heimwehr* continued publicly until the outlawing to the party. Set against the *Heimwehr* was the Republican

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[164] Philip Morgan, *Fascism in Europe, 1919 – 1945* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 33. Kitchen, p. 56.
[165] Glaubbauf, pp. 65 – 67.
[166] Melichar, p. 81.
[167] Michael Wolf, *Die Entstehung der Tiroler Heimwehr unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der gesamtösterreichischen politischen Lage* (Vienna: Unpublished MA Thesis, 2002), pp. 22 – 3.
[168] Edmonsen, p. 6.
[169] Kitchen, p. 57.
[170] Wiltschegg, p. 38.
[171] Lewis, p. 98; Wiltschegg, p. 47.
[172] Barker, p. 62.
[173] Lewis, p. 189.

Schutzbund, a defensive organisation founded in 1923 in response to the strength of right-wing paramilitary organisations.[174] From 1927 clashes between the groups marred Austrian society and publicly embodied and worsened societal difference.

In summary, the Austria of the First Republic was a state marred by political and societal division and undermined by repeated political crises. This background is crucial in understanding the context in which the war was commemorated.

War and Memory in Austria

In the previous sections we have seen how the study of war has developed in the last thirty years and outlined the key factors that determined the fate of Austria during the First Republic. Yet several important works have been produced in the last twenty years that bridge the gap between these two fields. In the following we shall see that although interesting and important contributions have been made, the commemoration and legacy of the world war in Austria remains an under-researched field.

Oswald Überegger, a historian of Tyrol, has made a damning assessment of the state of academic research on the history and legacy of the world war in Austria. Überegger sees structural and political reasons for the lack of research; the structure of Austrian universities leads to the neglect of the period 1914 to 1918, academic regional history has failed to develop, some topics have been the subject of active forgetting and others, such as the loss of South Tyrol, remain emotionally charged.[175] Others have shared this negative assessment of the quality of scholarship on the world war, arguing that Austrian reluctance to examine their role in the atrocities of the Second World War has led to a general neglect of contemporary history or that the study of military history has remained within its traditional constraints and has been dominated by official military perspectives.[176] While it is true that recent

[174] For details of the history of the Schutzbund culminating in the account of the civil war in 1934, based partly on oral history testimony but marred by a communist perspective see Ilona Duczynska, *Workers in Arms: The Austrian Schutzbund and the Civil War of 1934* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974).
[175] Überegger, pp. 21 – 28.
[176] Lewis p. 240. J.C. Allmayer-Beck, P. Broucek, M. Rauchensteiner, 'Der Erste Weltkrieg in der österreichischen Geschichtsschreibung zwischen 1914 und 1984,' in Jürger Rohwer (ed.),

trends in the cultural history of war have, as yet, had a limited impact on Austria, Überegger's negative assessment overlooks some valuable works on the world war and its legacy by both Austrian and foreign scholars. Many important contributions to Austrian history have been made by international scholars.[177] Maureen Healy's study of Vienna during the world war effectively combines social, cultural and gender history approaches to explore the conditions on the 'home front' and challenges key assumptions such as the idea of the almost total absence of men on the home front.[178] Ernst Hanisch has revealed the impact of war on ideas of masculinity in Austria during the twentieth century.[179] More detailed studies have offered valuable insight into the experiences of Austrian war veterans during the First Republic. Wolfgang Doppelbauer examined the postwar fate of officers and their difficulties in coping with the twin blows of defeat and loss of status that marked the early years of the new state.[180] Similarly Peter Melichar and Klaus Eisterer have examined attempts by former officers to readjust to peacetime conditions and to exert an influence within the Republic.[181] Detailed monographs on the experiences of other groups of former soldiers have also emerged in recent years. Injured veterans were the subject of works by Barbara Hoffmann and Brigitte Biwald, who examined their attempts to re-establish their lives in the face of their injuries and the inclement postwar conditions.[182] Alon Rachamimov has focused on the fate of those prisoners who were taken captive and held in Russia. Although the focus of his book was wartime, he has illustrated the postwar problems of this group, regarded as suspicious due

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Neue Forschungen zum Ersten Weltkrieg (Koblenz: Bernard & Gräfe Verlag, 1985), pp. 270 – 274. Rudolf Jerabek, 'Die österreichische Weltkriegesforschung,' in Wolfgang Michalka (ed.), *Der Erste Weltkrieg: Wirkung, Wahrnehmung, Analyse* (Munich: Seehamer Verlag, 1997), pp. 953 – 954.

[177] Hanno Scheuch, 'Austria 1918 – 1955: From the First to the Second Republic,' in *The Historical Journal,* 32/1 (1989) p. 177.

[178] Healy, pp. 258 – 299.

[179] Ernst Hanisch, *Männlichkeiten: Eine andere Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2005).

[180] Wolfgang Doppelbauer, *Zum Elend noch die Schande: Das altösterreichische Offizierskorps an Beginn der Republik* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1988).

[181] See Melichar. Also Klaus Eisterer, "Der Heldentod muss würdig geschildert werden.' Der Umgang mit der Vergangenheit am Beispiel Kaiserjäger und Kaiserjägertradition,' in Klaus Eisterer and Rolf Steininger (eds.), *Tirol und der Erste Weltkrieg* (Innsbruck: Österreichischer Studienverlag, 1995).

[182] Barbara Hoffmann, *Kriegsblinde in Österreich, 1914 – 1934* (Vienna: Ludwig Boltzmann-Insitituts, 2006). Brigitte Biwald, *Von Helden und Krüppeln: Das österreichisch-ungarische Militärsanitätswesen im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Vienna: ÖVB & hpt, 2002).

to their capture and the potential impact of the Bolshevik Revolution.[183] In combination these studies offer significant insight into the fate of veterans during the First Austrian Republic. However, none of these studies engages directly with the role played by veterans in the process of commemorating the war and none offers a comprehensive overview of the impact of the world war on the lives of the mass of Austrian veterans of the war. While the latter shortcoming is beyond the scope of this thesis, the former will be addressed in the following chapters.

Austria's memorial culture has been receiving increasing attention in recent years. A government-sponsored project to investigate 'sites of memory' has sought to uncover the roots of Austrian cultural identity.[184] The First World War plays a marginal role in this collection and its commemoration is not considered. Other studies have addressed Austria's physical memorials more specifically. An important collection was edited by Stefan Riesenfellner and published under the title 'Stone Consciousness.'[185] Articles examine pre-twentieth century sites of war commemoration including the Heldenberg complex designed to be the 'Austrian Valhalla,' the imperial Berg Isel war memorial complex in Tyrol, and the imperial 'national memorial' situated in the Vienna arsenal.[186] These articles discuss the political role of memorials and their construction from the perspective of art history. Thomas Kahler's doctoral dissertation moreover, investigates the construction of war

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[183] Alon Rachamimov, *POWs and the Great War* (Oxford: Berg, 2002).

[184] The three volume study was published between 2004 and 2005 to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Austrian state treaty. Although the volumes contain some important contributions on the role of history in Austrian identity, the overall focus of the series is on the contribution of the 'sites of memory' to contemporary identity. See Emil Brix, Ernst Bruckmüller and Hannes Stekl (eds.), *Memoria Austriae: Band I – Menschen, Mythen, Zeiten* (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 2004); Emil Brix, Ernst Bruckmüller and Hannes Stekl (eds.), *Memoria Austriae: Band II – Orte, Bauten, Regionen* (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 2005) and Emil Brix, Ernst Bruckmüller and Hannes Stekl (eds.), *Memoria Austriae: Band III – Unternehmer, Firmen, Produkte* (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 2005).

[185] Stefan Riesenfellner (ed.), *Steinernes Bewusstsein I: Die öffentliche Repräsentation staatlicher und nationaler Identität Österreichs in seinen Denkmälern* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1998).

[186] Stefan Riesenfellner, 'Steinernes Bewusstsein I: Der 'Heldenberg' – die militärische und dynastische ‚Walhalla' Österreiches,' in Riesenfellner, pp. 13 – 25; Laurence Cole, "Ein Held für wen? Andreas Höfer Denkmäler in Tirol im 19. Jahrhundert,' in Riesenfellner, pp. 31 – 61; Stefan Riesenfellner, 'Steinernes Bewusstsein II: Die 'Ruhmeshalle' und die 'Feldherrnhalle' – das k.u.k. 'Nationaldenkmal' im Wiener Arsenal,' in Riesenfellner, pp. 63 – 76. Also Markus Kristian, 'Denkmäler der Gründezeit in Wien,' in Riesenfellner pp. 77 – 126.

memorials in interwar Austria and northern Italy.[187] This dissertation is also written from the perspective of art history and emphasises the importance of the form of war memorials while neglecting their wider societal role. However, the author stresses the persistence of older ideas such as sacrifice 'with God, for Kaiser and Fatherland' in the aftermath of the conflict, ideas which are also illustrated in this thesis.[188] Similar conclusions have been reached by Biljana Menkovic, author of another study of Austrian memorial culture.[189] However, while Kahler and Menkovic recognise the importance of traditional interpretations of wartime sacrifice, they do not sufficiently interrogate the changed meaning of words such as 'fatherland' in postwar Austria. As we shall see in the following chapters, these apparently simple words mask a complex range of ideas. War memorials as points of conflict in the discourse over the postwar interpretation of the experience of war are explored in a study produced under the auspices of the Federal Memorial Office.[190] Again, this study offers useful analysis of the symbolism of memorials but again fails to sufficiently situate the process of commemorating the war in its wider social context. However, these and other studies recognise the significance of war memorials in giving meaning to the senseless deaths of soldiers and reassuring their families that their sacrifice was recognised and valued.[191] In the last twenty years therefore interest in Austria's memorial culture has grown, but significant gaps in the historiography remain. By examining the commemoration of the world war in its wider social context and by interrogating the meaning of terms used to give meaning to the deaths of soldiers in wartime, this thesis addresses some of these shortcomings.

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[187] Thomas Kahler, *Kriegderdenkmäler im Felde und daheim. Materialen zur Gestaltung von Kriegerdenkmälern des Ersten Weltkrieges in Österreich und Oberitalien* (Salzburg: Unpublished PhD thesis, 1990).
[188] Ibid., p. 25.
[189] Biljana Menkovic, *Politische Gedenkkultur: Denkmäler – Die Visualisierung politischer Macht im öffentlichen Raum* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1999), p. 50.
[190] Joachim Giller, Hubert Mader and Christina Seidl, *"Wo sind sie geblieben?' Kriegerdenkmäler und Gefalleneherung in Österreich* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1992), p. 88.
[191] Reinhold Gärtner and Sieglinde Rosenberger, *Kriegerdenkmäler* (Innsbruck: Österreichischer Studienverlag, 1991), p.22.

Methodological Approaches

The process of memorialising the experience of the world war in Austria was extremely complicated and did not always leave clear traces. In an attempt to understand this process, it has been necessary to examine a wide variety of sources. The physical memorials themselves have served as a source for this thesis. Some memorials, in particular significant monuments and war graves sections of cemeteries in Vienna and Carinthia were visited. War graves sections were created in many municipal cemeteries during the war and the bodies of soldiers who died within Austria were buried there, along with the smaller numbers that were exhumed from foreign battlefields and returned home. These areas were frequently visited and were the focus of much commemorative activity: individuals made pilgrimages to the graves, particularly on All Souls' Day, and organised remembrance ceremonies were held there. As we shall see, despite the large numbers of visitors, war graves were often badly maintained during the First Republic. Today the sections of these cemeteries are pristine but no longer the site of mass pilgrimage. However, the graves themselves generally remain untouched, making them a useful source for studying commemoration.

The major memorials visited in Vienna and Carinthia were selected for their prominence and also for the statements they made on the conflict. These memorials were controversial on unveiling, and some, such as the *Siegfriedskopf* memorial in the University of Vienna, have remained controversial to this day.[192] The statements they made on the conflict and their significance mean that visits to the memorials themselves were valuable.

However, the vast majority of war memorials did not make striking statements on war and their significance as individual monuments was restricted to their local setting. Such memorials are still to be found in most towns and villages in Austria. They are not comprehensively documented and rarely feature in the standard work on Austria's memorials, *Dehio*, as they are not considered to be of any artistic merit.[193] No more than a tiny sample of such memorials were visited during the course of this project. Aside from the

[192] See chapter two.
[193] See for example, *DEHIO, Handbuch der Kunstdenkmäler Österreichs, Kärnten,* (Vienna: Bundesdenkmalamt, 2001).

practical problems of visiting a large number of widely spread structures, there are a number of more important methodological reasons why this approach was not adopted. In many cases these memorials were altered after the Second World War, due to the addition of the names of the fallen of that later conflict or by total demolition and rebuilding.[194] Indeed, even those memorials which remain largely in tact have been altered by the development of the towns and villages in which they are located and the changed relationships of the population to these memorials.

Due to such changes the value of these memorials in their current forms as source materials for this thesis is limited. Yet, local war memorials were crucial to the process of commemorating the conflict during the First Republic because of the sheer numbers in which they were constructed and the significant role they played within the communities that erected them. Therefore alternative, contemporary records of their construction and form have been examined. Records about the construction of small scale, local memorials exist at the Federal Memorial Office in Vienna and these have proved crucial in examining these local memorials.

While the physical memorials themselves are an important element in this thesis, the limitations of centrally held sources and, more importantly, the aims of the thesis mean that the source material that has been drawn on is much wider than merely the physical memorials to the world war. Rather, James Young's broader definition of a memorial, encompassing not just physical monuments but also a wide range of practices and objects including ceremonies, events, books and paintings has been adopted.[195] The records of the Defence Ministry have been invaluable in accessing the wide variety of commemorative activities undertaken by Austrians each year. However, in order to contextualise these direct commemorative activities a broader range of sources, including the records of veterans organisations and their publications, volumes of popular military history, military and civilian publications, works of fiction, the records of the war invalids' section of the Ministry for Social Welfare, the Black Cross war graves organisation and other

[194] See Giller for a discussion of the adaptation of memorials. Giller et al (1992), pp. 185 – 191.
[195] James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 5.

cultural products have been examined. By drawing on a wide range of sources, this thesis is able to synthesise the range of attempts by Austrians to comprehend the experience of the world war in its aftermath.

The chapters examine the commemoration of war from 1918 to 1934. Due to the complexity of commemorative activities, it has been necessary to restrict the time frame to the period of the democratic First Republic. However, as the memory of the world war was central to the political culture of the *Ständestaat,* the first year of the new regime has also been considered.

However, the challenge of such a range of material has been great and it has been necessary to develop a framework for analysing this disparate range of sources. Accordingly the thesis is divided thematically. The first chapter examines ideas of comradeship forged in wartime. It suggests that many veterans believed that the bonds forged between men in combat were uniquely strong and had the potential to transform postwar Austrian life and give meaning to soldiers' sacrifices. They believed that these bonds should be publicly celebrated and produced publications and memorials to do this. However, the thesis challenges the reality of the existence of these bonds, by highlighting the diversity of veterans' postwar experience and demonstrating that a significant proportion of those who participated in the war were actually excluded from these bonds of comradeship.

The second chapter studies the meaning of 'dying for the Fatherland' in postwar Austria. While the widespread use of this phrase has been recognised by others, in this chapter the different meanings of the phrase, ranging from small villages to the former multinational empire are examined. It is argued that although the Austrian national identity was complex, the sense that 'dying for the Fatherland' justified the sacrifices of Austrian soldiers was widespread.

The third chapter analyses the fate of monarchism after the loss of the ruling dynasty. The world war had been fought, at least in name, for the emperor and the Habsburg family, yet in the postwar period loyalty to and nostalgia for the dynasty were restricted to a small group of former elites and officers until the challenges of the 1930s and the instrumentalisation of the imperial past by the *Ständestaat* led to the return of monarchist rhetoric to the

centre stage. For the majority of Austrians, sacrifice for the emperor could no longer justify their suffering in the postwar period.

The fourth chapter addresses ideas of illegitimate defeat and shows how militarism survived the conflict and flourished in the increasingly violent society of the 1920s and 1930s. It argues that by praising the performance of the sections of the Habsburg military or undermining the legitimacy of defeat, veterans could feel pride in their wartime achievements despite the obvious shortcomings of the Habsburg military performance.

The final chapter examines the role of sacrifice 'for God' in allowing Austrians to comprehend the experience of the world war. It argues that important rituals of commemoration were undoubtedly linked to the Catholic Church and a religious interpretation of sacrifice offered comfort to both veterans and the bereaved. However, many on the left rejected the role of religion in commemorating the war and the dominance of Catholic ritual led to the exclusion of those of other or no faiths.

In combination the chapters shed light on the complex reactions to the experience of war in a divided society such as Austria. However they also show that Austrians were united in seeking to answer questions about the meaning of wartime death and sacrifice. The central argument of this thesis is that, despite the catastrophe of war and the challenges of peace, positive explanations of the meaning of the world war were sought and found.

Chapter 2 - For Fatherland and *Heimat*

Introduction

At the unveiling ceremony of the *Heldendenkmal* in 1934 the honorary president of the organisation, Schönburg-Hartenstein, delivered an address to the assembled dignitaries and veterans. He claimed:

> [At the end of the war] former soldiers judged ourselves lucky to have escaped death, but today some of us envy those who fell because: '*dulce et decorum est, pro patria mori* – it is sweet and fitting to die for your fatherland!' They died so that our homeland could be saved from the enemy, they died so that our fatherland could live. We need to teach our children this lesson: Our fatherland Austria is worth any sacrifice.[1]

These words are a striking example of patriotism in the commemoration of the war. While this was an extreme example, it was not an isolated one. Studies have shown that memorials in Austria portrayed the experience of the world war as a sacrifice 'for the fatherland.'[2] Yet, as we shall see, scholars in the past have argued that Austria was a state with no sense of national identity or patriotism. This paradox is at the centre of the following chapter: why did Austrians choose to commemorate the world war as a sacrifice for the fatherland if that idea had no meaning in the new state?

It is widely accepted that it was the experience of the Second World War and occupation that encouraged Austrians to finally support the idea of independence.[3] Therefore, the period of the First Republic has been seen as a time when Austrians had no sense of national identity, which has in turn been regarded as one of the central problems of the new state. For example, according to Helmut Andics, the decision to create 'the state that no one wanted' was based solely on the victors' hatred of Germany. Further the Treaty of St. Germain was a 'death sentence'; Austrians were united only by a

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[1] Fürsten Schönburg-Hartenstein, 'Worte der Begrüssung,' *Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales*, p. 11.
[2] Giller et al, p. 75; Ernst Hanisch, 'Politische Symbole und Gedächtnisorte,' in Dachs et al, p. 426.
[3] Anton Pelinka, 'Nationale Identität,' in Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Dilek Cinar, Bernd Matouschek (eds.), *Nationale und kulturelle Identitäten Österreichs: Theorien, Methoden und Probleme der Forschung zu kollektiver Identität* (Vienna: IFK Internationales Forschungszentrum, 1995), p. 29.

shared mother tongue and a rejection of the new state.[4] The state was originally named 'German-Austria' and this has been taken as further proof of a lack of distinct identity as the name Austria was only adopted at the insistence of the Allies.[5] After this turbulent start the picture of the development of national identity in traditional accounts does not improve. Writing in the aftermath of the *Anschluss*, Malcolm Bullock claimed that the state had always been doomed to failure.[6] Others have alleged that interwar Austria was a unique example of 'a state bent on its own destruction.'[7] That the majority of Austrians supported the *Anschluss* has been used to illustrate the failure of Austrian national identity to crystallise. The state has been described as a 'loose collection of centrifugal forces' which included the effects of dialects and linguistic pluralism, the myth of blood differences, religious differences and parochialism.[8] None of the major political parties expressed sufficient faith in the future of the state, which was further undermined by the economic fatalism of German Nationalists and Social Democrats.[9] The lack of faith in the economic viability of the country in its new form has been regarded as one of the crucial factors in the failure of confidence in the state.[10]

This interpretation has been retained in some recent popular accounts. For example, Hannes Androsch, a prominent politician of the Second Republic, has suggested the new state was an artificial construction, united only in rejection of the monarchy and compromised by Austrians' lack of faith in its viability.[11] The political culture of the new Republic has also been used as evidence of a lack of identity as unifying national symbols never emerged. The national anthem was a case in point. At the end of the Empire the

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[4] Hellmut Andics, *Der Staat den keiner wollte: Österreich 1918 – 1938* (Vienna: Herder & Co, 1962), pp. 89 – 108.
[5] Barker, pp. 4 – 11.
[6] Malcolm Bullock, *Austria 1918 – 1938: A Study in Failure* (London: Macmillan & Co, 1939), p. 17.
[7] Stanley Suval, *The Anschluss Question in the Weimar Era: A Study of Nationalism in Germany and Austria, 1918 – 1932* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 169.
[8] William T. Bluhm, *Building an Austrian Nation: The Political Integration of a Western State* (London: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 2 – 24.
[9] Friedrich Heer, *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1981), pp. 337 – 340.
[10] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 32.
[11] Hannes Androsch, *Warum Österreich so ist, wie es ist: Eine Synthese aus Widersprüchen* (Munich: Kremayr & Scheriau, 2003), pp. 81 - 90.

imperial anthem, *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser* set to Haydn's melody, was abandoned and replaced by *Deutschösterreich, du herrliches Land* written by the new Chancellor Karl Renner and Wilhelm Kienzl. However this new anthem never achieved popular recognition and in 1929 was replaced by *Sei gesegnet ohne Ende* by the nationalist poet Ottokar Kernstock, again set to the original Haydn melody.[12] This new anthem was not accepted by Social Democrats and on many public occasions the Austrian was replaced by the German national anthem. Similarly, there was a failure to celebrate a universally accepted national day. The official national day was 12 November, the anniversary of the founding of the state, but this was regarded as a Social Democrat event and, after the first civil war in 1934, the national day was switched to 1 May.[13] Problems with national symbols contribute to a picture of a state devoid of national identity.

However, more recently the picture of Austrian identity during the First Republic has been refined. It has been recognised that the lack of a coherent national identity was not an innate feature of the new state, but rather the period of its existence was simply too short for a new identity to develop and be accepted.[14] There has also been a recognition that it is possible for national identities to exist above and below the level of the state, meaning that Austrians could simultaneously hold loyalties to their region, their political *Lager,* their new state and the wider German nation.[15] Further, it has been acknowledged that it was perfectly 'possible for a sense of Austrian identity to coexist with a lack of belief in the Austrian state.'[16] Support for the *Anschluss* did not preclude the existence of a sense of Austrian identity. If this more nuanced understanding of identity is adopted it becomes clear that a positive sense of Austrian identity did exist during the First Republic, yet was not

[12] Ernst Bruckmüller, *Nation Österreich: Kulturelles Bewusstsein und gesellschaftlich-politische Prozesse* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), p. 102.
[13] This was a provactive action as the 1 May was traditionally the international day of workers. Ibid., pp. 103 – 104.
[14] Mathis in Bischof and Pelinka (eds.), p. 22.
[15] Anton Pelinka, *Zur österreichischen Identitat: Zwischen deutscher Vereinigung und Mitteleuropa* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1990), p. 147.
[16] C.M. Peniston-Bird, *The Debate on Austrian National Identity in the First Republic, 1918 – 1938* (PhD Thesis, St Andrews, 1996), p. 17.

always accompanied by the recognition that Austrians were part of a separate nation.[17]

By investigating specific aspects of Austrian identity, examples of a positive sense of what it meant to be Austrian during the First Republic have been discovered. For example, in tourist literature Austria's diversity, generally considered to be a negative quality, was transformed into a virtue and articulated as part of a positive and coherent national identity.[18] Similarly, cultural institutions such as the *Burgtheater* in Vienna managed to articulate a sense of Austrian identity despite the ambiguity of the distinction between German and Austrian cultures.[19] If we accept that identity is generally complex and multifaceted and that the recognition of the existence of an Austrian identity did not necessarily equate to a belief in the viability of an independent Austrian state, then we can understand why the world war was commemorated as a sacrifice for the Fatherland.[20] These multiple identities meant that the meanings of words such as *Heimat* and Fatherland were complex. As we shall see, *Heimat* could refer to units as small as villages or as large as entire regions.[21] Fatherland could be used to refer to the Republic, the Greater German state envisaged as the future or the multinational empire of the past. The ambiguity of these words did not diminish their power to explain the experience of the world war.

Local *Heimat*

Jay Winter has argued that historians must 'approach the remembrance of war from the angle of small-scale, locally rooted social action.'[22] These grass-roots activities are essential sources for understanding the involvement of ordinary people in the commemoration of the conflict and the role played by

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[17] Werner Suppanz, *Österreichische Geschichtsbilder: Historische Legitimationen in Ständestaat und Zweiter Republik* (Vienna: Bohlau, 1998), p. 9.
[18] Ibid., 373 – 397.
[19] Robert Pyrah, *The Burgtheater and Austrian Identity: Theatre and Cultural Politics in Vienna, 1918 – 1938* (London: Legenda, 2007), pp. 11 – 13.
[20] Theorists of nationalism have recognised that objective definitions of the nation excluded many established nations so it is necessary to focus on national identity and the multiple identities which comprise it. Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), pp. 11 – 18.
[21] Pyrah, p. 12.
[22] Jay Winter, 'Forms of kinship and remembrance in the aftermath of the Great War,' in Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (eds.), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 59.

the process in coming to terms with grief. However, a comprehensive examination of all local memorials constructed in Austria would present a significant challenge due to their numbers and the limitations of the available source material. Although exact figures on the numbers of war memorials built during the First Republic do not exist, 'almost all' communities constructed some kind of marker.[23] While extremely large numbers of memorials were constructed, as they were privately funded and most were not considered to be of any artistic merit, detailed records were not maintained. However, in 1930 a questionnaire was sent to all communities in Austria, asking them to give details about any memorials in their community for a planned publication.[24] Unfortunately only the answers from Lower Austria remain and these indicate that by 1930 approximately three quarters of communities had a war memorial or plaque in place.[25] Memorial construction continued in the 1930s, so by 1934 the proportion of communities with a world war memorial was higher. These figures can reasonably be applied to the whole of Austria, supporting the conclusion that by 1934 'almost all' communities had some kind of memorial.

The Lower Austrian source is crucial for examining local memorials.[26] The responses to the survey provide information about the form, location, construction and funding of memorial projects. The majority of local memorials claimed that the fallen had died for the fatherland or for the *Heimat* but did not reflect on the meaning of these words.[27] While memorials took a variety of forms, some were certainly more popular. The most common form was an obelisk or column, often incorporating an eagle, a cross or both.[28] Similarly, memorial stones also including eagles, crosses or wreaths were

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[23] Giller et al, p. 75.
[24] BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 3: 1918 – 1929, BDA to all mayors, 14 November 1929.
[25] BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 4: 1930 – 1934, report, Zusammenstellungen der Kriegerdenkmäler, 10 January 1930.
[26] There is no evidence that the planned publication on war memorials was ever produced.
[27] Giller et al, p. 25.
[28] See for example memorials in Gainfarn (unveiled 19 June 1921), Traiskirchen (5 September 1920), Pfaffstätten (28 August 1921), Weissenbach an der Triesting (August 1926) and Berndorf (22 August 1926), all in the Baden district of Lower Austria. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 5: Bezirk Baden (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Baden. Also the memorial in Inzersdorf, Vienna, constructed by the veterans' association in 1923.

widespread.[29] Memorials which incorporated figures of soldiers were less common and those which included images of dead or dying soldiers were even rarer.[30] Finally, many communities had only plaques listing the names of the fallen.[31] The recording of names was a function of almost all local memorials which emphasises their role as surrogate graves, marking the deaths of soldiers. [32] Some monuments took the recording function further and featured photographs. [33] Local memorials were products of a community. That memorials were generally built in prominent locations, such as near the local church or school, is further evidence that they served an important function. While monuments took different forms they shared one important characteristic: none of them reflected the realities or horrors of modern war.

Yet how did these memorials come to be built? In almost all cases local committees were formed to raise funds and organise the construction. The committees were comprised of members of local veterans' organisations, notables and members of the council. One of major challenges that these committees faced was to raise sufficient funds. In some cases donations were received from the church or from the local council but the majority of memorials were funded by collections or fundraising events. While most communities were successful in raising some money, they did not have sufficient funds to organise elaborate competitions to select appropriate designs. Therefore the majority directly employed an architect or sculptor to

[29] See for example memorials in Markt-Aspang (unveiled 20 July 1921), Edlitz, St Peter am Neuwalde, Zöbern, Wiesmath (1922), Hölles (1922) and Weikersdorf (26 October 1919), all in the Wiener Neustadt district of Lower Austria. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 6: Bezirk Wiener Neustadt (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Wiener Neustadt.
[30] See for example Sollenau (unveiled 1 August 1920), which depicts a solider kneeling or Lichtenegg, where figures on the memorial show a solider cradling a dying comrade. Ibid.
[31] See for example Breitenstein am Semmering (20 July 1924) or Sautern, both in the Neunkirchen district of Lower Austria. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 7: Bezirk Neunkirchen (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Neunkirchen.
[32] For example, in Zöbern (15 October 1922), Wiener Neustadt district, Lower Austria, listed the names of the forty-four fallen and ten missing of that community. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 6: Bezirk Wiener Neustadt (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Wiener Neustadt.
[33] For example, in Hollenthon (1 May 1921), Wiener Neustadt district, Lower Austria, oval portraits of the faces of each of the fallen soldiers were shown on the memorial plaque. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 6: Bezirk Wiener Neustadt (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Wiener Neustadt.

design their memorial.[34] In some cases a local artist or a committee member chose to design the memorial, meaning that even the form was a product of the community.[35] However the similarities of memorials indicate that most designs were selected from a pre-existing set, rather than developed specifically for each memorial. For example, the communities of Feistritz (Wiener Neustadt) and Seebenstein (Neunkirchen) had identical war memorials depicting a soldier dying in the arms of Christ, both commissioned from the sculptor Rudolf Fänner in Vienna.[36] Certain firms, such as Eduard Goldschmidt, based in Wiener Neustadt, produced memorials for more than one community.[37] The vast majority of memorials were therefore mass produced rather than specifically designed.

Even during the war this mass production was a matter of concern for the Federal Memorial Office. In 1915 the Preservation Office in Salzburg sent a letter to all authorities, parishes, school administrations and comradeship organisations suggesting they seek the office's advice when constructing memorials.[38] The stated purpose of this letter was to protect Salzburg from 'the otherwise unavoidable, factory produced, insipid markers' that were present elsewhere.[39] Concerns about the production of artistically inappropriate memorials persisted into peacetime. In 1919, after concerns were raised by a local resident, a representative of the Innsbruck Memorial Office went to Axams in Tyrol to examine plans for an 'ugly and inappropriate' memorial and persuaded the local authorities to opt for one 'more fitting for

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[34] This was the case in the overwhelming number of cases when the designers of the memorials were simply listed by name and location and described as sculptors or stonemasons.

[35] For example in Sooss the memorial, unveiled in autumn 1921 was designed by Johann Schwertführer, the head of the memorial committee. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 6: Bezirk Wiener Neustadt (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Wiener Neustadt.

[36] BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 7: Bezirk Neunkirchen (1930), report, 'Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Neunkirchen,: BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 6: Bezirk Wiener Neustadt (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Wiener Neustadt.

[37] For example the memorials in Miesenbach, Pernitz, Lichtenegg, Wiesmath, Neumannsdorf, Walpersbach, Weikersdorf and Wöllersdorf were all either designed or built by the firm Eduard Goldschmidt in Wiener Neustadt. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 6: Bezirk Wiener Neustadt (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Wiener Neustadt.

[38] BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 1: 1912-1915, Landeskonservatorenamt Salzburg to all Gemeindevorstehungen, 10 February 1915.

[39] BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 1: 1912-1915, Landeskonservatorenamt Salzburg to Staatsdenkmalamt, 12 February 1915.

the village.'[40] *Deutsches Vaterland,* a monthly publication, argued that although the production of war memorials was to be welcomed, the memorials themselves were deeply unsatisfactory as 'the majority [are] so substandard, that they have to be called a cultural disgrace.'[41] When confronted with the challenge of commemorating the conflict, local communities faced with restricted budgets selected memorials which they considered to be appropriate. However, the conservation authorities and other, self-appointed, guardians of Austria's landscape argued that it was not only important to commemorate the sacrifices of the fallen, it was also essential to do so in an aesthetically appropriate manner.

Inevitably, the construction of a war memorial in a community was a process of negotiation and compromise. Most communities had a single memorial so its message had to be acceptable to all, leading to conservatism in local memorial culture. In 1928 a story in the left-wing military newspaper, *Der freie Soldat,* satirised this conservatism. The citizens of a town in the story, 'A War Memorial' by Ernst Fischer, wanted to build a memorial to their fallen sons, so elected a committee made up of a priest, a butcher, a house-holder and a retired colonel. The committee appointed a sculptor and, after a debate about the form the new memorial should take, the sculptor presented an alternative memorial he had spent years creating. This sculpture was made up of twisted human bodies and war material representing the horror of war. This striking and powerful monument was offered at no cost to the community. The sculptor suggested that the funds raised could instead be used to support the victims of the war. The reaction of the committee members to this memorial were described as follows:

> The men of the committee stared into each others faces. Suddenly, in outrage, the colonel exclaimed: 'That makes a mockery of patriotic feelings!'
> And the priest shouted: 'That makes a mockery of Christian ideals.'
> And the butcher shouted: 'That makes a mockery of national interests.'
> And the house owner shouted: 'That makes a mockery of humanity!'

[40] This practice is not documented elsewhere. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 3: 1918-1929, Landesdenkmalamt Innsbruck to Deutschösterreichische Staatsdenkmalamt, 03 July 1919.
[41] Hermann Goja, 'Kriegerdenkmäler,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* September/October 1923.

> In their outrage the committee members dismissed the sculptor and went to a local stone-mason, who produced a memorial which matched all their expectations of how war should be represented.[42]

The story satirises a deeper truth; local communities did not want to bring the horrors of war into their midst. Rather, they wanted to create a site to recognise, record and mourn the sacrifices of the fallen. The construction of war memorials was dependant on funds raised from the community, so their design had to appeal to or at least be accepted by the majority.

The major function of local memorials is therefore clear. However, there were also some other factors that affected the construction of local memorials. As well as representing the sacrifices of the fallen, war memorials also represented the communities that had constructed them. Concerns were expressed that in some cases this function of memorials was becoming dominant. In 1923 *Der freie Soldat* argued that 'villages are competing with each other to have the most beautiful 'Heroes Memorial'.'[43] The idea that memorials were, in some cases, a 'status symbol' for a village, is further illustrated by tourist postcards in which the local war memorial was depicted alongside the other attractions of a community.[44]

Therefore, local war memorials served multiple purposes. The impetus for their construction certainly came from within the community and the memorials played a role within towns and villages. However, committees were also aware of the construction of memorials in other areas and therefore it was inevitable that some element of comparison would enter into the process. Financial constraints and the need to produce a memorial that would satisfy the majority of the community meant that local memorials did not offer striking comments on the realities of modern war. While they were deeply rooted within communities, they did not interpret the sacrifices of wartime as having been made for a specific community. As we shall see in

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[42] Ernst Fischer, 'Ein Kriegerdenkmal,' *Der freie Soldat,* 1. December 1928.
[43] 'Kriegsgräber und Heldendenkmäler – Ehrenbeziehung,' *Der freie Soldat*, September 1923.
[44] For example, postcards of the memorials in Aigen (21 May 1922) and Matzendorf (1922) from the Wiener Neustadt district of Lower Austria. The official stamp of the village of Schranawand in the Mödling district of Lower Austria depicts the village's war memorial. BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 6: Bezirk Wiener Neustadt (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Wiener Neustadt; BDA, Kriegerdenkmäler, Fasz 8: Bezirk Mödling (1930), report, Kriegerdenkmäler im Bezirk Mödling.

the following sections, a larger unit was needed to justify the sacrifices of wartime.

Regional *Heimat*

Some historians have argued that during the period of the monarchy (German) Austrians had a dual identity; a strong German sense based on origins, language, education system, literature and communication, and a weaker, Austrian feeling, that focused on the monarchy and dynastic symbols.[45] Yet this view overlooks the crucial role of Austrians' identification with their province. It was once considered that national identities replaced regional identities in the age of nation states yet recent research has stressed the continued relevance of regional identities. Celia Applegate has argued that during the war the word *Heimat* in the *Pfalz* region of south-western Germany referred specifically to the region rather than the whole state. After the war the concept of *Heimat* referred to both regional loyalties and national (German) patriotism and was used to counter attempts to introduce a pro-French sense of identity.[46] Alon Confino has also examined regional identities in Germany and shown how national and regional identities co-existed in tension within the nation.[47]

In Austria, regional identities were similarly important. Conflict between Vienna and the provinces was one of the many problems which hindered the formation of a coherent national identity.[48] However, by examining regional identity we can get beyond the simple dichotomy of Vienna versus the provinces. Each region had a distinct identity. For example, Vorarlberg was caught between Switzerland, with which it shared many cultural similarities, and Austria and had a long history of resistance to outside authority, while Tyrol had a strongly Catholic identity and was damaged by the loss of South

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[45] See for example, Ernst Hanisch, *Österreichische Geschicte 1890 - 1990: Der lange Schatten des Staates - Österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1994), p. 154.

[46] Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 113 – 126.

[47] Alon Confino, *The Nation as Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany and National Memory, 1871 – 1918* (London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) pp. 8 – 9.

[48] See for example the discussion of the separatism of particularly the Western provinces in Karl Webber, 'Föderalismus,' in Dachs et al, pp. 124 – 5.

Tyrol at the end of the war.[49] Regions also had distinct symbols and views of the past. For example, in Tyrol the figure of Andreas Höfer, a leader of the Tyrolean uprising against the Napoleon, was crucial to regional identity.[50] As these examples illustrate, the Western provinces had particularly well developed regional identities.[51] These became more significant at the end of the conflict when Austrians lost their imperial identity and were forbidden from expressing their German identities through the *Anschluss*.[52] Attempts by the Western provinces to leave the state were evidence of this. Once it had become clear that South Tyrol would be lost to Italy, the idea of a 'Free state of Tyrol' under League of Nations control was proposed to effect a reversal of the decision. This was unsuccessful and once the border had been fixed there was increasing agitation for an *Anschluss* of the province of Tyrol with Germany. Vorarlberg sought union with Switzerland and also proposed a South German confederation with Würtemberg.[53] The citizens of Vorarlberg felt that their distinctive province did not have a place within the new state and those of Tyrol were prepared to sacrifice their position in Austria to maintain the integrity of their province. The case of Burgenland was interesting as, unlike the other provinces, no prewar regional identity existed as it had never been a distinct regional entity. During the First Republic attempts were made to foster a pro-Austrian regional identity and play down the importance of the Hungarian past in the province.[54]

In Salzburg a memorial to the fallen of the city and of the region of Salzburg was built in 1924 by the *Rainer* comradeship association. It was situated in the *Festung Hohensalzburg,* the castle which is one of the iconic locations in the city, and an important site of regional identification.[55] Therefore, it is clear that the strength of regional identities varied in Austria.

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[49] William D. Bowman, 'Regional History and the Austrian Nation,' *Journal of Modern History*, 67/4 (1995), pp. 878 – 891.
[50] Laurence Cole, *'Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland' Nationale Identität der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols, 1860 – 1914* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2000), p. 225.
[51] Karl Webber, 'Föderalismus,' in Dachs et al, p. 125.
[52] Bruckmüller, p. 188.
[53] Webber in Dachs et al, pp. 125 – 128.
[54] Burgenland only became part of Austria in 1921 and was part of the area previously known as 'German West Hungary.' Magyarised Germans and Croats in the area were resistant to this new identity. Peter Haslinger, 'Building a Regional Identity: The Burgenland, 1921 – 1938,' *Austrian History Yearbook,* 32 (2001), pp. 105 – 124.
[55] *Rainerdenkmal*, Festung Hohensalzburg, 1924.

Regional identities had a clear impact on the commemoration of the world war. By focusing on a province, continuity between the prewar and postwar *Heimat* could be maintained. As we saw in the introduction, regional studies of the commemoration of the world war in Europe have emerged in recent years. However, Austrian regional history remains an under-researched area so detailed accounts of regional variation in the commemoration of the conflict do not yet exist. However, the following section aims to draw out some distinctive features of the commemoration of the world war in provincial Austria and suggest that the variation points to a regional understanding of the conflict.

Even in wartime regional identities were reflected in memorial culture. In 1916 laurel wreaths were attached to the *Äussere Burgtor* memorial (later converted into the *Heldendenkmal*) in Vienna. This memorial had been built in 1824 to celebrate the battle of Leipzig (the Battle of the Nations) from 16 – 19 October 1813, when allied forces defeated Napoleon and forced his retreat across the Rhine.[56] Therefore this gate, part of the Hofburg complex in central Vienna, was already associated with military victory when, in 1915, a decision was taken to modify it. The modification project was known as "Laurels for Our Heroes" and its aims were to raise money for the victims of the war and to adapt the meaning of the memorial.[57] Along with golden laurel branches provided by Kaiser Wilhelm II, Sultan Mehmed V and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, metal laurel wreaths were attached, representing each of the provinces and major cities of the empire.[58] The names of individual soldiers were engraved on each leaf of these 'victory wreaths.'[59] The message of this adapted memorial was that the soldiers were fighting or had died for the 'imperial Fatherland.' Yet this Fatherland was made up a large number of regions; soldiers were fighting and dying in the first instance for their regional *Heimat*.

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[56] Robert A.Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526 - 1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 227

[57] K.K Militärwitwen und -waisenfond, Hilfsaktion des Kriegsfürsorgeamtes vormals "Kälteschutz," *Lorbeer für unsere Helden, 1914 - 1916: Denkschrift zur Enthüllung der Kränze am äusseren Burgtor in Wien* (Vienna: 1916), p.1

[58] Ibid., p. 2

[59] Ibid., p. 4

Regional understanding of sacrifice persisted into peacetime. The new state had a federal structure which was mirrored in the structure of veterans' and war graves organisations that accordingly had an impact on commemorative and mourning practices. As we shall see in chapter five, the generally accepted day for mourning the fallen of the world war in Austria was All Souls' Day. However some provinces chose to complement the All Souls' Day celebrations by the addition of a day dedicated specifically to the fallen of their region.[60] For example in May 1925 a reunion and a commemoration for the fallen soldiers of Vorarlberg was held in the provincial capital, Bregenz. Interestingly, the organisers of the event chose to invite German soldiers from a nearby garrison town but restricted the participation of Austrians to those who wished to specifically commemorate the sacrifices of the soldiers of Vorarlberg. This was a reflection of the affinity between Vorarlberg and its Southern German neighbours as well as feelings of separation from the rest of the Austrian state.

The insularity of commemoration in Vorarlberg is further highlighted by a later project. A memorial stone to the fallen of the 3rd Regiment (Vorarlberg) of the *Kaiserjäger* was unveiled in 1921. Soon after, a committee was founded to create a memorial in the war graves section of the municipal cemetery, which contained the graves of 186 members of the imperial armies, alongside Russians and Serbs. However, the committee had little success in fund-raising as an alternative project to build a memorial chapel dedicated specifically to the fallen of Vorarlberg monopolised donations and support. Ten years after the graveyard project had been launched it was no nearer completion. The organiser ascribed its failure to the agitation of veterans' and paramilitary organisations for the Vorarlberg memorial chapel.[61] The project dedicated to the fallen of the region achieved greater support. These examples suggest that commemoration in Vorarlberg focused on the region. This was certainly linked to its feeling of disconnection from the state but it was compounded by the behaviour of veterans' associations in Tyrol. In their

[60] In Lower Austria All Souls' Day was officially adopted by the Black Cross organisation as the provincial day of mourning. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Abteilung 1, carton 923, (31 - 6/5) Zl. 1852, Linzer Schwarzes Kreuz to BMfHW, 21 October 1921.
[61] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3147, (54 – 3/1), Zl. 31068, Kriegerdenkmalausschuss der Landeshauptstadt Bregenz to BMfHW, 15 July 1931.

commemoration of the world war the Tyrolean *Kaiserjäger* associations overlooked the participation of soldiers from Vorarlberg (as well as Jewish soldiers and Italian speaking soldiers).[62] As their sacrifices were being written out of history, the need to commemorate them within the region was more pressing.

Vorarlberg's distinctive commemoration was determined by its character and a postwar experience of exclusion. However, in the remainder of this section two states which suffered unique wartime and early postwar experiences are examined. The loss of South Tyrol was a source of great bitterness in Tyrol, where former combatants felt a particular sense of injustice after 'their heroic defence of the homeland.'[63] Therefore the meaning of the word *Heimat* was even more complex as it now referred to a region that was split between two states. The following extract from patriotic magazine in 1920 is illustrative of the complexity of discussing *Heimat* in the case of Tyrol:

> *Heimat*... Today that word has a double meaning, both sweet and tragic! The war and the imposed peace have made so many homeless (*heimatlos*) and so many more quake and fear that they will lose their *Heimat* and be forced leave without knowing where to go.[64]

Sacrifice for the *Heimat* was inevitably linked to its loss. Yet the loss also strengthened regional identity and meant that the unique experiences of Tyrol were commemorated. For example, the *Andreas Hofer Lied* was sung at most ceremonies in Tyrol, a practice unique to the region.[65] The figure of Andreas Höfer featured prominently in commemoration ceremonies for the fallen of the world war. For example, at a reunion in 1930 a spokesman of the *Kaiserjäger* veterans' association claimed that 'whenever the struggle for freedom of a people is discussed, Tyrol and its hero Andreas Höfer are spoken of with awe.'[66] Other ceremonies linked the tragedy of death in war to

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[62] Eisterer in Eisterer and Steininger, p. 123.
[63] Bowman, p. 884.
[64] Maria Reinthaler, 'Die Heimat ruft,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* November 1920.
[65] For example the song was sung at a Heimatwehrfest with a commemoration ceremony in Innsbruck in 1922. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Abteilung 1, carton 1248, (39 – 18), Zl. 1049, Zivilkommissariat to BMfHW, 24 November 1922. The song recounts the death of the Tyrolean folk hero Andreas Hofer, the leader of a peasant uprising against the French, who was shot in Feburary 1810.
[66] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2935, (75 – ½), Zl. 37542, pamphlet, Tiroler Kaiserjägertag am 2. und 3. August 1930 in Kufstein, verbunden mit dem 35jährigen Gedenktage der Fahnenweihe des 1. Tiroler Kaiserjäger-Regiments im August 1895 in Kufstein.

the tragedy of the loss of 'German South Tyrol.'[67] Tyrol's history and wartime experience combined to produce a unique form of commemoration that stressed the glory of the region's past and its contemporary tragedies.

The region of Carinthia in southern Austria also had unique postwar experiences. The armistice did not signal the end of the conflict in Carinthia, as the area was disputed between the new states of Austria and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Hostilities were ended by a plebiscite and the whole region was retained by Austria. The threat to the integrity of the state and the experience of violence strengthened regional identity, which was reflected in the commemoration of the conflict.[68] For example, in 1924 twenty-six bodies were exhumed by the Black Cross and returned to their families throughout Austria and German Bohemia. The first stop on this journey was Carinthia and their arrival was marked by a ceremony at which Colonel Roedl, a representative of the Defence Ministry, delivered the following speech:

> On your journey to your eternal *Heimat*, the first homage is paid to you in Carinthia. Carinthia, this beautiful *Land,* with its magnificent race and its sons who are literally heroes' sons, whose love of their *Heimat* and their ancestral tribe was worth more to them than their lives.[69]

The majority of the bodies had no connection with Carinthia but the speaker could not resist stressing the unique sacrifices of the fallen of that region. One of the bodies was that of Rear Admiral von Pebal, a Carinthian who had died as the result of injuries sustained during the war. A further ceremony accompanied his burial in Villach Central Cemetery.[70] Colonel Roedl again delivered a commemorative address, this time in his capacity as commander of the Villach Battalion, in which he suggested that the ceremony was an opportunity to honour all the Carinthian heroes:

> After the fall of the empire a thick fog enveloped us. There was only one flare and that came from Carinthia, where a brave people was

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[67] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Abteilungen 1, 2, 4, Abteilungen Präes, Rechtsbüro, carton 1991, (76 – 1), Zl. 266. Zivilkommission to BMfHW, 19 April 1925.

[68] It is important to note that the Slovene minority were not always included in this regional identity. Andreas Moritsch, 'Abwehrkampf und Volksabstimmung – Mythos und Realität,' in Andreas Moritsch (ed.), *Austria Slovenica* (Klagenfurt: Hermagoras, 1996), pp. 58 – 70. The border dispute is discussed in more detail in chapter four.

[69] 'Stadt Villach, Heldenfeier,' *Kärntner Tagespost,* 1 June 1924.

[70] 'Stadt Villach, Kontre-Admiral von Pebal, Bestattung in der Heimaterde,' *Kärntner Tagespost,* 4 June 1924.

> defending its beloved soil. We owe a debt of thanks first and foremost to the fallen heroes. It is because of them that we can stand on this soil today.[71]

The tendency to conflate the experiences of the world war and those of the postwar Carinthian hostilities into a particular regional understanding of the conflict was in evidence here. Von Pebal did not have any connection with the postwar hostilities yet they became the focus of the ceremony.

At the end of May, the bodies of the remaining returned Carinthian officers were buried in the Annabichl cemetery on the outskirts of Klagenfurt. These "unforgettable heroes of the world war" were Lieutenant Colonel Paul Payrhuber von Hueb, Lieutenant Colonel Dr Gustav Kordin und Lieutenant Hans Ehrlich.[72] The reburial ceremony was widely reported in the press. An article in the *Freie Stimme* newspaper recreated the ceremony and described the lives of the fallen:

> In his lifetime Dr Gustav Kordin was a well-known citizen of Klagenfurt. He was an active child of the city, a good-hearted Carinthian, the proudest hope of his widowed mother. Music was in his soul and was the chosen pursuit of the youth as he grew up. The mountains of our *Heimat* were his closest and deepest friends. He knew each and every one like, as a devoted member of the rowing club Albatross, he knew his *Wörthersee*. [...] He went to war cheerfully to defend the mountains of his *Heimat*.[73]

The author of this article placed regional *Heimat* at the centre of Kordin's life. The impression that Kordin not only fought and died but also loved and lived for his *Heimat* is undeniable.

Regional identity played an important role in the commemoration of the war in Carinthia. However, as noted, the world war sometimes became conflated with postwar hostilities and the regional aspects dominated. For example, the anniversary of the Carinthian plebiscite, 10 October, was marked annually throughout the region and was often the occasion for the unveiling of war memorials.[74] In such ceremonies wartime and postwar

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[71] Ibid.
[72] Franz Franzlercher, 'Heldenehren,' *Freie Stimme,* 2 June 1924.
[73] Ibid.
[74] For example the Federal Chancellery proposed that the army should consider 10 October to be a public holiday and make itself available for participation in commemoration ceremonies because of the important of the day for Carinthia. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, carton 2484, (34 – 4) Zl. 4281, Bundeskanzleramt to BMfHW, 4 June 1928.

fighting were linked. For example, on 10 October 1930 the town of Radsberg unveiled a war memorial listing the names of the fallen of the world war alongside those who fell in the postwar fighting, yet the commemoration ceremony focused on the significance of the plebiscite victory and not on the war.[75] In St Paul im Lavanttal a committee, under the protectorate of Ferdinand Kernmaier, the governor of Carinthia, constructed a 'liberation memorial' to honour those who fell in the postwar fighting. The memorial listed the names of the wartime and postwar fallen, but it was the smaller postwar conflict that was the focus of the event. The plaque on the memorial dedicated it to the 'liberators,' a reference to the postwar fighters. While in the previous examples the commemoration of the world war was overshadowed by the postwar hostilities, in other cases the major conflict was entirely absent. The *Sponheimer* fountain in Klagenfurt, constructed to mark the city's 700th anniversary, was dedicated to Sponheim (the founder of the city of Klagenfurt), the fighting of 1918 to 1919 and the 'glorious plebiscite' of October 1920.[76] This memorial is a further example of the privileging of regional sacrifice ahead of the more general sacrifice of the world war.

[75] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2922, (54 – 3/2) Zl. 35271, Kärntner Heimatbund Klagenfurt to BMfHW, 24 November 1930.
[76] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3354, (5 – 3/2), Zl. 23625, invitation, Verschönerungsverein für Klagenfurt und Umgebung, Festausschuss Klagenfurt Rathaus.

Figure 2.1 The Sponheim Memorial in Klagenfurt, postcard in possession of author.

Regional variations in commemoration of the conflict played a significant role. In Carinthia the 'triumph' of the retention of the southern areas of the region was celebrated and came to dominate the commemoration of the world war. In Tyrol a unique commemoration of the conflict also developed but in this case it was marked by anger and sadness at the loss of South Tyrol and pride in the 'glorious' history of the region. At these specifically regional commemoration ceremonies, sacrifice for the *Heimat* came to mean sacrifice for the specific region.

Republican Heimat

In the introduction to this chapter we saw that expressions of loyalty to the Republic were rare. However, we shall see that when the word *Heimat* was used on some memorials it referred to the Republic of Austria. In some cases

this was because of a loyalty to the new state. For some, particularly those on the left, it was the emergence of a democratic Austria at the end of the war that explained and somewhat justified wartime suffering. In other cases it was indicative of the 'pragmatic republicanism' that developed among some Austrians over the course of the Republic.[77]

Even if many rejected the new state at its conception, it was this new Republic that had to deal with the aftermath of the war. In a purely practical sense the phrase 'our dead' as used by the Austrian Black Cross war graves organisation referred to those who, had they lived, would have been citizens of the new Republic.[78] In death they became the responsibility of the new Austria. By 1930 this implicit assumption had been accepted. The office responsible for the Viennese Central Cemetery argued that renovating the grave markers of the "eighty to ninety percent of the soldiers buried in the Central Cemetery from far-flung corners of the former empire" was not as important as maintaining those of the local (Austrian) fallen.[79] The soldiers of the empire were divided into 'Austrians' and those of other 'far-flung' states. Even in the *Heldendenkmal,* a memorial explicitly designed to commemorate the Habsburg armies, it was only the names of the Austrian fallen that were included in the Heroes' Books.[80]

However, it was not just practicalities that meant the fallen were commemorated in the context of the new state. During the 1920s the Social Democrat Party, particularly the city administration in Vienna, began to celebrate the achievements of the Republic. For example, 12 November, the national day, was marked in the left-wing press as the day that the new state threw off the 'yoke of Habsburg oppression'.[81] Further, the foundation of the new republic came to be regarded as a positive legacy of the war. This idea was most prominently expressed in the Central Cemetery memorial, designed by Anton Hanak and unveiled in 1925. The monument, located in the war

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[77] Klemperer, p. 101.
[78] Edward Timms, 'Citizenship and Heimatrecht after the Treaty of St. Germain,' in Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms (eds.), *Austrian Studies V: The Habsburg Legacy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), pp. 158 – 170.
[79] ÖStA, AdR, BKA/I, Kriegsgräberfürsorge, carton 3973/4, (19 Kg), Zl. 144902, Magistratsabteilung 13 a, Zentralfriedhof, Tor II to BKA Inneres, 25 July 1930.
[80] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Heldendenkmal 304, open letter, Anlage des Wiener Heldenbuches, from Österreichisches Heldendenkmal Kommittee, 18 September 1934.
[81] For example, 'Vier Jahre Republik,' *Der freie Soldat,* 10 November 1922.

graves section of the Central Cemetery, was funded entirely by the Socialist municipal administration in Vienna, who, according to Mayor Seitz, placed great importance on honouring the fallen of the world war.[82] The memorial expressed the pain and loss caused by the conflict and fought against false images of heroism.[83] It took the form of a large block, with a relief of a grieving mother and the inscription "Never Again War" (*Nie Wieder Krieg*).

Figure 2.2 Central Cemetery Memorial, photograph in possession of the author.

Outwardly, the memorial did not make any comment on 'dying for Austria.' Councillor Julius Tandler explained at the unveiling ceremony on 31 October 1925 that the memorial was not only for Austria's fallen sons but for all the victims of the war.[84] The leading Social Democrat newspaper, the *Arbeiter Zeitung* argued that the new memorial was a monument to sadness and reconciliation.[85] The author was proud of the universality of the structure; it

[82] 'Ein Kriegerdenkmal auf dem Zentralfriedhofe: Neugestaltung des Heldenfriedhofes,' *Neue Freie Presse*, 28 October 1925.
[83] Kahler, pp. 76 – 77.
[84] 'Die Enthüllung des Kriegerdenkmals auf dem Zentralfriedhof,' *Neue Freie Presse*, 31 October 1925
[85] 'Das Kriegerdenkmal der Gemeinde Wien im Zentralfriedhof,' *Arbeiter Zeitung,* 29 October 1925

could have been built in France, England or Italy and would not have looked out of place.[86] In its form and in some of the discussion surrounding its unveiling the memorial was depicted as overtly non-national.

Yet as part of the dedication of the memorial various commemoration ceremonies were held, which tell a different story. On 31 October the Republican *Schutzbund*, 'the avant-garde of the Viennese workers' marched past the memorial.[87] According to the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, the purpose of this march was to fight against war by countering the reactionary forces working against the state. Julius Deutsch, the former defence minister and head of the *Schutzbund*, made a speech in which he stated that the organisation would defend the people of the city and the country from the greatest of all catastrophes: war. According to Deutsch the memorial and the dead of the world war were a reminder to fight to preserve the new state and to ensure that those who had been responsible for the conflict never returned to power.[88] Despite the explicit non-national aim of the memorial, this unveiling ceremony placed death in the world war firmly in the context of the new state. A clear message about the relationship between the war and the new republic was delivered. While the fallen soldiers had not fought for the Republic, it was the establishment of this new state that gave significance to their deaths. This attribute of the memorial was also recognised by those who opposed its construction. The Christian Social *Reichspost* claimed that it had received many letters, 'which - in part in the severest words - condemned the conception and the execution of the memorial.'[89] Much of the criticism was related to the concept of the memorial. Correspondents felt that it was a monument to the new state; its primary focus was not, as would have been appropriate, the sacrifices of the past.[90] This dissatisfaction with this memorial and its interpretation of the war did not fade during the 1920s. For example an official report on the 1930 military All Souls' Day events argued

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[86] Ibid.
[87] 'Die Totenfeier des Republikanischen Schutzbundes: Für die Opfer des Weltkrieges,' *Arbeiter Zeitung,* 1 November 1925
[88] Ibid.
[89] 'Das neue Kriegerdenkmal,' *Reichspost,* 3 November 1925.
[90] 'Das neue Kriegerdenkmal,' *Reichspost,* 3 November 1925

that these ceremonies would take place in Heldenplatz because there was no major world war memorial in Vienna.[91]

The rejection of the Central Cemetery memorial can partly be explained by the great divide that existed between 'Red Vienna' and the provinces. This division meant that for many Austrians, 'Red Vienna' could never have been the appropriate site for a 'national' memorial. Others, who sought an alternative site for a memorial for Austria's fallen focused on the landscape and natural beauty of the state. The landscape became a significant component of national identity during the First Republic.[92] Mountains were linked to anti-modernism; their natural beauty was contrasted with the decay of cities.[93] In light of this association it is perhaps unsurprising that there were attempts to create a national site of remembrance in Austria's striking landscape. In 1924 the Austrian Alpine Club and the Christian Social controlled Defence Ministry began to make plans to create a memorial incorporating an Unknown Soldier at the summit of the Grossglockner, the highest point in Austria. This project would, according to the Alpine Club, 'express our love of our *Heimat* and the mountains of our *Heimat*,' but was beset by problems. As well as the practicalities of transporting a body to this height, the Alpine Club had several other reservations. It argued that a soldier's body should not be buried in such an inaccessible location without the consent of their family, which, in the case of an 'unknown soldier,' would be impossible. Further, they suggested that the creation of a memorial in a site inaccessible to the majority of the bereaved would be counterproductive, denying most the opportunity to make a pilgrimage while simultaneously increasing tourism and thereby risking the special character of the site. Additionally, they remarked that there was already a memorial marker for the fallen members of the Austrian Alpine Club on the Grossglockner.[94] The Defence Ministry remained convinced that the idea would be diluted by placing the memorial anywhere apart from the highest point of the federal territory (*Bundesgebiet*). Their solution to the problem of inaccessibility was

[91] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, report, carton 2922, (54 – 3/1) Zl. 29845, Ehrung der Gefallenen durch das Bundesheer.
[92] Peniston-Bird, p. 361.
[93] Mosse (1990), pp. 115 – 116.
[94] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1977, (54 – 3/1), Zl. 7675, Österreichischen Alpenklub to 6. Brigadekommando, 22 December 1924.

to place a marker referring to the Grossglockner monument on every other war memorial in Austria.[95] The financial and practical challenges of the project proved insurmountable but the plan to create a different kind of Austrian memorial, one that reflected the mountainous, Alpine character of the new state, was significant and reflected an understanding of Austria that lay in the natural beauty of the provinces.

However, other organisations continued to maintain that the most appropriate site for an Austrian memorial was Vienna. In 1933 the Amstetten branch of the Comradeship Association of Former Warriors sent a petition to the Defence Ministry calling for the introduction of a specific 'Austrian' day of national mourning on 30 August, and the construction of an Austrian War memorial in Vienna.[96] This call is evidence that there was a perceived need to have some kind of memorial that commemorated the sacrifices of Austrian fallen and, perhaps more importantly, that none of the massive range of projects to commemorate the fallen of the world war were judged to have satisfied this need. Projects in Vienna and the provinces searched for an appropriate way to mark the sacrifices of the Austria's fallen. For some of the left, the new Republic was more than the site of commemoration, it also went some way to justifying the sacrifices of wartime. For others, who slowly came to terms with the new state, it was the mountains of the new republic that provided the most appropriate site for mourning the fallen. While this view was by no means dominant, it is important to recognise the significance of the new state in the commemoration of the conflict.

Greater German Heimat and Fatherland

The establishment of the new Republic became a positive point of identification for some Austrians, but for a large number German nationalism remained central to their identity. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the majority of Austrians regarded unification with Germany as the only firm way of securing the future of their state. The banning of the *Anschluss*

[95] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1977, (54 – 3/1), Zl. 7675, Bundesminister für Heerwesen to 6. Brigadekommando, 12 February 1925.
[96] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3629, (45 – 4/3) ZL. 3972, Gruppenverband der Kameradschaftsverein ehemaliger Krieger (Heimkehrervereinigungen) für den politischen Bezirk Amstetten, 18 February 1933.

increased fatalism about the future of an independent Austria, as illustrated by an article in 1920 by the former Habsburg General Alfred Krauss:

> Without the *Anschluss* the six million Austrians will founder. Anyone who believes that we can be saved by another means, anyone who believes in the recreation of a state resembling the old Austria, is mistaken.[97]

Krauss did not even entertain the possibility that the new state could exist or prosper within its 1920 borders. Rather, the only solution to its problems was incorporation into the new German state. Such pan-German feelings were undoubtedly widespread in interwar Austria, but recent work has revealed the range of views contained within this broad ideology, as some Austrians stressed the cultural, historical and religious links between the two states while others stressed the racial connection between the German peoples.[98] However, these variations did not diminish the importance of pan-German ideology. It was perhaps inevitable that visions of Austria's future place within the German state would impact on interpretations of the world war. Some German nationalists began to portray the world war as a pan-German struggle with Austria functioning as part of a Greater German Fatherland.

Austria's universities became centres of German nationalist ideology and activism, as well as hotbeds of anti-Semitism, during the First Republic.[99] University professors were regular contributors to German nationalist publications and stressed the place of Austria within the German state. A typical example of such rhetoric came from Professor Karl Gottfried Hugelmann, who argued that 'above our love of our narrower *Heimat* stands our love of our whole Fatherland, of which the narrower *Heimat* is just one part [...].'[100] However, it was among the student body and particularly student fraternities that German Nationalist sentiment found its strongest expression. In particular the German Students' Association of Austria espoused an aggressive form of German Nationalism based on racial theory that rejected

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[97] Alfred Kraus, 'Das Selbstbestimmungsrecht Deutschösterreichs,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* August 1920.
[98] Julie Thorpe, 'Provincials Imagining the Nation: Pan-German Identity in Salzurg, 1933-38,' *Zeitgeschichte* 4/33 (2006), pp. 193
[99] Stadler, p. 139.
[100] Dr Karl Gottfried Hugelmann, 'Heimatliebe und Vaterland,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* 1920.

the possibility of Jews belonging to the German nation.[101] It was this association that erected a war memorial in the auditorium of the University of Vienna in 1923. In fact, the idea of constructing a memorial to the fallen students had been raised by the university authorities as early as December 1914.[102] However, wartime attempts to raise funds to produce such a memorial met with little success and the project was not developed further during the war.[103] In early 1923 the German Students' Association approached the Academic Senate of the University with a proposal to construct a memorial to the fallen 'German' students of the university.[104] The Senate accepted the offered of the association and accordingly a memorial was unveiled on 9 November 1923 in the presence of the Academic Senate, the professorial college, government representatives as well as National Socialist, Catholic and Nationalist student societies.[105] The memorial itself was in the form of a massive Siegfried head (*Siegfriedskopf*) and was purchased from Professor Josef Müllner, a Viennese sculptor.[106] Although the memorial was organised and selected by the German Students' Association, its purchase and unveiling ceremony were approved by the university authorities. The form of the memorial made an unambiguous statement about the German Students' Associations view of the war; Siegfried is an important figure in German mythology who was further immortalised in Wagner's opera 'The Ring of Nibelung,' a piece of nationalist music. In the legend Siegfried bathed in the blood of a slain dragon, rendering him invulnerable apart from a small patch on his back. Therefore, Siegfried could only be ultimately defeated by a treacherous and cowardly stab-in-the-back. By choosing this form the constructors of the memorial were making a powerful statement about the outcome of the war. At the unveiling ceremony

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[101] Franz Gall, *Alma Mater Rudolfina: Die Wiener Universität und ihre Studenten, 1365 – 1965* (Vienna: Austria Press, 1965), pp. 89 – 90.
[102] Akademischer Senat, Senatsakten, 1914/15, Zl. 386, Edmund Häusler to akademischer Senat, 4 December 1914.
[103] Akademischer Senat, Senatsakten, 1922/23, Zl. 339, minutes, 14 November 1922.
[104] Akademischer Senat, Senatsakten, 1922/23, Zl. 339, Deutsche Studentenschaft to akademischer Senat, 12 March 1923.
[105] "Mit Gott für Freiheit, Ehre und Vaterland.' Totenfeier und Enthüllung des Heldendenkmals an der Wiener Universität,' *Reichspost,* 10 November 1923
[106] For a discussion of the Second World War fate of the controversial memorial see Ulrike Davy and Thomas Vasek, *Der "Siegfried-Kopf": Eine Auseinandersetzung um ein Denkmal in der Universität Wien* (Vienna: WUV Universitätsverlag, 1991).

Bishop Pfluger claimed that 'like this man [Siegfried] the German people could not be defeated in honest battle, only trapped by betrayal and malice.'[107] The Rector of the University of Vienna, Johannes Döller, praised the sacrifices of the academic youth who had died in defence of their people and fatherland. The final speaker at the unveiling ceremony was the student Walter Kolbe who maintained that it was the duty of the surviving students to give meaning to the sacrifices of their fallen brothers. He described the end of the war as a betrayal and 9 November as a day of enslavement and servitude. Further, he linked the loss of German life during the conflict and the loss of German territory to the north, south, east and west in the aftermath of the war.[108] The climax of the ceremony was the singing of the German national anthem.

The memorial and its unveiling ceremony made unambiguous statements about the meaning of the war. Firstly, the memorial was a physical embodiment of the *Dolchstoß* legend, the allegation the German armies were not legitimately defeated in the field.[109] Secondly, the creation of the new state and the signing of the Paris Peace Treaties was portrayed as a moment of capitulation before the Allies, also an idea more widely held in Germany than Austria.[110] However, what is perhaps most interesting was the interpretation of the war during the unveiling ceremony and in the memorial itself. All the speakers, and the inscription on the memorial reading 'Honour, Freedom, Fatherland', stated explicitly that the sacrifice of the fallen soldiers being commemorated was to be understood as a sacrifice for or in defence of their people and Fatherland. Yet throughout the ceremony the Fatherland being described and discussed was Greater Germany, not the Habsburg Empire, the 'fatherland' for which the soldiers had actually fought and died, or the Austrian Republic, the 'fatherland' in which the commemoration ceremony was taking place. The German Students' Association was an ultra nationalist organisation that operated in the nationalist environment of the University of Vienna. Despite this, the degree to which the world war was commemorated as a sacrifice for Germany, when the fallen soldiers had been members of the

[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] The Austrian version of the 'stab-in-the-back' myth is discussed in chapter 4.
[110] Gerhard Jagschitz 'Die Nationalsozialistische Partei' in Dachs Talos et al, p. 238

Habsburg armies and the ceremony was taking place in the Republic of Austria is striking.

The German Students' Association continued to hold nationalist commemoration ceremonies for the fallen of the world war at the memorial. For example, in 1925 the group held its annual commemoration ceremony on 17 January, the anniversary of the founding of the German Empire. The event was attended by the rector of the university, representatives of the professorial college, the German ambassador and students. The nationalist tone suggested by the choice of date was continued throughout the ceremony. The German Students' Association produced leaflets explaining the purpose of the event as an occasion to unite 'all people of German blood, language and culture, wherever they may choose to live, regardless of state borders.'[111] Again, the participation of Jewish soldiers and the nationalities of the empire was marginalised and overlooked during the event.

The *Siegfriedkopf* was not the only example of the commemoration of the world war in the context of German nationalism and unity. The 'Heroes Organ for the German People' project in Kufstein castle, Tyrol, is a further example of a nationalist interpretation of the world war. As noted previously, commemoration of the war in Tyrol was linked to the specific wartime and postwar experiences of the region. As well as being an object which commemorated the fallen of the world war, the organ was also a statement about the strength of the German people that has to be understood on the background of the loss of South Tyrol.

[111] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1990, (75 – 1/3) Zl. 5478, pamphlet, Deutschvölkische Studentenbewegung,1925.

Figure 2.3 Heroes' Organ for the German People, postcard in possession of the author.

The committee formed to create the organ was made up of veterans of the world war and local notables of the region and by 1930 fundraising attempts for the project were already underway among 'patriotic, veterans and military' organisations as well as individuals.[112] By 3 May 1931 the organ, built by a renowned firm in Ludwigsburg, Germany, was complete and the inaugural performance took place.[113] Before the performance the organising committee stressed the organ's importance, not only as a reminder of the sacrifices of the fallen but also as the first and only joint memorial of the German lands.[114] To mark the inaugural performance a brochure was produced, which further accentuated the pan-German nature of the memorial. It was dedicated "to the memory of all those of German stock (*Gefallenen deutschen Stammes*) who fell in the World War" and the preface to the brochure contained the slogan "German people, remain united, loyal and strong!"[115] The committee planned to offer concerts twice daily, the profits of which would go to help blind

[112] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2922, (54 – 3/1), Zl. 54278, Werbeausschuss für das Heldenmal des Deutschen Volkes auf Geroldseck to Tiroler Landesregierung, 21 November 1930.
[113] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3147, (54 – 3/1), Zl. 56513, brochure, Heldenorgel auf Geroldseck, 1931.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

soldiers in Austria and Germany.[116] The organ was a less overtly political memorial than the *Siegfriedskopf* but again it reinterpreted the world war as a pan-German struggle, overlooking both the participation of the non-German nationalities of the Empire and wartime friction between Germans and Austrians.[117] The memorial was dedicated to the German people, encompassing those in Germany, Austria and Italy, rather than the people of the Republic or the Empire.

Beyond these two memorials the celebration of the German Day of National Mourning (*Volkstrauertag*) brought the idea of the war as a German sacrifice to the attention of a larger section of the population. As early as 1921 calls were made in German nationalist circles to introduce the day as an official day of remembrance in Austria. In a sermon on 6 March, again at the University of Vienna, the German Nationalist politician and priest Karl Drexel explained that in the whole of Germany this day was dedicated to the remembrance of the fallen, yet in Austria only this one event was taking place, a situation that must be rectified in coming years.[118] Unofficial *Volkstrauertag* events became more popular during the 1920s. By 1930 there were events to mark the day throughout Carinthia and a ceremony was also held in the Votivkirche in Vienna attended by prominent Austrian politicians, including the Austrian President Miklas.[119] In 1931 the Black Cross called on the government to officially recognise the day. Black Cross president Waitz argued that the move was justified in light of the 'common destiny *(Schicksalsgemeinschaft)* and kinship *(Stammesverwandtschaft)*' of the German and Austrian peoples.[120] *Volkstrauertag* events stressed the common experiences of the German and Austrian peoples during the world war and, while not as radically nationalist as the events held at the University of Vienna, drew out the shared fate of the peoples of Germany and Austria.

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[116] Ibid.
[117] The experience of close contact with Germans during the war led some Austrians to perceive greater differences between the two groups. Binder, p. 101.
[118] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Abteilung1, carton 923, (31 – 2), Zl. 453, report, Polizeidirketion Wien, 6 March 1921.
[119] 'Gedenkfeier in Österreich' *Der Plenny,* March 1930
[120] The defence ministry rejected this request, stating that it did not want to (and could not) interfere with the established practice of holding commemoration ceremonies on All Souls Day. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3158, (75 – 3/1), Zl. 6980, ÖSK to BMfHW, 5 February 1931.

These examples have shown that the context in which the world war was fought could be overlooked or sidelined in its commemoration. By interpreting the world war as an exclusively German endeavour, the commemoration ceremonies at the University of Vienna denied the contribution of not only of the Jewish soldiers of the empire but also of the non-German nationalities. The organ in Tyrol was a display of German unity and strength as well as a marker of the sacrifice of the German fallen, while the celebration of *Volkstrauertag* was an event that stressed the shared wartime fate of the peoples of Germany and Austria. To a greater or lesser extent, in all these cases the experience of war was commemorated in the context of a Greater German Fatherland.

Imperial Fatherland

An interesting paradox when examining the meaning of phrases such as 'dying for the Fatherland' in the Austrian Republic, is how relatively infrequently or explicitly the phrase was used to refer to the 'Imperial Fatherland' for which the soldiers had actually been fighting.[121] On one level this is unsurprising, as after the break-down of the empire few realistically expected the multinational state to re-form. Little hope or comfort for the victims of the war could be found in claiming that the fallen had died for a defeated and dismembered empire that was firmly consigned to history. Yet in a small section of society, particularly those from the old imperial bureaucracy and military, the world war would always be understood as a sacrifice for the old empire.

During the war soldiers and officers were fighting in multinational units, officially 'With God, for Kaiser and [imperial] Fatherland.' At the end of this war this rhetoric lost its explanatory power. The empire disintegrated and some former regions positioned themselves on the side of the victors. For example, areas incorporated into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes attended the Paris Peace Conferences as part of a victorious new

[121] Istvan Deak notes that evidence of the spiritual legacy of the Habsburg empire is difficult to find: Deak, 'The Habsburg Empire,' in Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen (eds.), *After Empire: Multiethnic societies and Nation-Building: The Soviet Union, the Russian, Ottoman and Habsburg Empires* (Oxford: Westview Press, 1997), p. 134.

'nation', which was formally recognised in May 1919.[122] Czechoslovakian and Romanian areas made similar claims. The irrevocability of the demise of the empire was further underlined by border conflicts between former components of the empire. For example in 1921 conflict between Hungary and Austria over the fate of Burgenland led to a small number of casualties but a great deal of bitterness between the two states. The experience of the formation of new states and which then competed with each other to secure their borders and position in Europe undermined feelings of a shared imperial fate.

Yet this break in the understanding of the war as an imperial struggle was not complete or permanent. For example, in 1925 during a military commemoration of the war, 'the soldiers of the former imperial forces and the *Bundesheer* who have fallen before the enemy or died as a result of war, as well as the soldiers of foreign nationalities buried in the Republic,' were honoured.[123] The separation of the soldiers into those who fell for the empire and foreign soldiers was a recognition that the soldiers of various different postwar states had been fighting for a now defunct, single empire. During the 1920s into the 1930s an imperial understanding of the war became more prominent. On the anniversary of the end of the empire in 1925 an author in the right-wing soldiers' newspaper *Der Wehrbund* stated that 'in a few days it will be seven years since a glorious empire met its fateful end.'[124] The rhetoric of a magnificent imperial past was gradually returning. By 1928 the same newspaper was arguing that:

> The situation of our narrow *Heimat* would have been bleaker, if the glorious soldierly spirit of Old Austria had not held all the horrors of enemy aggression away from our country. [...] We thank you, the sons of our people (*Volk),* that we can call our *Heimat* our own. We thank you that we can still carry the proud name Austria.[125]

The achievements of the soldiers of the old empire and their positive legacy for the postwar state were being praised publicly in a way they had not been

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[122] See for example Andrej Mitrovic, 'The Yugoslav Question, the Great War, and the Peace Conference,' in Dejan Djokic (ed.), *Yugoslavism: Histories of a Failed Idea, 1918 - 1992* (London: Hurst & Co, 2003), p. 44; John Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice there was a country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 113.
[123] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1990, (75 – 1/3) Zl. 7136, Heerespropst Dr Ferdinand Pawlikowski to BMfHW, 22 October 1925.
[124] Willibrord, 'Trübe Erinnerungen,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* November 1925.
[125] 'Unsere toten Kameraden!,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* November 1928.

in the immediate aftermath of the war. *Der gute Kamerad,* a Catholic soldiers' publication, also voiced similarly positive opinions about the achievements of the soldiers of the empire:

> Their deaths were not normal deaths, not inglorious departures from this world. Their deaths were accompanied by magnificent deeds which came from their fervent love of their people and *Heimat.* [...] For all times our Austrian soldiers will remain glowing examples of the loyalist fulfilment of duty, selfless love of the Fatherland and joyfully sacrificial commitment to their sworn duty. That their heroism was not rewarded with the success it deserved, does not mean their service was diminished.[126]

Sacrifice for 'the Fatherland' or the *Heimat* was again being understood at least in part as a sacrifice for the monarchy. Military publications repeatedly voiced such sentiments into the 1930s.[127] Imperial interpretations of the war were also represented in memorials. A memorial chapel constructed in 1931 in Zicksee bei St Andrä in Burgenland was specifically dedicated to the "Fallen of the former Austro-Hungarian Army.[128] The other examples in this chapter have shown that a wide range of interpretations of 'the Fatherland' and *Heimat* were offered in memorials, yet it was not until the 1930s that the monarchy became one of these interpretations.

The challenges of the Republic led to the return of feelings of nostalgia for the old Empire, but it was not until the establishment of the *Ständestaat* that Austria's imperial legacy firmly returned to the fore.[129] The threat presented by Nazi Germany and the growing popularity of Nazism within Austria meant that the leaders of the new government instigated a deliberate policy of promoting a separate and positive Austrian identity and constructing Austria as the 'legitimate German state'.[130] The official policy of the new government was to change the imposed name of Austria into a 'badge of honour.' In a move popular among civil servants, imperial style uniforms for

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[126] 'Dem Gedächtnis der Gefallenen,' *Der gute Kamerad,* October 1928.
[127] For example, articles in *Der Wehrbund* in 1930 praised the unanimous enthusiasm of the peoples of the empire to fight for their fatherland at the start of the war, and compared their performance in the war favourably with the performance of the Russian empire. 'Das österreichische Problem - das gross Problem der deutschen Zukunft,' *Der Wehrbund,* March 1930.
[128] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3147, (54 – 3/1), Zl, 4531, BMfHW to Ortskommando Neusiedl am See and Brigadekommando Burgenland Nr 1, undated 1931.
[129] Suppanz, p. 6.
[130] Androsch, p. 80.

government officials were re-introduced and imperial traditions were propagated in all walks of life.[131] The new government introduced thorough reforms of the education system, with the aim of inculcating the youth of Austria in this new spirit of national identity.[132] The identity of the *Ständestaat* was made up of two linked strands: an understanding of Austria as a 'better' German state and a clear focus on the 'glorious imperial past.'[133] The new symbol of the state, the *Kruckenkreuz,* was also created as a Christian response to the threat posed by the Nazi *Hakenkreuz.*[134]

The Turkish siege of Vienna played a particular role in the celebration of the past during the *Ständestaat*, as it was possible to construct the events of the siege as simultaneously a German, a Christian and an Austrian victory.[135] The celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the siege in 1933 brought the imperial legacy to special public prominence. The siege of Vienna from 14 July 1683 to 12 September 1683 is regarded even by some modern historians as 'a heroic chapter in Austrian history.'[136] In particular, the endurance of the citizenry of Vienna, under the leadership of Mayor Andreas von Liebenberg has been praised. The anniversary celebrations marked the high point of a meeting of German Catholics held in Vienna in early September 1933. Press reports suggested that up to two hundred thousand people had attended *Katholikentag* events at Schönbrunn and the Vienna Stadium.[137] The final ceremony of the event included a mass read by the Viennese Cardinal Innitzer followed by a military display, took place on Heldenplatz, a large square in central Vienna. The event was attended by the President and the Chancellor of Austria, as well as a large governmental delegation and many representatives of the army and church and, according to the press, 'civilian guests from all sections of the population.'[138] In his

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[131] Kann, pp. 39 – 45.
[132] Carla Esden-Tempska, 'Civic Education in Authoritarian Austria, 1934 - 38,' *History of Education Quarterly* 30/2 (1990), p. 187.
[133] Suppanz, p. 124.
[134] Peter Diem, *Die Symbole Österreichs: Zeit und Geschichte im Zeichen* (Vienna: Kremayr & Scheriau, 1995), p. 120.
[135] Suppanz, p. 68.
[136] Robert A. Kann *A History of the Habsburg Empire 1526 - 1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974) p. 65.
[137] 'Katholikentag auf dem Höhepunkt,' *Wiener Sonn- und Montagszeitung,* 11 September 1933
[138] 'Die Türkenbefreiungsfeier der Bundesregierung' *Wiener Zeitung,* 12 September 1933

speech President Miklas praised the actions of the Austrians in 1683 and their role as a bastion of Christianity in securing the unity and future of all Germans.[139] He argued that the heroic deeds of Austrians in 1683 should again spur Austrians on to heroism.[140] During a linked ceremony for the fallen of Tyrol, comparisons between the heroic actions of Austrians during the world war and in the Turkish siege were also made.[141] While discussion of the experience of the world war only played a marginal role during the *Katholikentag*, the conflict was again placed firmly in its imperial context.

In fact, under the *Ständestaat*, the 'cult of the fallen heroes was transferred to the level of the state' and for the first time since the world war, a strong national understanding of the meaning of the conflict was advanced.[142] That this interpretation was not shared by all Austrians, did not reduce the importance of the world war in the official political culture of the *Ständestaat.*[143] The culmination of this process was the construction of the Austrian *Heldendenkmal.* The memorial was created by the adaptation of the existing *Äussere Burgtor*, built in 1824 to commemorate the Battle of Leipzig.[144] On 9 September 1934 the *Heldendenkmal* was unveiled and a commemorative publication was issued to mark the event, which featured contributions from major figures in the Austrian government and the Catholic Church, who reflected on the war in light of the inauguration of the new memorial. President Miklas outlined his reverence for the 'glorious history of the erstwhile military of the great old empire and the admirable heroic deeds of the brave defenders of our beloved Heimat.'[145] This quote sums up the tone of the publication and the whole memorial project; it was dedicated to the

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[139] President Miklas 'Österreich 1683 - Österreich 1933' *Wiener Zeitung* 12 September 1933
[140] Ibid.
[141] 'Tiroler Heldenfeier' *Wiener Zeitung* 12 September 1933
[142] Hanisch (2005), p. 67.
[143] Werner, Suppanz, "Die grosse Tat will grosse Erben.' Der Erste Weltkrieg im Alpenraum in den Gedächtniskonstruktionen des 'autoritären Ständestaates,' in Hermann J. W. Kuprian and Oswald Überegger (eds.), *Der Erste Weltkrieg im Alpenraum: Erfahrung, Deutung, Erinnerung – La Grande Guerra nell'arco alpino: Esperience e memoria* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag, 2006), pp. 427 – 439.
[144] Barbara Feller, 'Ein Ort patriotischen Gedenkens: Das österreichische Heldendenkmal im Burgtor in Wien,' in Jan Tabor (ed.), *Kunst und Diktatur: Architektur, Bildhauerei und Malerei in Österreich, Deutschland, Italien und der Sowjetunion, 1922 – 1956* (Baden: Grassl, 1994), pp. 142 – 147.
[145] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales *Österreichisches Heldendenkmal: Gedenkschrift anlässlich der Weihe des österreichischen Heldendenkmales am 9. September 1934* (Vienna: 1934), p.3

fallen sons of Austria as members of the imperial army. The head of the Austrian state archives Edmund Glaise von Horstenau talked about the 'death of the glorious army on All Souls 1918.'[146] While 'national memorials' in other European states were dedicated to the fallen, the *Heldendenkmal* also marked the passing of the army that had 'died at the end of the empire.'[147] The memorial committee was comprised of former high-ranking officers and imperial elites and its aims were described by former General Major Carl Jaschke as follows:

> A memorial, for the living and dead heroes of the world war should be built, a memorial that is also a monument to the centuries old former army, to the thousand battles in which the sons of Austria fought; a memorial to the victories which made our old Fatherland powerful and great; a memorial to the innumerable heroic deeds on which old Austria's military reputation was built and preserved. Therefore it should be a memorial of thanks, honour and loyalty.[148]

The committee was keen to stress that the memorial was not a 'Western style tomb of the unknown soldier' but rather a monument to all of Austria's 'heroic sons from 1618 to 1918.'[149] The dates chosen placed the world war firmly in the context of Austria's imperial past. This attribution was also reflected in the fundraising process for the memorial. In May 1934, a wartime Iron Soldier was re-erected in on Schwarzenbergplatz in Vienna.[150] During the world war the same memorial had been situated in Vienna and citizens could purchase nails to hammer into the 'Iron Soldier' in order to express their support for soldiers in the field and to raise funds for victims of the war. The memorial committee resurrected the practice in order to raise funds for the project. The committee were harking back to an imperial practice in order to raise support for the new project. In the search for a robust, alternative Austrian identity to

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[146] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales *Österreichisches Heldendenkmal: Gedenkschrift anlässlich der Weihe des österreichischen Heldendenkmales am 9. September 1934* (Vienna: 1934), p.23

[147] Interestingly the original memorial had only been dedicated to the army as an institution, not the individual soldiers who fought and died in the victorious battles. See Giller et al, p. 32.

[148] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales *Österreichisches Heldendenkmal: Gedenkschrift anlässlich der Weihe des österreichischen Heldendenkmales am 9. September 1934* (Vienna: 1934), p.44.

[149] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales *Österreichisches Heldendenkmal: Gedenkschrift anlässlich der Weihe des österreichischen Heldendenkmales am 9. September 1934* (Vienna: 1934).

[150] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Heldendenkmal 304, leaflet, 'Wehrmann in Eisen' by Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmal, 13 May 1934.

counteract the anti-Austrian propaganda emanating from Nazi Germany, the leadership of the new state instrumentalised the legacy of the war and embodied this new understanding of the conflict in the *Heldendenkmal*.[151] Despite all these attempts, the leaders of the new regime never managed to rally the support of the majority of the Austrian people behind their vision of the past or future of the state. However, it is important to note that 'dying for the Fatherland' was central to the official commemoration of the conflict under the *Ständestaat*.

The examples outlined in the previous sections have shown the prevalence of ideas of sacrifice for the *Heimat* and the Fatherland in explaining and justifying the experiences of war during the First Republic. However, it remains true that the new state lacked a clear, unified sense of national identity. As a result, the world war was commemorated as a sacrifice for a range of different entities, including regions, the new state, the Greater German nation and the monarchy.

[151] Giller et al, p. 82; Biljana Menkovic *Politische Gedenkkultur: Denkmäler - Die Visualisierung politischer Macht im öffentlichen Raum* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1999), pp. 100-1

Chapter 3 – For the Emperor

Introduction

On 29 July 1914 the front page of the Christian Social newspaper, *Reichspost*, was taken up entirely by Franz Josef's call to his peoples that marked the start of the world war:

> The flames of hatred against me and my house are growing higher and higher; attempts to violently tear away inseparable parts of Austria-Hungary are becoming more and more evident. A criminal force is reaching over the borders, trying to undermine the foundations of the state in the south east of the monarchy, to shake the loyalty of the people, to whom I devote my complete paternal love, to their dynasty and fatherland [...].[1]

War was declared in the *name of the emperor* in defence of the fatherland and the imperial dynasty. This chapter explores the postwar place of the emperors and the imperial dynasty in the commemoration of the war fought in their names. Although monarchism and legitimism were minor forces during the First Republic, the role of the dynasty in postwar commemoration is nonetheless important. It is revealing of both the postwar legacy of the Habsburg dynasty and the extent to which the world war was a moment of rupture or continuity.

During the period of the multinational empire, the monarch and the imperial family were crucial in the identification of the disparate peoples with the Habsburg Empire. At the start of the war the vast majority of Franz Josef's subjects had known only one Emperor, around whom a cult had developed in the course of a sixty-eight year reign. 'His person was hallowed, inviolable and unaccountable. [...] The old emperor, with his long held, mythical status, was adored or at least respected by all social groups,' according to Ernst Hanisch.[2] While this interpretation was not accepted by all, there is a consensus that, despite his lack of real authority, Franz Josef enjoyed a certain popularity among his peoples.[3] Much of the 'legend' of

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[1] 'An meine Völker,' *Reichspost,* 29 July 1914.
[2] Ernst Hanisch, *Der Lange Schatten des Staates: Österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1994), p. 212.
[3] Helmut Rumpler *Österreichische Geschichte 1804 - 1914. Eine Chance für Mitteleuropa: Bürgerliche Emanzipation und Staatsverfall in der Habsburgermonarchie* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1997), p. 559.

Franz Josef was built on his long life and reign. Jean-Paul Bled, a biographer, has argued that his cult was made up of three components: Franz Josef's conscientiousness as a monarch; the personal tragedies he suffered during his long life, including the suicide of his son Rudolf, the execution of his brother Maximilian in Mexico, the murder of his wife Empress Elisabeth and the assassination of his nephew Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo; and finally the imperial grandeur and distance he preserved throughout his reign.[4] This myth did not develop organically but was deliberately cultivated. The process of 'civic education' in the empire was too narrowly focused on cultivating the imperial myth, strengthening only loyalty to the emperor and dynasty, and was one of the weakest elements of Franz Josef's legacy.[5] The mechanism of creating this myth through imperial celebrations under Franz Josef has recently been examined. Franz Josef re-introduced strict court etiquette and insured that imperial forms were applied to every contact between the Emperor and his subjects. Popular participation in imperial celebrations and Catholic ritual were also promoted.[6] These reforms meant that:

> Over the course of Franz Josef's long reign, the elaborate rules of court etiquette and the magnificent Catholic ceremonies of foot washing and the Corpus Christi procession became part of the legend of the benevolent emperor who worked for the good of his people despite personal tragedy.[7]

By analysing Habsburg myths in Austrian literature, Claudio Magris has reached similar conclusions. In the last years of the monarchy a myth of Franz Josef was cultivated and reflected by Austrian writers. Magris argues that 'The emperor, who was perhaps the only reason for the existence of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy in its last years, and had suffered so many blows of fate, became an exceedingly effective myth.'[8]

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[4] Jean-Paul Bled, *Franz Josef* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 327.
[5] Steven Beller, *Francis Josef* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 227.
[6] Daniel Unowsky, 'Reasserting Empire: Habsburg Imperial Celebrations after the Revolutions of 1848-9' in Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield (eds.) *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2001), pp. 13 - 45.
[7] Ibid., p. 26.
[8] Claudio Magris, *Der habsburgische Mythos in der modernen österreichischen Literatur* (Vienna: Zsolnay Verlag, 2000), p. 232.

This imperial myth persisted and intensified in wartime. As Franz Josef's declaration to his people indicates, soldiers on the front and civilians at home were fighting and sacrificing for their emperor. Although this notion was not universal, many soldiers (and others) seemed to accept it sincerely. Franz Josef 'had become a legend among his subjects, while millions of men were fighting in his name.'[9] The myth of the emperor was strong enough to motivate some soldiers in at least the first two years of the war.[10] In her recent book Maureen Healy investigated the relationship between Austrians and their ruling family, based on the correspondence sent by ordinary Viennese people to their emperor. She has shown that the relationship of the emperor to his subjects was one of 'imperial paternalism.' His subjects' knowledge of Franz Josef's personal tragedies further strengthened his image as a father or grandfather of the empire.[11] She convincingly claims that historians have previously failed to understand that imperial paternalism was 'something that subjects might have believed in, and in times of distress actually relied on, in their everyday lives.'[12]

In summary, the personal myth of Franz Josef pre-1914 and during the war was of a conscientious and caring monarch, who had suffered as much as any of his subjects, at once distanced from his peoples and yet still with a personal stake in their concerns.

In a reign of sixty-eight years it was inevitable that the personality of Franz Josef and the Habsburg dynasty itself would become conflated. Despite this, the Habsburg dynasty was greater than the person of Franz Josef. The Habsburg emperors' divine right to rule was a vital element in the larger Habsburg legend. The whole imperial court 'was immersed in a sacred aura.'[13] Oskar Jaszi, who briefly served in the imperial government and was a member of the postwar Hungarian government, argued that the universalism

[9] Bled, p. 318.
[10] Hanisch (2005), p. 30.
[11] Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 280-282.
[12] Ibid., p. 298.
[13] Hanisch (1994), p. 214.

of the dynasty and the religious mysticism that surrounded it stood above each individual member of the imperial family.[14]

On 21 November 1916 Emperor Franz Josef's sixty-eight year reign was finally ended by his death. He was succeeded by his great nephew Karl. It was inevitable, following Franz Josef's long reign and the difficult circumstances of the succession, that the 'imperial myth' would not transfer seamlessly to the new ruler. Emperor Karl has been the subject of much criticism. Karl's ability to fulfil the function of a figurehead for the army or to unite the increasingly disjointed nationalities of the empire has been disputed. For some contemporary historians, the death of Franz Josef effectively spelt the end of the dynasty. Josef Redlich argued that 'In Francis Joseph the last real Emperor of Austria-Hungary was entombed.'[15] According to Eugene Bagger, Franz Josef was the last Habsburg Emperor; Emperor Karl was dismissed as 'good-natured but incapable.'[16] In describing the death of Franz Josef, Karl Tschuppik argued that, 'Two generations knew him as the monarch and nothing more, the personal centre of the empire, the emperor who never died.' The reign of Karl was merely an epilogue, 'The Habsburg Empire really died on November 21, 1916.'[17]

Others have taken a more sympathetic view of Karl. His former private secretary Count Polzer-Hoditz published a biography of the emperor in which he argued:

> The picture formed of the Emperor Karl both at home and abroad does not even remotely resemble his real personality and character. He is known only in a distorted likeness drawn with deliberate malice by opponents of the crown, by people who were hostile to him, who had been personally disappointed or deliberately set aside, and, finally, by men who allowed their political passions to denigrate into personal animosity.[18]

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[14] Oscar Jaszi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), p. 135-6.
[15] Josef Redlich, *Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria: A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1929), p. 534.
[16] Eugene Bagger, *Franz Joseph: Eine Persönlichkeits-Studie* (Vienna: Amalthea-Verlag, 1927), p. 7.
[17] Karl Tschuppik, *The Reign of the Emperor Francis Joseph* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1930), p. 496 – 7.
[18] Arthur Count Polzer-Hoditz, *The Emperor Karl* (London: Putnam, 1930), p. 409.

Some modern historians have also attempted to rehabilitate Emperor Karl's image to some extent. Healy's analysis of the correspondence between ordinary citizens and Karl has shown that petitions to the emperor actually increased during Karl's reign. She has argued that 'In symbolic terms, it would seem that the young ruling pair were at least a plausible replacement for the elderly, paternal Franz Josef.' [19] However even those who suggest that Karl had the potential to effectively replace Franz Josef accept that the practical problems of wartime undermined his position over the period of the war.[20]

Up to the end of the monarchy an aura of myth and legend still surrounded the Habsburg dynasty as a whole and the figure of Franz Josef in particular. Elements of this myth seem to have transferred to his successor, particularly among the ordinary people of the empire. The myth was powerful above all among the German speaking peoples, rural populations and Christian Social voters in the cities.[21] Yet the figure of the Kaiser was not only important to these groups. For example, during the imperial period the Social Democrats were mocked as the '*k.k. Sozialdemokratie*' because of their loyalty to and respect for the emperor.[22] On the other hand, the conditions experienced by soldiers and civilians during the war, coupled with the effects of the Sixtus affair, the June offensive and the bungled armistice had damaged the faith of many in the Habsburg dynasty.[23]

The end of the dynasty in Austria came in late 1918. On the background of his failed manifesto of 16 October 1918, Emperor Karl issued a carefully worded statement on 11 November 1918 in which he renounced his state duties (although did not formally renounce the throne).[24] At this point he remained in Austria. Fears for his personal safety and disquiet about his continued presence in the country prompted him to leave Austria in the

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[19] Healy, p. 282.
[20] Ibid., p. 297.
[21] Laurence Cole, 'Der Habsburger Mythos,' in Emil Brix, Ernst Bruckmüller and Hannes Stekl (eds.) *Memoria Austriae I: Menschen, Mythen, Zeiten* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 2004), p. 475.
[22] Magris., p. 253.
[23] Glaubauf., p. 21.
[24] Robin Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy c. 1765 - 1918* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2001), p. 395.

company of his immediate family.[25] On 3 April 1919 a law 'concerning the banishment of the House of Habsburg-Lothringen and the transfer of their assets' was passed. As well as the emperor and his immediate family, other members of the dynasty who did not 'clearly renounce their membership of the house and all rights of leadership for all time' were banned from returning to Austria. [26] Despite this law and Karl's exile, some remained in Austria who hoped for a restoration. Legitimism in Austria never developed into a significant political force. For example, membership of the paramilitary arm of the legitimist party number two hundred and twenty in 1920.[27] The perceived threat of legitimism always far outweighed the reality of the challenge presented by the movement. Except for a small group of former imperial elites, for whom the banished dynasty remained an important point of identification, the vast majority of Austrians accepted the demise of the dynasty and did not seek a restoration. But the lack of political will to re-establish the monarchy did not hamper the growth of nostalgia for the imperial family or mean that the dynasty had no significance in the First Republic.

Members of the dynasty continued to be figures of consequence, both in a positive and negative sense, long after their political power had vanished. This is illustrated by examining the fate of dynastic myths during the First Republic and in particular, the role of the departed dynasty in the discussion and commemoration of the war. At this point a brief comparative consideration of the postwar fate of dynasties is useful. Robert Gerwarth, in the context of Germany, has argued that because of widely shared perceptions of Kaiser Wilhelm's failings, it was Bismarck who became the figurehead for monarchists seeking to 'illustrate the past glory of the Kaiserreich.'[28] The fallen dynasty had little political or even symbolic relevance. In Hungary, monarchism was a far stronger force than in Austria. There, legitimists hoped to restore the Habsburg dynasty while 'free electors'

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[25] Walter Goldinger, 'Die Geschichtliche Ablauf der Ereignisse in Österreich von 1918 bis 1945,' in Heinrich Benedikt (ed.), *Geschichte der Republik Österreich* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1954), p. 48.
[26] '209. Gesetz vom 3. April 1919, betreffend die Landesverweisung und die Übernahme des Vermögens des Hauses Habsburg-Lothringen,' *Staatsgesetzblatt für den Staat Deutschösterreich* (10 April 1919), p. 513.
[27] Botz (1976), pp. 91 – 93.
[28] Robert Gerwarth, *The Bismarck Myth: Weimar Germany and the Legacy of the Iron Chancellor* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p. 53.

accepted the international rejection of a Habsburg restoration and invested Admiral Horthy with the qualities of a monarch. Revisionism in Hungary was intimately linked to its territorial claims based on the lands of the Crown of St Stephen, which gave it a particular importance and potency. [29] Nancy Wingfield has shown that in postwar Czechoslovakia Habsburg symbols and dynastic statues were attacked and became a flashpoint in the conflict between Czechs, who rejected the dynastic legacy and Germans, who defended it. Yet despite this explicit rejection of the Habsburg past she has also shown how a cult of the new president Thomas Masaryk was deliberately cultivated that shared many of the characteristics of the cult of Franz Josef during the imperial period.[30]

These ideas have also been examined in Austria. Laurence Cole has provided a useful overview of the development of the Habsburg myths from the end of the world war.[31] He argues that the following the death of Franz Josef and the catastrophic consequences of the war, the cult of the monarchy collapsed alongside the empire. However, the Habsburgs 'cast a long shadow over the new state.' A process of aggressive demystification (accompanied by state pressure) from 1918 to 1927 was followed by a period of growing nostalgia and rehabilitation from 1927 to 1938, first at the level of society and then in government.[32] In his 1963 book, Claudio Magris traced the Habsburg myth in Austrian literature, arguing that the key components of the postwar myth had been present during the era of Franz Josef.[33] He contends that 'the Habsburg myth did not go down with the empire, but rather entered its most impressive and interesting phase.' In particular, Magris has shown how key figures in Austrian literature including Josef Roth, Franz Werfel, Stefan Zweig and Robert Musil re-created a nostalgic image of the monarchy (and the monarch), far removed from reality, during the period of the First Republic and beyond. These authors, and others, were harking back to an idyllic happy period before the war to escape from the uncertainty and

[29] Laszlo Kontler, *A History of Hungary* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 341.
[30] Nancy M. Wingfield, Flag Wars and Stone Saints: How the Bohemian Lands became Czech (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).
[31] Cole's analysis extends beyond the end of the Second World War and into the Second Republic. Cole (2004), pp. 473 - 504.
[32] Ibid.. p. 475 – 476.
[33] Magris, p. 24.

desperation in the immediate postwar years and the increasing conflicts during the 1930s.[34]

Gergely Romsics has conducted a similar analysis of Habsburg myths, this time based on the memoir literature of political elites.[35] Romsics examined one hundred memoirs of high ranking soldiers, bureaucrats, politicians and intellectuals and classified the authors as Old Austrians, those men who viewed the collapse of the monarchy as the end of their world, Austro-Germans, who committed themselves to the new Austria after 1918 and Hungarians, who focused on Hungary not the empire as a whole. While acknowledging variations in the views of the monarchy within these groups, Romsics has been able to draw overarching conclusions about the image of the monarchy and monarchs shared by these in the groups. Naturally for Old Austrians, the 'person of the King and Emperor plays a peculiarly significant role.' Despite criticisms of both Franz Ferdinand and Karl in the memoirs, Franz Josef was 'according to the silent but unanimous opinion, above all criticism.' The figure of the ruler became a personification of all the positives virtues of the former empire.[36] In contrast he has shown that among German Nationalist and Social Democrat elites the dynasty faded in importance in the First Republic. Members of these elite groups did not attach much importance to dynastic figures. Christian Social elites had a more ambivalent relationship with the legacy of the monarchy and dynasty. As the party became increasingly trapped in the battle between right wing nationalism and left wing socialism 'the Habsburg Empire became the source of legitimacy.'[37]

The relationship between the dynasty and the commemoration of war is the subject of the following sections. As we have seen, in the early years of the war the idea of sacrificing for the emperor was an important one for many Austrians. Yet in 1918 the end of the dynasty was final and there was little expectation or even hope that a restoration would be achieved. What happened to all of the wartime rhetoric but also genuine belief that Austrians had been fighting for their emperor during the world war? In the following we

[34] Ibid., pp. 285 – 304.
[35] Gergely Romsics *Myth and Remembrance: The Dissolution of the Habsburg Empire in the Memoir Literature of the Austro-Hungarian Political Elite* (Wayne, New Jersey: Center for Hungarian Studies and Publications, 2006).
[36] Ibid., p. 3 – 19.
[37] Ibid., p. 112 – 120.

shall see that the dynasty and its role in the war still had the ability to produce strong reactions and polarise opinion in postwar Austria. The Habsburgs had lost their political power but still retained symbolic importance.

Anti-Monarchism

Clear narratives about the experience of war did not emerge in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Yet during the 1920s the development of narratives about the meaning of war went hand-in-hand with the process of the demystification of the dynasty.[38] Negative comment on the wartime role of the dynasty came from both the left and from German Nationalist circles. Largely this condemnation came in response to monarchist demonstrations or perceived monarchist statements. Illustrative of this was the response to commemoration ceremonies held in Tyrol, Vienna and Graz to mark the birthday of the former Emperor Karl in 1921. The ceremonies were small; press reports indicated that up to three hundred attended in Vienna and 'a few hundred legitimists' were present in Graz.[39] Nonetheless the ceremonies provoked concern and outrage from the left-wing. Julius Deutsch, Social Democrat national councillor and the former defence minister of the Republic, called for an investigation into the birthday celebrations in Graz, which had been attended by uniformed officers of the *Bundesheer*.[40] The Innsbruck celebrations began with the firing of shots. In an article on the celebrations for 'Karl the Last' the Innsbruck based Social Democrat *Volkszeitung* newspaper commented:

> It is a shame to have wasted the gunpowder, as all of the people have known for a long time that the whole Habsburg clan is not worth one shot of powder. [...] The people of Tyrol do not want to have anything to do with the 'glorious' Habsburg dynasty.[41]

The following day the newspaper carried reports about the birthday celebrations for 'Karl the Insignificant' in Vienna.[42] There is an interesting paradox present in these criticisms of Karl, with the left wing press

[38] Cole (2004), p. 478.
[39] 'Die Karlisten Demonstranten,' *Volkszeitung,* 18 August 1921.
[40] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Abteilung 1, carton 924 (39 - 10) Zl.1741, Julius Deutsch to BMfHW, 18 August 1921.
[41] 'Dumme Kerle,' *Volkszeitung,* 17 August 1921.
[42] 'Die Karlisten Demonstranten,' *Volkszeitung,* 18 August 1921.

simultaneously dismissive and fearful of the former emperor. The outraged response was not in proportion to the scale of the demonstrations; again the perceived threat of monarchism far outweighed the reality of the threat.

A 'particularly passionate anti-monarchism' emerged from the left, as Social Democrat politicians sought to distance themselves from their imperial past.[43] John Boyer has noted that during the late imperial period, the Social Democrats had gradually acknowledged 'Franz Josef's equitable style of government' and had placed a great deal of faith in the dynasty.[44] The supportive attitude adopted by the Social Democrats towards the dynasty led to opponents mocking them as the 'k.u.k. Social Democrats.' In the postwar period Social Democrat leaders were embarrassed by their support of the imperial government and in particular by their enthusiastic support for the war in 1914. Their virulent anti-monarchism was prompted in part by their urge to cover up their own monarchical past.[45] Left-wing anti-monarchism was further strengthened by developments in the 1920s. In 1921 the Christian Social politician Carl Vaugoin became defence minister and remained in that post, with brief interruption, for the next 12 years. Vaugoin aimed to restore the traditions of the old army to the new *Bundesheer* and gradually undermined the influence of the *Volkswehr* soldiers' council and civilian commission institutions.[46] It was in this 'counter-revolutionary' context that left-wing anti-monarchism became more vociferous. In 1922 the left wing military periodical *Der freie Soldat* discussed the 'Habsburg War of Conquest (*Raubkrieg)*' in an article entitled 'From the High k. u. k. War Ministry of the Republic.'[47] The perceived monarchism of the civil service led to more explicit criticism of the dynasty's role in the war in an article from 10 November:

> With pride and satisfaction we celebrate the day on which the people of Austria freed themselves from a dynasty, which literally allowed many millions of its 'subjects' to drown in rivers in blood in the pursuit of its interests [...].[48]

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[43] Cole, pp. 475-6.
[44] John W. Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897 – 1918* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995), p. 121.
[45] Heer, pp. 328 – 333.
[46] Manfred Rauchensteiner, 'Landesverteidigung und Sicherheitspolitik' in Dachs et al, p. 610.
[47] 'Aus dem hohen k.u.k. Kriegsministerium der Republik,' *Der freie Soldat,* 10 October 1922.
[48] 'Vier Jahre Republik,' *Der freie Soldat,* 10 November 1922.

Yet left wing criticism of the ruling family was not always consistent. In the first examples Emperor Karl was depicted as irrelevant and inconsequential. In the latter instance the dynasty was culpable for the deaths of millions in an aggressive, self-serving war. This discrepancy was noted by the opponents of the left. In a vitriolic attack on the left wing press' portrayal of the dynasty, a journalist in *Der Wehrbund* documented the accusations made in the *Arbeiter Zeitung* about the causes of the war. The author argued that the Kaiser, who had once been portrayed as 'bloodthirsty' and 'an old vampire', was now no longer considered capable of having started the war at all.[49]

Anti-monarchist statements were not ubiquitous; they were typically made in reaction to the expression of monarchist loyalties, or statements which were perceived to be monarchist. According to Cole, 'after 1918 any allusion to the symbols or rhetoric of the Habsburg myth implied a clear rejection of the republic (and often of democracy as a whole).'[50] An interesting early flash point in the conflict was the wearing of wartime medals; for the left those who wore medals were making an unambiguous monarchist statement. The Civil Commission of the Defence Ministry, a socialist innovation designed to ensure the loyalty of the army to the Republic, denounced this practice, arguing that only the politically naive could fail to interpret the wearing of medals as a monarchist declaration.[51] In some cases the sporting of medals led to open conflict. On 20 July 1923 Colonel Neffzern of the defence ministry carried out an inspection of the Austrian Military Driving School. A soldiers' representative registered a complaint about an officer wearing a wartime medal (the *Karltruppenkreuz)* in the school's factory. The disturbance which followed this complaint led to the medal-wearing officer followed by the entire workforce leaving the school, which was forced to close for the remainder of the day.[52]

This controversy about the monarchist intent of wearing medals recurred in 1924. General Theodor Körner, one of the very few high-ranking

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[49] 'FM Conrads Anteil an der Kriegsschuld: Erwiderung auf eine Kritik,' *Der Wehrbund,* January 1924.
[50] Cole (2004), p. 476.
[51] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Abteilung 1, carton 1248, (39 - 18) Zl. 2564, Zivilkommissariat der BMfHW to Bundesminister für Heereswesen, 24 November 1922.
[52] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Abteilung 5, carton 1631, (16 – 1/10) Zl. 2893, Österreichische Heeres-Kraftfahrschule Wien to BMfHW, 24 July 1923.

Habsburg officers who joined the Social Democrat party in the First Republic, published a very critical commentary on what he perceived to be the continuing undermining of the *Bundesheer* by the new Defence Minister Carl Vaugoin and the military bureaucracy.[53] In part, Körner criticised the wearing of wartime imperial medals by members of the peacetime republican army. In a heated response Vaugoin argued that medals gained in wartime were a holy relic and a reminder of a supreme sacrifice; attempts to portray the wearing of medals as a monarchist statement were 'misplaced over-sensitivity.'[54] Those who persisted in wearing the medals insisted that they were not making a political assertion. These denials did not reassure those on the left who saw the wearing of medals as a monarchist statement and continued to protest against the practice into the mid 1920s. For example, the dragooner squadron from Breitensee, Lower Austria participated in the 1924 Staatsfeiertag celebrations in Vienna wearing 'decorations they had earned during the war.'[55] According to right wing press reports this led to them being 'sworn at, ridiculed and even physically attacked by comrades of the [Social Democrat] party.'[56]

Indeed, more overtly monarchist statements provoked more radical anti-monarchist reactions. A commemoration ceremony for fallen soldiers in Graz in 1924 is illustrative of this. On Saturday 1 November, the National Association of War Wounded, Widows and Orphans held a ceremony at the military cemetery.[57] The following day a military commemoration ceremony attended by both deputy mayors of Graz, Anton Rintelen, the provincial governor (*Landeshauptmann)* of Styria, various other local notables, and many veterans' associations including the Iron Corps, the Alpine Association of War Participants, the Comradeship Association and the Front Fighters' Association as well as delegations from the *Bundesheer* was held.[58] The left wing press was outraged in particular by the participation of the 'Black and Gold' Front Fighters association at the official military ceremony and in

[53] Rauchensteiner in Dachs et al, p. 609.
[54] 'Minister Vaugoin zur Denkschrift General Körners,' *Der Wehrbund,* February 1924.
[55] 'Minister Vaugoin über die Vorfälle am Staatsfeiertage,' *Der Wehrbund,* November/December 1924.
[56] Ibid.
[57] 'Die Gedenkfeier der Kameradschaftsbünde,' *Neues Grazer Tagblatt,* 3 November 1924.
[58] Ibid.

particular by the perceived instrumentalisation of the dead for the monarchist cause:

> The poor dead cannot defend themselves from the black and gold circles and the living. We must seriously ask ourselves, whether we want to protect the victims of the Habsburgs from such mockery by the black and gold supporters, who are even prepared to use cemeteries in the promotion of their bloody folly.[59]

This depiction of the fallen of the world war as the victims of the Habsburgs was echoed in a Social Democrat commemoration ceremony for the wartime fallen of Wiener Neustadt, in the same year. The Republican *Schutzbund*, laid a wreath on the large cross of the war graves section of the municipal cemetery, bearing the words 'To the bloody victims of the wicked Habsburgs.'[60] The *Schutzbund* clearly recognised the controversy of the step; a four man guard was placed by the wreath for the three days it was in place. According to the military authorities in Wiener Neustadt, there was agitation in the town about the irreverence of the wreath.[61]

In summary, anti-monarchism was a potent, if not prevalent, force on the left in the 1920s. The Social Democrat leaders feared attempts by the right-wing government to restore monarchist traditions. In discussion of the war a range of allegations from irrelevance to maliciousness were levelled against the dynasty. In contrast to most of the other interpretations of the experience of war examined in this thesis, anti-monarchism did not have the power to offer a positive meaning to the sacrifices made in wartime. Accordingly, it was not a reaction to the experience of war that resonated widely with the mass of the population of Austria. Yet there was a strength of feeling behind the sentiment which cannot be overlooked. There are several reasons for the expression of such anti-monarchist sentiments. Firstly, as noted above, the Social Democrats were keen to distance themselves from their participation in the monarchist system, and more specifically, from their

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[59] 'Der nicht gelungene Missbrauch der Wehrmacht,' *Arbeiterwille,* 3 November 1924. The military authorities rejected the accusations that the *Bundesheer* had marched together with any of the veterans' organisations. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1778, (75 – 1/1), Zl. 61605, Kommando der Brigade Steiermark Nr 5 to BMfHW, 7 November 1924.
[60] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1778, (75 – 1/1), Zl. 61605, Ortskommando Wiener Neustadt to BMfHW, 4 November 1924.
[61] Ibid.

'almost complete paralysis in the first two years of the war.'[62] Secondly, the fear of an attempted restoration during the 1920s, stoked by two restoration attempts in Hungary, meant that constant reminders of the shortcomings of the dynastic system were necessary. Yet these two explanations suggest merely a political instrumentalisation of anti-monarchism by the higher levels of the social democrat party structure. A third explanation encompasses the views of more ordinary party supporters and explains why they accepted the anti-monarchist line of the leadership. As discussed above, many ordinary Austrians believed they had a personal connection with the benevolent emperors and went into war partly in defence of the dynasty. The harsh conditions endured by soldiers and civilians, the experience of mass death and disability and finally the catastrophic defeat left many feeling angry and betrayed by the dynasty in whose name they had fought.

Yet anti-monarchism did not only come from those on the left who rejected the idea of monarchy on principle. Those with German Nationalists leanings on the left and right were also keen to distance themselves from the deposed dynasty. German nationalist critics of the monarchy made more specific allegations about the conduct of the dynasty during the war. Their central complaint was that the dynasty had blocked the integration of Austria into the German Reich and, in particular, that Karl had betrayed Germany during the Sixtus affair.[63] German nationalist criticism of the dynasty was voiced largely in the press. Even those publications of the right which had a generally positive view of the legacy of the empire and dynasty acknowledged that the dynasty was a factor which had kept Austria outside the German Empire. An article on the German wars of liberation in the soldiers' magazine *Der Wehrbund* is a good example of this. The article, written by an unnamed major of the Austrian army argued that Austrians could not allow themselves to feel German during the imperial period, because if they had they would have been forced to seek *Anschluss* even under Habsburg rule.[64] This piece, aiming to educate young soldiers about the history of their country and army,

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[62] Maderthaner in Dachs et al, p. 180.
[63] For a discussion of the detailed attempted peace negotiations see Robert A. Kann, *Die Sixtusaffäre und die Geheimen Friedensverhandlungen Österreich-Ungarns im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1966).
[64] Major H. E., 'Die Befreiungskriege,' *Der Wehrbund,* November/December 1923.

argued that the Habsburgs had been a stumbling block in the natural integration of the German Austrians into the Reich. In the next edition, the same newspaper took its criticism of the monarchy further, suggesting that the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was the 'fruit of our weakness.'[65] Here the start of the war was blamed on Habsburg weakness leading to aggression, rather than an unprovoked attack of state-sponsored terrorism.

Left-wing commentators also criticised the dynasty on the basis of German nationalist sentiment. As we saw in chapter two, Socialists also advocated membership of the German Reich. In a retrospective article on the end of the war, published in 1924, the left-wing *Der freie Soldat* reflected on the end of the empire, when 'the courage of the people was unbroken, the historic realisation was greater than ever, the longing to return to the great German Fatherland and the recognition of the need to leave Habsburg dynastic interests in the past.'[66] Otto Bauer, the socialist politician and theorist, enhanced this criticism in his reflections on the tenth anniversary of the end of the war. According to Bauer 'the empress, brought up in the French tradition in the German-hating family Parma-Bourbon, pressed for a separate peace.[67] He argued that this had dire consequences:

> The German army on the Western Front had just begun its second major offensive and the German nationalists were hoping for the breakthrough towards Paris and Calais, for the final victory. It was at this moment that German Austria learnt that the Kaiser had, behind Germany's back, assured his sympathy, through his enemy-serving brother-in-law, to the president of the French Republic [...].[68]

For Bauer, Zita and by extension Karl, were not only obstacles to the natural integration of German Austria into the German Empire, but also traitors in the German people's war effort.

In a later article responding to the General Staff's emerging official account of the war from the same publication, it was argued that:

> The Habsburgs were warlords over their subjects and they used them to secure the interests of their dynasty. [...] 1848/9, 1859, 1866, 1878 and finally 1914 to 1918, were they not simply wars for the Habsburgs'

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[65] 'FM Conrads Anteil an der Kriegsschuld: Erwiderung auf eine Kritik,' *Der Wehrbund,* January 1924.
[66] 'Hoch die Republik,' *Der freie Soldat,* 15. November 1924.
[67] Otto Bauer, 'Habsburgs Kriegsverrat und Ende,' *Der freie Mensch, Bildungsstunden des freien Soldaten,* 15 October 1928.
[68] Ibid.

personal power? German strength was wasted on the personal gains of the Habsburgs.[69]

The author accused the dynasty of subverting German interests in their own personal crusades; the whole recent history of the Habsburg Empire was recast as a struggle to preserve and enhance dynastic power at the expense of national power.

This kind of anti-monarchist sentiment was undoubtedly less common, but it did reflect the overwhelming belief that Austria's future lay with Germany, a state in which the Habsburgs could not hope to play a role. It is a clear contrast with monarchism in Hungary, which offered legitimacy for attempts to revise the Treaty of Trianon, based on the hereditary claims of the Crown of St Stephen. The restoration of the monarchy in Hungary would have justified the expansion of Hungarian territory. In contrast the restoration of the monarchy in Austria would have blocked its path to integration into Germany, the course of action that many believed would be the salvation of the struggling state.

By the 1930s anti-monarchism had all but disappeared from discussion about the world war in Austria. The changing political climate of the 1930s meant those wishing to maintain democracy in Austria were faced with far more pressing internal and external threats. Anger and disappointment in the dynasty had long since faded.

Moreover, by the 1930s it was not always clear whether negative remarks about a non-democratic system referred to the dynasty of the past or the threat of dictatorship in the present and future. An incident at a 1933 memorial unveiling ceremony is indicative of this changed climate. The ceremony, which took place on 23 July 1933 in Burgenland, was attended by a delegation of the army and the head of the provincial parliament in Burgenland, as well as Protestant and Catholic clergy and a rabbi. The representative of the parliament, a Social Democrat, delivered a speech, described by the army representative as 'the strongest Social Democrat agitation,' in which he argued that it was the working people represented by

[69] 'Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg, 1914-1918,' *Der freie Soldat,* 1 December 1928.

his party, who had made the greatest sacrifices during the war.[70] He concluded his speech by proclaiming 'Never again may Austria be ruled by one person!'[71] For this speaker the war had brought about a positive change in the system of governance in Austria and had taught Austrians the importance of rejecting personal rule. Was this man speaking out against the monarchism of the past or appealing against the threat of dictatorship in the future? By 1933 the answer to this question was no longer clear.

On one level the world war was obviously a moment of rupture in monarchism during the First Republic. The Emperor had stepped down and, following the restoration attempts in Hungary at Easter and in October 1921 was exiled to Madeira where he died in 1922. Yet the violent expressions of antimonarchism from the left did not continue into the late 1920s and 1930s. As we shall see, monarchism was maintained by only a small group of imperial elites in the 1920s, returned to prominence in the 1930s to reaching its peak under the *Ständestaat* from 1934.

Monarchism

Before examining monarchist discussion and commemoration of the war, it is first important to establish the development of monarchism after 1918. Romsics' work has shown that there was a group of Old Austrian elites, including politicians, bureaucrats and soldiers, for whom the end of the empire was the end of the world. He argues that this group was marginalised and 'can be viewed as such a liminal group whose position on the edges of society had become permanent, at least as far as ritual was concerned.'[72] One factor in this clique's marginalisation was their continued insistence on the importance of the dynasty. Yet beyond this group, the imperial legacy became increasingly important for the Christian Social Party and its supporters from the late 1920s and into the 1930s. This was a much larger and more influential group. Magris has traced the emergence of nostalgia for the empire and dynasty in the First Republic and the particular role of Austrian

[70] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs B, carton 3629, (45 - 4/4) Zl. 13825, report, Kommando des Burgenländischen Feldjägerbataillon Nr 2 to BMfHW, 24 July 1933.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Romsics, p. 48.

literature in provoking it.[73] There is a consensus that in the immediate postwar years monarchism and legitimism were restricted to politically marginal groups of former 'Old Austrians.' But as time passed, nostalgia for the empire, and more particularly the dynasty, developed and was adopted by Christian Social politicians and the politicians of the *Ständestaat* to offer historical legitimacy to their parties and state and was to some extent accepted by ordinary Austrians. An examination of monarchist discussion and commemoration of the war reveals a more nuanced picture of the dynasty as reflected by monarchists in the First Republic.

A positive reassessment of the role of the monarchy in the war did not emerge until the mid 1920s. An early example of such a defence comes from *Der Wehrbund* in 1924 and was prompted by Social Democrat General Körner's criticisms of the old army:

> General Körner must be aware, that in parliamentary ruled democratic Old Austria, it was not the emperor alone who set the budget. It could only have been the boundless immorality of the MPs that allowed the army to decline, costing the lives of hundreds of thousands of courageous soldiers in the war![74]

Franz Josef was thus depicted as a victim of parliamentary intrigues. This construction of the imperial family as victims of the war was ever present from the mid 1920s into the 1930s. An article by 'a victim of the war' addressed to the head of the *Schutzbund* Julius Deutsch, pushed the idea of Habsburg victimhood further. 'In ten years, Dr Deutsch, you and your clan [*Sippe*] will have been hounded out, in the same way that you boast of having hounded out the last Habsburg.'[75] This takes the idea of victimhood further, suggesting that the dynasty was not only undermined by politicians but actively persecuted by them.

This sense of Habsburg victimhood, which emerged in the right wing, militaristic press, later filtered into the commemoration of the world war. On 19 August 1924 a plaque was unveiled in the Sacred Heart Basilica in Hall, Tyrol. The plaque was funded by the local branch of the *Reichsbund der Österreicher* and the patrons of the project were former General Dankl and

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[73] Magris, p.24.
[74] 'General Körner als Politiker: Was wird nun geschehen?,' *Der Wehrbund,* March 1924.
[75] Ein Kriegsopfer 'Nach 10 Jahren,' *Der Wehrbund,* August 1924.

Bishop Waitz, both men who had held positions of power in the empire. The plaque was dedicated to Emperor Karl and Archduke Franz Ferdinand as the last and the first victims of the world war.[76] The memorial made an unambiguous monarchist statement. Yet, as in the examples from the press described above, it was not the glory of the monarchy which was immortalised in the plaque, but rather the suffering and sacrifices of the imperial family.

A similar interpretation of the fate of Franz Ferdinand was expressed in a memorial unveiled in August 1933 in the town of Lölling, Carinthia. A committee of citizens of the town was established to erect the monument, which was dedicated to the fallen of the world war with special mention of Franz Ferdinand, who 'actually fell as a victim of the war.'[77] The sacrifice of Franz Ferdinand was linked with the sacrifices of ordinary Austrians in wartime. The 1924 project was linked to the 'Old Austrian' elites, whilst the 1933 project was a local initiative, indicative of the spread of nostalgia for the dynasty (as well as the peculiarities of a Carinthian town). The idea of Franz Ferdinand as the first and Karl as the last victim of the war was, as we shall see, also echoed on the altar in the Austrian *Heldendenkmal.*[78]

However, before discussing the *Heldendenkmal,* another project that made an explicit link between the dynasty and the fallen of the world war, the *Hochschneeberg* memorial church in Lower Austria is considered. The original church was built in 1902 and was dedicated to the memory of the murdered Empress Elisabeth (known popularly as Sisi) but had become neglected during the war. In the First Republic, a committee headed by local notables but with the official backing of Christian Social politicians, including the former Chancellor Ignaz Seipel, the clergy, including Bishop Ferdinand Pawlikowski and former high ranking soldiers was established to reconstruct the memorial chapel. The dual aims of the project were described in a letter to the Defence Ministry in 1929:

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[76] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2502, (85/3/12), Zl. 5525, Kommando der Brigade Kärnten, Salzburg, Tirol und Vorarlberg Nr 6 to BMfHW, 31 July 1928.
[77] The castle in Lölling had previously belonged to Franz Ferdinand. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs B, carton 3629, (45 - 4/4) Zl. 14862, Hans Jordan, Obmann des Kriegerdenkmalausschusses in Lölling to Regimentskommando, 26 June 1933.
[78] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Heldendenkmal 304. 'Zum Führer durch das österreichische Heldendenkmal.'

> The Association for the Maintenance of the Memorial Church on *Hochschneeberg,* which was built in memory of the murdered Empress Elisabeth of Austria and has become dilapidated over the years, is restoring the church. It has also set itself the task of adapting this little church as a consecrated site in memory of those Austrian alpinists who fell in the world war, to ensure that a site of eternal memory is provided for those dead heroes who sacrificed their blood for their Fatherland. [79]

On 15 September 1929 a remembrance ceremony for the fallen of the world war was held at the church, which took the form of a mass followed by a wreath-laying ceremony.[80] The project did not aim to transform the original dedication of the church to Empress Elisabeth but rather placed a new layer of meaning on the existing church. The result of this was the establishment of a link between Elisabeth, a popular Habsburg figure, but one who had played no part in the war, and the fallen soldiers of the conflict.

A year later another commemoration ceremony for the fallen alpinists was held. Again, it was the Association for the Maintenance of the Memorial Church on *Hochschneeberg* that organised the ceremony. At this point the members of the project's honorary committee included the chancellor, Johann Schober, the vice chancellor and the defence minister Carl Vaugoin. Once more the stated aims of the project were:

> To rebuild the church, constructed in memory of Empress Elisabeth, murdered on 10 September 1898 in Geneva, which was almost completely dilapidated and forgotten after the war, and to preserve it for posterity. Also, in the future, to adapt the church as a site of remembrance for the fallen alpinists of Austria.[81]

By 1930 the element of the project which commemorated the former empress was foregrounded ahead of the element which honoured the soldiers of the world war, reflecting the increased public profile of monarchism.

In 1931 the annual commemoration ceremony took place on 5 July. The committee could now report favourably on their achievements in beginning the restoration work and outlined their plans for the church. 'Inside the mountain sanctuary, the association intends to erect a remembrance

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[79] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2692, (18 – 7) Zl. 40399, Verein zur Erhaltung der Gedächtniskirche auf dem Hochschneeberg to BMfHW, undated.
[80] Ibid.
[81] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2935, (73 – 1) Zl. 32670, Verein zur Erhaltung der Gedächtniskirche auf dem Hochschneeberg to BMfHW, 16 August 1930.

plaque for those heroes of Austria who fell during the world war,' according to the publications surrounding the ceremony.[82] By 1931 it was clear that for the committee the church would retain its primary dedication, to the empress. The honouring of the fallen of the world war would be a secondary addition. It was the changed climate of the 1930s and the spread of nostalgia for the dynasty that allowed the subordination of the memory of the fallen soldiers to that of a popular but entirely unconnected member of the imperial family.

In the previous examples the dynasty were commemorated either as victims of the war or simply alongside the fallen soldiers of the war. But from the 1930s a more aggressive kind of monarchism also emerged. In this interpretation the dynasty, and particularly Franz Josef, were still presented as justification for the experience of war. Again, this understanding emerged first in the right wing press. According to *Der Wehrbund,* at the start of the war 'all the peoples [of the empire] followed his [the emperor's] call to arms with unanimous enthusiasm.'[83] The same publication later printed a commemorative article to mark what would have been Franz Josef's centennial, stating:

> Franz Josef I was, as a man and as the leader of Austria and far beyond, the most prominent representative of that illustrious dynasty of princes, who had to personally endure the blows of fate, but during his sixty-eight year reign remained the same loveable, chivalrous, noble ruler. Even in the contentious present he is esteemed and venerated. [...] The emperor was the greatest linchpin of the army. Whether a man was an officer or a simple soldier he listened to them all and helped them on every occasion. When Franz Josef closed his eyes forever on the evening of 22 November 1916, the sadness in the army was sincere.[84]

The image of the emperor in this article is identical to the pre-war legend of Franz Josef. He was again portrayed as the beneficent father of his peoples and his special relationship to each and every member of the Habsburg armed forces, who had fought and died for him, was highlighted.

The legacy of Franz Josef was also defended, particularly by former officers, from those who sought to undermine it, in particular the National

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[82] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3158, (75 – 3/1) Zl. 14623, Verein zur Erhaltung der Gedächtniskirche auf dem Hochschneeberg to BMfHW, 7 April 1931.
[83] 'Österreichs Tradition,' *Der Wehrbund,* April 1930.
[84] 'Der 100jährige Kaiser,' *Der Wehrbund,* July 1930.

Socialists. In one speech Major Rudolf Zotti of Infantry Regiment No. 6 argued that, contrary to Hitler's claims in *Mein Kampf*, Franz Josef was always 'a German prince' and refused to betray his allies.[85]

This glorification of the Habsburgs that emerged in the press, later exerted an influence on the public commemoration of the war. In 1930 plans emerged from a collective of right-wing, largely officer level veterans' organisations and similar civilian societies to organise a day of remembrance for Franz Josef.[86] The catalyst for this event was again the hundredth anniversary of Franz Josef's birth. The Viennese author Hans Sassmann prepared a statement to explain the purpose of the event:

> In the legendary figure of Franz Josef we greet the last great representative of the celestial imperial idea of the romantic period. His reign encompassed historical movements, which were unprecedented in the lifespan of a monarch. Sixty-eight years, five great European wars, in which Austria participated and suffered a fate during the World War that has not been experienced by a state since the fall of the Roman Empire. [...] That is what is tragic and great about his reign. We bow down before the exalted mystique of his majesty.[87]

In this understanding of his reign Franz Josef again returns to his pre-war, cult-like status. Officers' associations were prominently involved in the commemoration ceremony, reflecting their special relationship with the dynasty during the imperial period.[88]

In 1930 one of the organisations involved in the Franz Josef Remembrance Day, the *Alt-Kaiserjäger* veterans' club was involved in further monarchist activity. It purchased a bronze bust of Franz Josef, which had been on display in the former Innsbruck Infantry Cadet School. As part of a monarchist commemoration ceremony in August the bust was unveiled at the Berg Isel complex, a site already linked to the history of the *Kaiser Jäger*

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[85] 'Warum muss der österreichische Soldat dem NS fernstehen, aus einem Vortrag des Herrn Major Rudolf Zotti des IR 6,' *Der Wehrbund*, March 1933.
[86] The organisations included the Officers' Association, the Front Fighters' Association, the Christian German *Turnerschaft* and the Catholic Noblemen (*Edelleute*). ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2922, (50 – 3/1) Zl. 50725, Vorbereitender Ausschuss der Kaiser-Franz-Josef-Gedächtnisfeier to BMfHW, 15 December 1930.
[87] Ibid.
[88] The exalted place enjoyed by officers during the imperial period was linked to their personal identification with the empire and their training was designed to create unbounded loyalty to the empire. See Deak, pp 4 – 83.

tradition as well as the legend surrounding Andreas Höfer. [89] The bust was an addition to the site dedicated to the glorious history of Austria and Tyrol.

The examples of the *Hochschneeberg* church and the re-situation of the bust of Franz Josef at the *Berg Isel* complex are indicative of a process of adjusting the meaning of dynastic monuments to include the experiences of the world war. At this point however, it is important to note that this did not happen uniformly. In some cases, the dynastic elements of monuments were removed and those meanings were overlaid with new ideas, eclipsing the original purposes of the monuments. An example of this is the memorial to the fallen telegraphists of the world war. It was originally constructed and unveiled in October 1930 at the barracks of the Telegraph Company Nr 2 at Breitensee.[90] However, the memorial was then relocated to a new barracks in Meidling, leaving their memorial 'homeless' and necessitating its relocation. The funds for the original memorial had been raised by the telegraph company so its relocation was also funded by the company. It was decided to relocate the memorial to an empty plinth which had once contained a bust of Franz Josef that had been removed at the end of the war. The commander of the telegraph company assured the defence ministry that if anyone should wish to relocate the Franz Josef memorial then a suitable spot in a small park near the barracks was available.[91] In this case, although the possibility of re-erecting the Franz Josef memorial had been acknowledged, no attempt was made to combine the dynastic elements of the memorial with the memory of the fallen telegraphists.

Another indication of reinvigorated monarchism in Austria in the 1930s was the presence of members of the dynasty, in that capacity, at commemoration ceremonies of the world war. In 1928 a committee under the patronage of Vaugoin was formed to produce a memorial for the grave of the former infantry general, 'commander of the fourth army and victor of the Battle of Komarow' General Auffenberg-Komarow. By 1932 the funds had been raised, the memorial produced and an unveiling ceremony organised for 10

[89] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2922 (54 – 3/1) Zl. 29045, BMfHW to Brigadekommando 6, undated.
[90] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2922 (54 – 3/1) Zl. 844, Wiener Telegrafenkompagnie Nr 2 to BMfHW, 3 July 1930.
[91] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3884 (45 – 4/4) Zl. 4792, Wiener Telegrafenkompagnie Nr 2 to BMfHW, 25 April 1934.

May at a cemetery in Hietzing, on the outskirts of Vienna. The guest of honour at the ceremony, who laid the first wreath on the grave, was 'General Joseph Ferdinand Habsburg-Lothringen.' [92] Joseph Ferdinand was an Archduke, born in 1872, who had followed a military career typical of a high ranking Habsburg. He commanded troops in battles in the Carpathians, at Wolhynien and at Luck during the war and by its end had risen to the rank of General Inspector of the Air Forces.[93] This was an important development; the guest of honour at this ceremony was again, as during the imperial period, a member of the dynasty.

The presence of members of the dynasty at commemoration ceremonies increased the prestige of events and continued during the 1930s. The Silesian community in Vienna had unveiled a plaque in the *Altlerchner* church in 1926 to honour the wartime sacrifices of the fallen Silesians.[94] Annual commemoration ceremonies followed. In 1934 the ceremony took place in the *Altlerchner* church on 11 November 1934, with the participation of 'his *kaiserliche und königliche Hoheit* (imperial and royal highness) Field Marshal Eugen.' Eugen had been another high ranking Habsburg soldier during the world war, commanding armies in the Balkans and on the Italian front. He had, with papal approval, renounced his titles in 1923 and only returned permanently from Switzerland in 1934.[95] In this case a member of the dynasty was prized as a member of the imperial family in the first instance and his attendance was emphasised in order to show the high profile of the event.

However, the culmination of the reintegration of the dynasty into the commemoration of the war was the 1934 *Heldendenkmal* project. As we have seen, the whole project was deeply rooted in imperial tradition. The dynasty was fore-grounded in the publications surrounding the unveiling ceremony. An image of Franz Josef in 1849 as head of the imperial army, surrounded by other members of his family, was one of the first images in the official

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[92] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs carton 3404, (45 - 4/4) Zl. 10176, Auffenberg-Grabmal Kommittee to BMfHW, 21 April 1932.
[93] Brigitte Hamann (ed.) *Die Habsburger: Ein biographisches Lexikon* (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 1988) p. 194.
[94] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Präs, carton 3882, (45 – 4/4) Zl. 7845, Schleschische Gemeinde in Wien to BMfLV, 17 October 1934.
[95] Hamann (ed.), p. 100.

commemorative publication. It contained various articles dealing with the history of Austria and the war, including one by the director of the state archives, Edmund Glaise von Horstenau:

> And in the tragic summer of 1914, when the aged commander-in-chief called his warriors to arms, the words of Bismarck, spoken all those years ago, were proved: 'Let Emperor Franz Josef merely climb into his saddle and you will see, how the sons of all his peoples will show their allegiance!'[96]

Again, the world war was cast as a popular struggle, fought in the name of Franz Josef. It was not just in the rhetoric surrounding the unveiling of the memorial that the dynasty was conspicuous; imperial and dynastic symbols featured prominently in the inner rooms of the memorial. The decorations on the long sides of the 'halls of honour' were a gigantic wreath made of bronze, facing an 'old imperial double-headed eagle.'[97] The latter, produced by the artists Dimmel and Schmid, was three meters high and made of lime stone from Lindabrunn, Lower Austria.[98] During the unveiling ceremony for the memorial the first wreath was laid by two soldiers of the *Bundesheer* on the monumental double-headed eagle statue.

Members of the imperial dynasty, both living and dead, were a ubiquitous presence during the ceremony. 'Attending from the imperial house were their imperial majesties Field Marshal Archduke Eugen, General Archduke Josef Ferdinand and General of the Cavalry Archduke Franz Salvator, who were greeted with elation.'[99] Franz Salvator had served as the head of the sanitary care services during the war and had been particularly

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[96] Edmund Glaise von Horstenau 'Die alte Armee: Ein Gedenkblatt' in Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales, *Österreichisches Heldendenkmal: Gedenkschrift anlässlich der Weihe des österreichischen Heldendenkmales am 9. September 1934* (Vienna: 1934), p. 22 – 23. Glaise von Horstenau had already made a, more qualified, version of this statement in his account of the collapse of the empire: 'Although the onset of war enthusiasm in Austria-Hungary was not equal to that in Germany, it was sufficient to give a semblance of truth to Bismarck's famous words: 'Only let the Emperor Francis Josef mount into the saddle, and the sons of all the peoples of his empire will gladly follow his leadership." Edmund Glaise von Horstenau *The Collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1930), p.2. The absence of the qualifier 'semblance of truth' is explained by the celebratory nature of the *Heldendenkmal* publication.

[97] General Major Egon von Lauppert, 'Das künstlerische Problem des Heldendenkmales,' in ibid., p. 42.

[98] Prof Wilhelm Frass, 'Die plastischen Werke am österrreichischen Heldendenkmale in Wien,' in ibid., p. 68.

[99] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales, p. 3.

involved in actions to help prisoners of war in Russia.[100] Their presence was acknowledged in the opening speech by the honorary head of the *Heldendenkmal* association:

> In awe I greet the members of that illustrious dynasty, which has given us our rulers for centuries and with which we are eternally linked. In particular I welcome his Imperial Majesty Field Marshal Archduke Eugen, who, following the example of his glorious ancestors, the victors of Aspern and Custozza, led us to victory on the South-Western front. When looking back at the long row of Commanders-in-Chief our thoughts cannot pass over the venerable former ruler Franz Josef. For sixty-eight years he was Austria's first soldier and generations of Austrian soldiers swore an oath of loyalty to him. We may also not forget the martyr figure of our last Commander-in-Chief, former Emperor Karl, with whom we stood together in the field and who was forced to die far from his beloved *Heimat.*[101]

The ceremony continued in a similar vein. General Dankl, a man long associated with monarchist activity, delivered a commemorative speech looking back on the history of the Habsburg empire, in which he singled out several members of the dynasty for particular praise:

> [Maria Theresa] was the consummate Austrian. [...] Today we have the honour and the pleasure to see an eminent army leader, his k.u.k. Highness Field Marshall Archduke Eugen among us. In loyalty and thankfulness we pay homage to him as well as to the late Imperial Majesty Emperor Karl and to his Imperial Majesty Archduke Friedrich, the two foremost commanders.[102]

The speech went on to praise the universal 'idea of emperor,' which had been a unifying force for each of the peoples of the empire. It ended by again praising the martyred heroes 'Archduke Franz Ferdinand as the first and Emperor Karl as the last blameless victim of the war as well as the honoured Emperor Franz Josef.'[103] In the very final element of his speech Dankl linked the memories of the martyred emperors to the 'martyr Chancellor Dollfuss, who was struck down by a band of murderers.'[104] The memory of Dollfuss was given greater gravitas by its association with the legacy of the Habsburg dynasty.

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[100] Hamann (ed.), p. 144
[101] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales, pp.10.
[102] Ibid., p. 17.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.

This link between the Habsburg dynasty and postwar Austria was further strengthened as the ceremony progressed. Under the title 'A historic moment' a description of events continued as follows:

> The *Bundespräsident* Miklas, accompanied by members of the government and the most important generals and officials of the new Austria, entered the 'halls of honour', where the general officers of the old imperial army including Field Marshall Archduke Eugen were waiting. Miklas, the head of state of contemporary Austria, and Archduke Eugen, the splendid representative of an unforgettable, great past, shook hands under Old Austria's double-headed eagle, which stands impressively above the scene.[105]

The war thus became the context in which the legacy of the empire was linked to the new Austrian *Ständestaat*. More specifically, the ceremony aimed to appropriate the 'myth of the emperor' and establish a direct link from to the dynasty to the leaders of the *Ständestaat*, who lacked a democratic mandate or popular support.

The *Heldendenkmal* was promoted in many other publications. For example *Das Posthorn,* a travel magazine in Burgenland, published a special commemorative edition to mark its unveiling. This included an article by the architect who designed the memorial, explaining his aims for the project, including the following claim:

> The *Äusssere Burgtor* was the 'entry port' to the house of our emperor. The heroes of the world war have symbolically taken their place within the house through the warriors' memorial *(Kriegerehrenmal)*. This is a deep, beautiful, almost mythical thought....[106]

Such publications aimed to raise national awareness of the project and also to encourage donations to complete the memorial. Again, the link between the imperial family and the fallen soldiers of the world war was made explicit. A guide to the *Heldendenkmal,* issued after the initial unveiling ceremony, further strengthened this connection, commenting on the choice of location for the memorial:

> The *Äussere Burgtor watches* over the entrance to *Heldenplatz* and to the imperial *Hofburg*. It was built in 1824 in memory of the victorious

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[105] Ibid. p. 21

[106] Rudolf Wondracek, 'Österreichs Heldendenkmal,' *Das Posthorn Burgenland, Österreichisches Heldendenkmal: Das Posthorn, Reisezeitschrift mit offiz. Mitteilungen des Staatlichen Postkraftwagendienstes,* p. 2.

> 'Battle of the Nations' at Leipzig. In combination with the mounted statutes of Austria's greatest military leaders, Prince Eugen of Savoy and Archduke Karl, the historic seat of the dynasty creates a glorious square, the likes of which cannot be found throughout Europe. The idea of producing a memorial for the old army and incorporating a site of memory for the fallen heroes of the world war in this historically important place had always been appealing.[107]

Even the location of the Heldendenkmal was used to reinforce the symbolical links between the imperial army leaders of the past and the sacrifice of the fallen soldiers of the world war.

Under the *Ständestaat* therefore the dynasty once again became prominent in the commemoration of the war. The emperors were again discussed in the language of glory and triumph and the loyalty of the peoples of the monarchy to their rulers was once again emphasised. Yet, as we have seen, this interpretation of the war did not emerge from a vacuum. Some 'Old Austrians' and also Christian Social politicians as well as military and bureaucratic elites had always held the dynasty in high regard and valued their contribution to the war.[108] As these groups grew in importance throughout the 1930s their ideas rose to prominence and by the period of the *Ständestaat* their ideas had become the official view of the experience of war. Initially in the press and later in small-scale commemoration ceremonies they defended the dynasty from attacks by left wing and German nationalist anti-monarchists. Small scale commemoration projects reinterpreted members of the dynasty as victims of the war or linked Habsburgs to the suffering of ordinary Austrian soldiers. Commemoration ceremonies were then enhanced by the attendance of members of the imperial family, and finally the dynasty again became the focus of commemoration of the war.

These monarchist ideas were not shared by the majority of Austrians, who for reasons of principle or pragmatism, saw no further place for the Habsburgs in Austria. Despite this, monarchist ideas were able to prosper in the 1930s for a number of reasons. For some members of the old imperial elite, a connection and loyalty to the dynasty had been central to their identity in the empire and their sincerely held beliefs in the monarchy survived the

[107] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Heldendenkmal 304, 'Zum Führer durch das österreichische Heldendenkmal'.
[108] Waltraud Heindl, 'Bürokratie und Beamte,' in Dachs et al, p. 101.

transition to a republican system. For a larger group of Christian Social and later *Ständestaat* politicians and supporters, the dynasty offered historical legitimacy for a party and state struggling to establish itself between the competing demands of left wing socialism and right wing German nationalism and particularly National Socialism. While the majority of the people in Austria did not share this monarchism, the gradual rehabilitation of the dynasty throughout the 1930s meant that the return of the dynasty to centre stage under the *Ständestaat* was at least tolerated.

Chapter 4 - Victors and Victims, Militarism and Pacifism

Introduction

In 1931 a collection of letters entitled 'A People Protests: Fifty Letters Against War,' was published in Vienna. The editors of the book, which contained details of the cruelties and suffering endured by the contributors during the war, claimed that the purpose of the book was to 'describe the war as it had really been experienced.'[1] The roots of this condemnation of war lay in the violent, right-wing protests against Lewis Milestone's 1930 film of Erich Maria Remarque's novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*. In response to these protests, the Viennese daily newspaper *Das Kleine Blatt* called on its readers to offer their recollections of the world war in support of Remarque's vision and received 1300 responses, fifty of which were published in the collection. The collection was described by its editors as a document of a people protesting and crying out against war. [2]

Yet such public outpourings of pacifism were rare in the First Austrian Republic. The rejection of war and violence, in a state which faced external threats and with internal division frequently spilling over into violence, seemed utopian. The increasing power and presence of paramilitary organisations made calls for peace seem unrealistic. Even before the two civil wars of 1934, political violence and murder were common place.

The problem of the failure of pacifism and the continued power of militarism in interwar Europe after the devastating experience of the world war has exercised historians.[3] A vital factor in the continued prominence of militarism after the catastrophic experience of the First World War were the claims of victory or 'undefeatedness' made by combatant states which, at first sight, appeared to be on the losing side. In the aftermath of defeat it was essential for vanquished states to salvage some pride in the performance of their armed forces in order to preserve military values. In his path-breaking study that utilised psychological approaches to the study of defeated states in

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[1] *Ein Volk klagt an! Fünfzig Briefe über den Krieg* (Vienna/Leipzig: Hess & Co, 1931) p. 5
[2] Ibid p. 6
[3] See for example George L. Mosse, 'Two World Wars and the Myth of War Experience,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 21/ 4 (1986) for a discussion of the failure of pacifism in interwar Western Europe; and Antoine Prost, 'The Impact of War on French and German Political Cultures,' *The Historical Journal,* 37/1 (1994) for a critique of these ideas.

three crucial conflicts, Wolfgang Schievelbusch has documented the universal urge of the defeated to undermine the legitimacy of their defeat.[4] Victories were ascribed to the material superiority and illegitimate tactics of the enemy while defeat was interpreted as 'a pure, unsullied antithesis of false triumph.'[5] The tragedy of the world war also meant that victor states were unwilling to celebrate their military victory in the aftermath of the conflict, further illustrating the ambiguity of defeat and victory in the representation of war.[6]

Myths of illegitimate victory reflected the particular wartime and postwar circumstances of a state. For example, the 'stab in the back myth' (*Dolchstosslegende*), the idea that Germany's defeat in the world war originated on the home front rather than with the military, has been well documented.[7] Once the stain of guilt for defeat had been removed from the military, other groups, such as the Social Democrat leaders of the new Weimar Republic and the Jews of Germany were held accountable for defeat by right-wing groups.[8] While the 'stab in the back myth' reassigned the blame for defeat, battle myths were deliberately cultivated in order to offer moments of glory to celebrate. For example, the image of German youth storming to their deaths over the top of a trench to a rousing rendition of *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* at the Battle of Langemarck (a strategically insignificant event) was vital in the 'formation of the image and self-image of a whole generation'.[9] This myth of youth was replaced by a different image

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[4] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning and Recovery* (London: Granta Books, 2003), p. 17

[5] Ibid., pp. 16 - 17

[6] For example, Adrian Gregory discusses the debates in Britain surrounding the appropriateness of dancing and celebrating on Armistice Day in the early 1920s. Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919 - 1946* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), pp. 71 - 75

[7] The prominence of the 'stab in the back' legend is a standard feature of accounts of German history and histories of the Weimar Republic. See for example Mary Fulbrook, *Germany 1918 – 1900* (London: Fontana Press, 1991), pp. 31 – 32; Eberhard Kolb, *The Weimar Republic* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 35; V. R. Berghahn, *Modern Germany: Society, Economy and Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 59.

[8] Schivelbusch, pp. 205 – 208. For further discussion of the *Dolchstosslegende* in Germany see Wilhelm Diest 'The Military Collapse of the German Empire: The reality behind the stab-in-the-back myth,' *War in History* 3/2 (1996) pp. 186 – 207. Further Joachim Petzold, *Die Dolchstosslegende: Eine Geschichtsfälschung im Dienste des deutschen Imperialismus und Militarismus* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1963) and more recently, Boris Barth, *Dolchstosslegenden und politische Desintegration: Das Trauma der deutschen Niederlage im Ersten Weltkrieg, 1914-1933* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2003).

[9] Bernd Hüppauf, 'Langemarck, Verdun and the Myth of a New Man in Germany after the First World War' *War and Society* 2/6 (1988), p. 71. Sabine Behrenbeck points out that Hitler, who

under the National Socialist regime which centred on the battle of Verdun and the birth of a new breed of fighter, 'amoral, cool, functional, experienced, hardened men.'[10] What the myths of Langemarck and Verdun had in common was that a military disaster during which one regiment after the other was massacred as cannon fodder was reinterpreted in a positive light in the postwar period.[11]

These positive narratives of war emerged despite Germany's unambiguous position on the losing side of the conflict. In some of the successor states of the Habsburg Empire the situation was more complex. As noted previously, Czechoslovakia and Poland positioned themselves on the side of the victors in the postwar period. In these new states it was the military role of a small minority of combatants who had fought on the victorious side that became the subject of postwar attention. From the start of the war attempts were made to form a fighting force from among the Czech prisoners of war in Russian camps, but early attempts met with little success.[12] As the war progressed, more Czechs deserted and were captured. A minority of these men joined the 'Czech Legions' and fought against their former comrades in the imperial army.[13] Czechs were also recruited from captivity in Italy.[14] The Battle of Zborow was the key military engagement of the Czech Legions. The Czech regiments of the 19th Infantry Division were engaged in combat against the Czech Legions fighting for Russia. As the imperial Czech soldiers became aware that they were fighting fellow Czechs more than three thousand crossed the lines to the Russian side. Many Czech soldiers stayed loyal to the imperial army so during the battle Czechs were fighting and killing their fellow countrymen.[15]

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discussed his role in the battle in *Mein Kampf* failed to mention either the place Langemarck or the singing of the *Deutschlandlied* in his contemporary letters: Sabine Behrenbeck, *Der Kult um die toten Helden: Nationalsozialistische Mythen, Riten und Symbole* (Cologne: SH-Verlag, 1996), p. 87

[10] Hüppauf, p. 84

[11] Behrenbeck, p. 107

[12] Rauchensteiner (1993), p. 482.

[13] Other Czechs remained loyal to the Emperor while still more were apolitical and preferred to remain in captivity than return to the front. See Josef Kalvoda 'Czech and Slovak prisoners of war in Russia during the war and revolution' in Samuel R. Williamson and Peter Pastor (eds.) *Essays on World War I: Origins and Prisoners of War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 217.

[14] Rowan A. Williams 'The Czech Legion in Italy during World War I' in ibid., p. 200.

[15] Rauchensteiner (1993), p. 482.

Nancy Wingfield has shown how the activities of the Czech Legions were mythologized in the postwar period. When commemorating the activities of prisoners of war 'it was not the emasculating, humiliating experience of captivity that was remembered, but rather the heroic behaviour of those who left the camps to battle the Habsburg army.'[16] The anniversary of the Battle of Zborow on 2 July was celebrated annually as 'Army Day,' and it was the activities of the small minority of legionnaires, rather than the overwhelming majority of the Czech soldiers (and the German, Hungarian or Ruthenian minorities within the Czechoslovak state) who fought loyally for the Habsburg Empire, that were the focus of this day. Its significance was highlighted by the decision to bury the Czechoslovak Unknown Soldier on the fifth anniversary of the Battle of Zborow.[17] The military defeat of the great majority of the Habsburg fighters who were absorbed into the new state of Czechoslovakia was eclipsed by the actions of the relatively small number of legionnaires, allowing a heroic narrative of the world war to be maintained.

The situation was more complex again in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Although Serbia had fought on the Allied side during the war, Croats and Slovenes had fought for the Habsburg armies. To complicate the situation further, by 1918 a small minority of Croat and Slovene soldiers had deserted and joined the fighting on the Allied side and South Slav ex-Austrian prisoners of war who had been transferred from the Russian to the Balkan battlefields were also fighting alongside the Allies.[18] The 'volunteers recruited among the prisoners of war in Russia were not a decisive factor on the battlefield' but they did play a crucial 'symbolic' role.'[19] Again the defeat of the majority was eclipsed by the symbolic successes of a small minority of combatants. A similar process accompanied the Italian volunteers from the Trentino who entered the war in May 1915 and fought against the Habsburg Empire. Although the experience of the vast majority of soldiers and civilians from the Trentino during the world war was one of tragedy and suffering, the

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[16] Wingfield, p. 171.
[17] See for example, ibid. p. 183 and pp. 189 - 190 for an account of the reburial of the Unknown Soldier.
[18] Ivo J. Lederer, *Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study in Frontiermaking* (London: Yale University Press, 1963), pp. 31 – 32.
[19] Ivo Banac, 'South Slav prisoners of war in revolutionary Russia,' in Williamson and Pastor (eds.), p. 120

history of the volunteers was recast as one of 'epic tales of heroism, heroic sacrifice and national liberation.'[20]

We have seen that the ambiguity of victory in interwar Europe allowed a militaristic, heroic narrative of the experience of war to survive the horrors of the conflict. While Austria could not claim to be on the side of the victors and lacked glorious military victories to celebrate, militaristic, heroic narratives of the world war were also prevalent in postwar Austria.

These narratives developed and were maintained despite the disappointing performances of the Habsburg armed forces during the world war. In the early stages of the conflict, the failure to 'slap Serbia' was 'a deep wound to Austrian pride.' Early Habsburg campaigns against Russia also failed to make significant progress and the Galician front was only stabilised with German help. The early 'twin disasters' of the Serbian and Galician campaigns caused massive material and human losses and significantly damaged the potential of the whole Habsburg armed forces. [21] Despite some victories in 1915 Austria-Hungary was incapable of scoring significant successes alone against Russia and Serbia and was pushed into the position of 'junior partner' in the alliance with Germany.[22] After the Italian declaration of war, Austria began its struggle with 'the hereditary enemy', with the first four battles of the Isonzo in 1915.[23] Massive losses continued throughout the year. In 1916 the battles of the Isonzo continued at great human cost to both the Italian and Habsburg armed forces without significant breakthroughs for either side. In summer 1916 Austria-Hungary suffered a further heavy defeat, this time at the hands of the forces led by Russian General Brusilov.[24] In particular the 'frightful casualty level' (more than fifty per cent in some units) was a disaster and damaged the military potential of Austria-Hungary.[25] Along with military defeats the Habsburg troops endured the effects of supply shortages and many hundreds of thousands also died from diseases. The

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[20] Nils Arne Sorensen, 'Zwischen regionaler und nationaler Erinnerung. Erster Weltkrieg und Erinnerungskultur im Trentino der Zwischenkriegszeit,' in Kuprian and Überegger, pp. 398 – 399.
[21] Gerard J. DeGroot, *The First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 55 – 57.
[22] Ibid. pg, 146
[23] Ibid. pp. 152 - 172
[24] Ibid. p. 209
[25] Graydon Tunstall 'Austria-Hungary and the Brusilov Offensive of 1916' *The Historian* 1/70 (2008), p. 40.

Habsburg armies did score some significant victories such as the Twelfth Battle of the Isonzo (Caporetto) which was an important short term boost to morale and supplies but failed to deliver significant long term advantage.[26] There was a 'startling' breakdown in the military establishment towards the end of the war that manifested itself in mutinies, refusals to engage in combat and mass desertions from June 1918 onwards.[27] In summary, the military performance of the Habsburg armed forces was disappointing, with many high profile defeats, the role of 'junior partner' in the alliance and the failure to score significant victories without German aid culminating in the eventual collapse of the armed forces.

Yet despite these shortcomings the war was glorified and mythologised in Austria, as it was in other defeated states. After outlining the fate of pacifism, we will see that 'victories,' both general and specific, were commemorated and celebrated in Austria. Postwar 'victories', both internal and external, were then incorporated into this narrative of heroism and glory.

Pacifism

Christa Hämmerle has argued that, because of the privileging of the official interpretation of events, Austrian military history has been dominated by a uniform narrative and a 'heroising and apologetic orientation.'[28] Although Hämmerle herself admits that this suggestion is polemic, before discussing militarist narratives of the world war in Austria it is important to provide a counterpoint to these by examining the relationship between the commemoration of war and pacifism.

The term pacifism dates from the early twentieth century and has complex, multiple meanings.[29] For the purpose of this discussion, pacifism will be taken to be a 'set of theories or beliefs which have a common feature –

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[26] See Mark Cornwall, *The Undermining of Austria-Hungary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 72 – 110.
[27] Ibid., pp. 257 – 443.
[28] Christa Hämmerle "'Es ist immer der Mann, der den Kampf entscheidet, und nicht die Waffe...' Die Männlichkeit des k.u.k. Gebirgskriegers in der soldatischen Erinnerungskultur,' in Hermann J.W, Kuprian and Oswald Überegger (eds.), *Der Erste Weltkrieg im Alpenraum: Erfahrung, Deutung, Erinnerung - La Grande Guerra nell'arco alpino: Esperienze e memoria* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag, 2006), p. 35.
[29] Jenny Teichman, *Pacifism and the Just War: A Study in Applied Philosophy* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), p. 1.

opposition to war.'[30] Before the world war two distinct peace movements, a largely male, liberal bourgeois movement and a socialist, working class peace movement, coexisted in the Habsburg Empire. Although there was no cooperation between the two movements they shared many principles, including the rejection of the 'absolute pacifist' position and the acceptance of the legitimacy of defensive war and conscription.[31] At the outbreak of war neither of these movements mounted any significant resistance. These peace movements failed to mount a significant challenge to the universalised image of the man as warrior which grew up in the years before the start of the conflict.[32]

During the war itself censorship and restrictions on the freedom of the press made organised pacifist movements impossible. However, by the end of the conflict war weariness was widespread among the peoples of Europe. One of the obvious responses to the devastating experience of the world war after the conflict was a rejection of war itself. In Britain the idea of the world war as a 'war to end all wars' was widespread by the 1920s/30s.[33] Antoine Prost has emphasised the universality of pacifism among veterans and in wider society in France.[34] Yet pacifism failed to establish itself to the same extent in interwar central Europe.[35] George Mosse grappled with the problem in an article on the cultural impact of the two world wars in, arguing that 'the only Europeans who seemed to accept the warning, 'Never Again War' without reservation were some isolated intellectuals or members of traditionally pacifist religious movements.'[36] Mosse concluded that the

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[30] Ibid., p.2.
[31] Solomon Wank, 'The Austrian Peace Movement and the Habsburg Ruling Elite, 1906 – 1914,' in Charles Chatfield and Peter van den Dungen (eds.), *Peace Movements and Political Cultures* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988), pp. 40 - 46.
[32] Ernst Hanisch (2005), p. 21.
[33] By the late 1920s in Britain peace was 'a lesson to be learnt from suffering and disillusionment.' Gregory, p. 36.
[34] Antoine Prost (1994), p. 510
[35] For example, in Germany the Peace Cartel counted 100,000 members at its peak but rejected conscientious objection and accepted the right to national self defence. The *Bund der Kriegsdienstgegner,* an organisation the supported conscientious objection and rejected all war only counted three thousand members at its peak. See Guido Grünewald, 'War resisters in Weimar Germany' in Peter Brock and Thomas P. Socknat (eds.), *Challenge to Mars: Essays on Pacifism from 1918 to 1945* (London: University of Toronto Press, 1999), pp. 69, 71 - 74.
[36] George L. Mosse (1986), p. 506.

brutalising effects of the wars made strong pacifist movements impossible.[37] As we shall see, some striking examples of pacifist art and literature as well as Social Democrat pacifist rhetoric were present in interwar Austria. Yet external threat and internal division, coupled with the brutalising experience of war made pacifism a minority force.

Albin Egger-Lienz (1868 - 1926) was one of the few prominent Austrian artists of the interwar period who engaged explicitly with political themes and he produced several striking anti-war images.[38] His experiences as a war painter prompted the painting *Finale*.

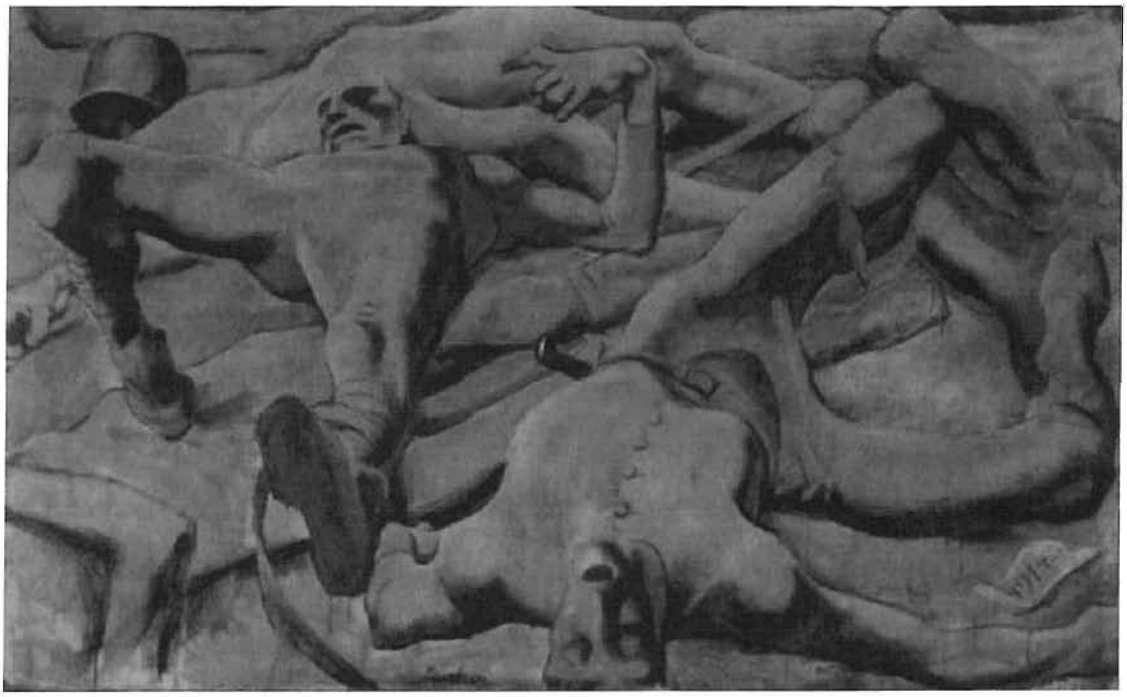

Figure 4.1 Albin Egger-Lienz *Finale* (1918), Leopold Museum, Vienna.
Soldiers, contorted with pain and in the throes of death were depicted with the dates of the world war visible in the bottom right hand corner. The bodies of fallen soldiers blended with the mud of the battlefield. Suffering and the degradation of human life were the themes of this work.

[37] Ibid., pp. 504 - 508
[38] Manfred Wagner, 'Zum kulturpolitischen Kontext der Zeit zwischen 1918 und 1938,' in *Zwischen den Kriegen: Österreichische Künstler 1918 - 1938* Exhibition Catalogue (Vienna: Leopold Museum, 2007), p. 18

Figure 4.2 Albin Egger-Lienz *Den Namenlosen* (1925), Heeresgeschichtles Museum, Vienna.

Egger-Lienz echoed the themes of this painting in a later work, *Den Namenlosen* (To the nameless), in which the soldiers of the world war trudge doggedly through muddy battlefields, representing the sprouting seeds of hate caused by war. *Den Namenlosen* was part of a series of four works painted for a church war memorial project in Lienz, East Tyrol, which was unveiled before a crowd of ten thousand in September 1925.[39] Egger-Lienz's international stature and the artistic merit of the work undoubtedly contributed to the great public interest in the project.

Lienz was not alone in producing striking condemnations of war. The prominent Austrian biographer and author Stefan Zweig was a committed opponent of war, a position reflected in much of his work. His 1941 autobiography, written in exile in the shadow of the Second World War, was devoted to a condemnation of both conflicts. Zweig lamented the experience of the world war, during which 'the most peaceable good-natured [people] were intoxicated with the smell of blood.'[40] Although he did not fight, he visited the front as an employee of the War Archives and recalled his shock at the poorly trained doctors and priests desperately administering to the men

[39] Great controversy surrounded the memorial but this was prompted by the depiction of Christ in the fourth image rather than the striking depiction of war illustrated above. Martin Kofler, *Das Bezirkskriegerdenkmal bei St Andrä in Lienz/Osttirol* (Unpublished documentation of the Tiroler Landesarchiv).

[40] Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), pp. 235 - 6.

dying in cattle trucks. Zweig's description of war focused on the brutality of conflict and the futility of human losses. His vision of war was encapsulated by the words of an aged priest, tending to the dying during the First World War, quoted by Zweig in his autobiography:

> It was from him that I heard the words that I was never to forget, spoken in a hard, angry voice: 'I am sixty-seven years old and I have seen much. But I would never have believed such a crime on the part of humanity possible.'[41]

Condemnation of war also came as from cultural figures who had engaged directly in combat. Egon Erwin Kisch was a journalist and communist who wrote diaries recording his experiences throughout the war, published in 1922 under the title 'Write that down, Kisch.'[42] Kisch's experiences during the war prompted his transformation into a committed opponent of war (and a communist) and this can be traced in his diaries.[43] The public presence of Kisch's writings was raised by the use of the extracts from his diaries in the left-wing press. In *Der freie Soldat* extracts from Kisch's diaries were regularly contrasted with extracts from the official history of the war to represent the 'truth' of events.

Although these cultural expressions of pacifism offered striking and sometimes moving condemnations of war and were undoubtedly important, they did not offer a programme or basis for a pacifist movement. The Social Democrat Party, which was ideologically sympathetic to pacifist ideas, could have been the focus of a mass, anti-war movement. Some pacifist agitation did come from Social Democrats, particularly in the left-wing press where the military hierarchy and the militarism of the world war were denounced and mocked. An article from the *Der freie Soldat* in 1922 is indicative of such Social Democrat rhetoric:

> In a battle for their capitalist interests the ruling classes of the different nations forced the workers into the yoke of militarism. [...] By promoting some men to sergeants, they denigrated the rest to

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[41] Ibid., p. 250
[42] Egon Erwin Kisch *'Schreib das auf, Kisch!' Das Kriegstagebuch von Egon Erwin Kisch* (Berlin: Reiss, 1930).
[43] Egon Erwin Kisch *Nichts ist erregender als die Wahrheit: Reportagen aus vier Jahrzehnten* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 1979), p. 87.

> miserable cannon fodder and forced them, for four long years, to destroy the world which they had built up with their own hard work.[44]

War was interpreted as an imposition on the working people by the forces of capitalism. Alongside explicit criticism, satire was used to undermine militarism and the legacy of the Habsburg army. For example, 'The Brave General: A Fairy Tale for Schools' mocked the old Habsburg military hierarchy. The story ended with a description of 'the brave general' in wartime:

> The imperfection of the world meant that war does not stand still and wait for communications and orders to reach their goal. Such problems meant that the brave general, who had always set such a good example throughout his life, lost the war. But his soldier's heart did not break. As he rode over the battlefield and saw the millions of bodies, he said: "They died as brave heroes." And who do they have to thank for such fame, children? None other than the brave general. Without him the men would have died a quiet, inglorious and cowardly death of typhus or some other terrible disease years later. And the brave general? If he hasn't died, then he is still alive today and is writing the rich memoirs of his eventful life.[45]

Again, the war was portrayed as an event imposed by the old elites, this time military, on the working people.[46] This kind of satire has clear links with one of the great cultural figures of late Habsburg empire and postwar Austria, Karl Kraus. One of Kraus's most important works *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit* was a tragedy based on the experiences of Austria in wartime. The play, 'a masterpiece of anti-war satire' was written and rewritten between 1915 and 1922.[47] The long gestation of the play meant that developments in Kraus' outlook were reflected in this work; 'a play begun in 1915 by a 'loyal' satirist was completed by a radical republican with strong socialist sympathies.'[48] The play was a 'documentary drama' which blended documentary and imaginative elements to 'find a literary form commensurate with the magnitude

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[44] 'Der Feiertag der Arbeit,' *Der freie Soldat,* 1 May 1922.
[45] Franz Blei, 'Der tapfere General: Ein Märchen für Schulen,' *Der freie Soldat,* July 1924.
[46] Both of these interpretations of war ignore Social Democrat initial support for the conflict. According to Zweig, it was 'the Social Democrats, who but a month before had branded militarism as the greatest crime, clamoured perhaps louder than all the others so as not to be classed as 'people without a fatherland.'': Zweig, p. 235
[47] Edward Timms, *Karl Kraus, Apocalyptic Satirist: Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna* (London: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 371.
[48] Ibid.

and horror of events.'[49] Much of the power of Kraus' work derived from the principle of 'gruesome contrast,' either between or within scenes.[50] By satirising the conflict *Die letzten Tagen der Menschheit* illustrated both the absurdity and the tragedy of war.

Images in left wing periodicals also condemned war. The answer to the question 'What was it for?' posed in the cartoon is answered in the negative by the pile of corpses that form the background to the image.

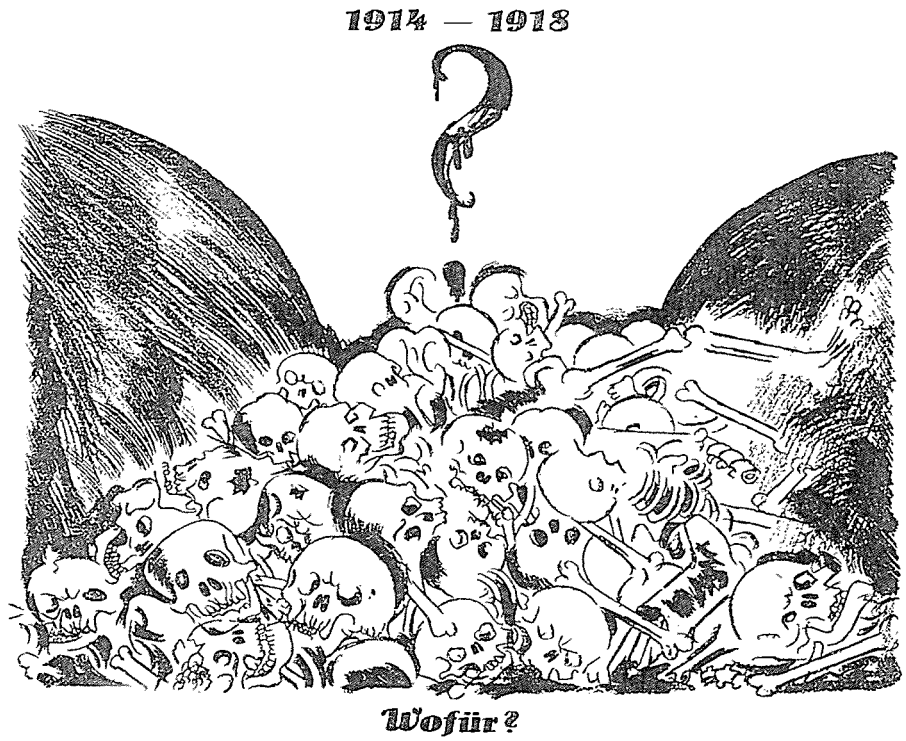

Figure 4.3, *Der freie Soldat,* 1 October 1929.

On a personal level it is clear that many Social Democrats had an extremely negative view of their wartime experiences. The collection of memoirs, autobiographies and letters written by Social Democrat functionaries and collected by Stefan Riesenfellner is evidence of an anti-heroic narrative of war. The collection includes extracts from the diary of a man who rejected war entirely and other accounts which dwelt on the futility and waste of the conflict.[51]

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[49] Ibid., pp. 374 – 5.
[50] Ibid., p. 378.
[51] See Pierre Ramus' and Hermann Paul's diary extracts in Stefan Riesenfellner (hg.), *Zeitgeschichten: Autobiographien zur Alltags- und Sozialgeschichte Österreichs, 1914 – 1938* (Graz: Leykam , 1992), pp. 12 – 18, 19 – 28.

However, the anti-war sentiment espoused by the Social Democrats of the First Republic was marked by some deep contradictions. The *Wofür* image is taken from *Der freie Soldat,* the newspaper of the Social Democrat *Militärverband*, which represented the interests of left wing soldiers within the Austrian *Bundesheer.* Although this group rejected many of the traditions and practices of the old army, it did not seek to reduce the power of the military or to oppose war but rather to defend the Social Democrat position within the military.[52] Their opposition was to the imperial military rather than the military *per se*.

The Social Democrats did not only have a representative organisation within the army. The party also had a large and well organised paramilitary arm, the *Schutzbund.*[53] The existence of this organisation casts doubt on the sincerity of much of the Social Democrat anti-war and pacifist rhetoric.[54] Further, the presence of uniformed delegations of the *Schutzbund* at the unveiling ceremonies of outwardly pacifist war memorials undermined the anti-war message of these constructions. The unveiling of the *Trauernde Mutter* memorial, funded by the Social Democrat municipal assembly and built by the sculptor Anton Hanak, is a good example of this. Although the memorial (discussed in greater detail in chapter two) was in the form of a mourning woman and contained the inscription 'Never Again War,' the unveiling ceremony was attended by the uniformed *Schutzbund.*[55] An editorial in the *Arbeiter Zeitung* offered the following explanation for the presence of the *Schutzbund* at the unveiling of an outwardly pacifist memorial:

> Above all we are armed with the aim of resisting another war. We want to help protect the working people in the town and country from this biggest of all disasters. In all countries reactionary parties and

[52] The new Austrian *Bundesheer* was a 'politically orientated' military force and many of its founding principles were governed by a Social Democrat fear of reactionary former imperial officers, so institutions such as soldiers representatives were introduced. See Ludwig Jedlicka, *Ein Heer im Schatten der Parteien: Die militärpolitische Lage Österreichs, 1918 - 1938* (Graz: Böhlau, 1955), pp. 22 - 31.

[53] The formation of the *Schutzbund* was prompted in 1923 by Social Democrat concerns about the activities of the *Heimwehr.* Edmonson, p. 33.

[54] Although the *Schutzbund* was set up response to the increasing presence of paramilitary organisations on the right it remained a disciplined and powerful military organisation. For a detailed account of the development of the *Schutzbund* based partly on oral history interviews but marred by the clear communist sympathies of the author see Ilona Duczynska, *Workers' in Arms: The Austrian Schutzbund and the Civil War of 1934* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978).

[55] 'Die Totenfeier des Republikanischen Schutzbundes' *Arbeiterzeitung,* 1 November 1925.

> movements are pushing for new wars. [...] We gather at the graves of our comrades, because we are determined to fight reaction and in doing this, to preserve peace.[56]

The threat of, albeit defensive, violence contained in this explanation and the presence of the armed *Schutzbund* delegation at the unveiling ceremony undermined the powerfully pacifist message of the memorial.

Similar contradictions can be seen at the unveiling ceremonies of other outwardly pacifist memorials. In Bischofshofen, near Salzburg, a memorial dedicated to the ninety fallen soldiers of the community was inaugurated on 7 June 1931. The word *Frieden* (peace) featured prominently on the memorial, yet the unveiling ceremony was attended by a delegation of the *Bundesheer*, as well as delegations of veterans' and comradeship organisations that marched past the memorial in formation.[57] Again, the juxtaposition of a pacifist construction with an unveiling ceremony in which the military featured prominently undermined the pacifist message of the memorial.

Despite their infrequency, pacifist comments on war produced extreme reactions. The expression 'Never Again War' (in contrast to the more neutral 'peace') was regarded by many non-Social Democrats as a party political statement. A journalist in the Christian Social newspaper *Reichspost* suggested that engraving 'Never Again War' on the Central Cemetery memorial was as fitting as 'a fist in the eye.'[58] The use of this phrase was condemned as political instrumentalisation of the dead as well as a devaluation of their sacrifice. Another example of the contentiousness of the expression 'Never Again War' comes from an All Souls' Day commemoration ceremony in Eisenstadt in 1925. A speech by the mayor at the military commemoration ceremony ended with the words 'Never Again War.' As a response to this, the army commander in Graz refused to invite the mayor to any further commemoration ceremonies for the fallen because of his use of

[56] 'Trauerkundgebung für die Opfer des Weltkrieges' *Arbeiterzeitung*, 3 November 1925.
[57] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3147 (54 – 3/1) Zl. 56513, Kriegerdenkmal Kommittee Bischofshofen, 7 June 1931.
[58] Erich Dolezal 'Das neue Kriegerdenkmal auf dem Zentralfriedhof: Die Enthülllungsfeier,' *Reichspost* (1. November 1925)

this 'party device' and his resultant rejection of tradition and love of the Fatherland.[59]

Militarist groups were similarly outraged by the discovery of a note reading 'Down with the heroes' swindle, onwards to the socialist international' in a donation box in a memorial chapel in Carinthia. *Der Wehrbund* argued that:

> If the soldiers, whose sense of duty and bravery also protected the homes and jobs of the workers, could return to life, they would turn away from the 'socialist international', which uses the words 'heroes' swindle' to describe their heroes' death for people and Heimat, with revulsion and disgust.[60]

The angry reaction to the idea that soldiers had not died 'a hero's' death,' is further evidence that rejecting the narrative of heroism was understood as devaluing the sacrifices of soldiers in the world war. Anything but a traditional interpretation of the deaths of soldiers as 'heroic' provoked an angry response from the Republican and former imperial military hierarchy.

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, Erich Maria Remarque's novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* became a particular flashpoint in the conflict over militarism. The novel had a great impact on public perceptions of the world war and provoked massive debate. In 1929 the novel was banned from all military libraries by the Defence Minister Carl Vaugoin at the instigation of the commander of the 5th Brigade in Graz. He described the book as a 'vituperative attack on war' which 'only describes the underbelly of war in an exaggerated manner, while devoting no words to its uplifting and idealistic sides.'[61] The left wing *Militärverband* organisation was affronted by this move. They saw the banning of the book as a denial of the 'true' experiences of the troops in the trenches:

> We can understand why a brigade commander and a defence minister do not like the book: Remarque describes the experiences at the front; he was not at military headquarters, and so he gained a different impression from some others who were much further away from the bullets. We, who were at the front, can testify that no one has

[59] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs carton (75 – 3/1) Zl. 53973 Report, Ortskommando Graz to BMfHW, 21 November 1925.
[60] 'Heldenehrung-Sozialismus,' *Der Wehrbund* (February 1932).
[61] Letter Brigadekommando der 5. Brigade to BMfHW, 18 August 1929, reproduced in *Der freie Soldat,* 15 September 1929.

> described the hell of the trenches so precisely, so realistically, so masterfully as Remarque. The reason why he overlooked the 'light side' of war, may well be because the 'light side' was only visible to those who fought for their Fatherland with quill pens not flame throwers, with morale reports not gas grenades and surrounded by paper not by death.[62]

The controversy was predicated on the belief that it was possible to represent the 'truth' of the experience of war and further that 'All Quiet on the Western Front' was more than a novel but rather a successful or unsuccessful attempt to represent this 'truth.'[63] The debate about the novel (and film) became a wider debate about the essence of war. Undoubtedly, the extreme terms in which the debate was carried out can be partly explained by the popularity and wide influence that the book had. By the mid 1930s over a million copies had been sold. It has been convincingly argued that this and other 'left-wing front novels' had a greater impact on the image of war than organised pacifist movements in Europe.[64]

In January 1931 screenings of 'All Quiet on the Western Front' in Austria were interrupted by violent National Socialist demonstrations.[65] Following these clashes, the film was banned first in Lower Austria and then in the rest of the state, officially for reasons of public order.[66] The discussion surrounding the banning of the film focused on the perceived 'capitulation' of the government before a 'small minority' of National Socialists.[67] Yet it was not only National Socialists who supported the decision to ban the film. An article in *Der Wehrbund* against the film challenged Remarque's war service and hence his ability to offer authentic comment on the war by describing him

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[62] 'Vaugoin und Remarque,' *Der freie Soldat,* 15 September 1929.
[63] Modris Eksteins argues that Remarque was 'more interested in explaining away the emotional imbalance of a generation than in any kind of comprehensive or even accurate account of the experience and feelings of men in the trenches.' Eksteins 'All Quiet on the Western Front' p. 349.
[64] Thomas Kühne *Kameradschaft: Die Soldaten des nationalsozialistischen Krieges und das 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 2006), p. 41.
[65] National Socialist attacks on the book and film in Germany were just the start of their much larger attacks on pacifist representations of war after 1933. Behrenbeck, p. 222.
[66] See 'Bürgermeister seitz lehnt ein Verbot des Films ab!,' *Das kleine Blatt* , 9 January 1931; 'Vor dem Hakenkreuzgesindel kapituliert!,' *Das kleine Blatt,* 9 January 1931.
[67] See for example 'Ohnmacht der Staatsgewalt! Der Remarque-Film in ganz Österreich verboten, weil die Polizei mit ein paar hundert Burschen nicht fertig wird!,' *Das kleine Blatt,* 10 January 1931. For a more positive interpretation of government action see 'Sieg der Vernunft im Filmkrieg,' *Reichspost,* 9 January 1931.

as a 'forty-seven day hero'.[68] Claiming to speak for all right thinking soldiers, the author rejected Remarque's interpretation of war for two reasons: firstly, Remarque's lack of service meant that he was not in the position to pass judgement on the war and secondly, his work was of little artistic merit and contained damaging tendencies.[69] The future Chancellor of the *Ständestaat* Kurt von Schuschnigg also argued that film was detrimental to the memory of the war dead.[70]

The debate on 'All Quiet on the Western Front' is revealing for several reasons. Firstly it is illustrative of the ability of statements about the nature of war to provoke extreme, even violent responses. Secondly, the tendency towards polarisation in Austrian politics is revealed. The perceived pacifism of the book led to its promoting by Social Democrats and its rejection by other parties as well as the extreme right-wing. Finally, the whole debate centred on the idea that it was possible to produce an 'authentic' interpretation of war. It was, according to those involved, the success or the failure of the book to do this which made it particularly significant.

Interestingly the private recollections of former officers revealed the 'underbelly' of war as well as discussing more positive, uplifting moments. The diaries of Constantin Schneider, a professional soldier who served on the Russian and Italian fronts, are illustrative of this. Schneider described the fears of his comrades, who were oppressed by concerns about their families and described incidents when members of his regiment were killed in 'friendly fire.'[71] Schneider's account does not offer a clear cut, heroic narrative of the war experience. Although the primary concern of this thesis is the public remembrance and commemoration of war, it is worth noting that the division between those who offered a pacifist view of conflict, based on futility and suffering, and those who viewed war as an essentially positive experience, does not seem to have been as great in the memories of combatants as they appeared to be in the public commemoration and discussion of the world war.

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[68] Actually, little is known about the details of Remarque's wartime service. Eksteins p. 348; 'Warum wir Soldaten Remarque ablehnen müssen,' *Der Wehrbund,* January 1931.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Hanish (2005), p. 62.
[71] See for example, Constantin Schneider, *Die Kriegserinnerungen 1914 - 1919:(ed. Oskar Döhle)* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2003), p. 22 and p. 52.

Cultural examples of pacifism were undoubtedly important in interwar Austria. However, these striking condemnations of war could not offer a programme for a pacifist movement and seemed increasingly utopian in the unstable, violent conditions of interwar Austria. Social Democrats were drawn into the internal paramilitary conflict which blighted Austrian society and this undermined their potential to offer a coherent pacifist programme. As we shall see, the rejection of war was eclipsed by right-wing success at promoting a heroic, militarist interpretation of the conflict during the First Republic.

'Undefeated on the Field of Honour'

A discourse of heroism dominated the discussion and commemoration of the war in the First Republic. Former officers and military elites continued to espouse militarist values and defend the prowess of the old army. They dominated archives and developed military collections with the intention of 'rehabilitating their profession by heroising' the achievements of the war.[72] By publicly discussing, describing and commemorating 'victories' these ideas were brought into the wider public sphere and by 1934 the idea that the Habsburg armies remained 'undefeated in the field' had been adopted as the standard, official description of the war.

Even in the immediate postwar years, several high ranking soldiers of the old army refused to accept the defeat of Habsburg military forces. Alfred Krauss, a former battlefield commander whose armies achieved major victories on the Italian front, was one former soldier who held such views.[73] Krauss, 'perhaps the finest tactician in the whole Habsburg Army,'[74] was partly ostracised from the mainstream of former Habsburg officers (despite his relatively impressive service record) because of his extreme nationalist views.[75] As early as 1920, Krauss published an article containing the following claims in a German Nationalist publication:

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[72] Melichar, p. 52.
[73] Romsics, p. 208.
[74] John R. Schindler, *Isonzo: The Forgotten Sacrifice of the Great War* (London: Praeger, 2001), p. 246
[75] Istvan Deak, *Beyond Nationalism: a social and political history of the Habsburg officer corps, 1848 - 1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 218

> Austria-Hungary collapsed during the World War. But this Great Power did not collapse because of the power of its enemies or as a consequence of the victories of the Entente. Because the Entente armies, despite their material superiority, were not the victors in this violent battle of humanity. The true, the only victors were the tremendous German people. We are a people who are peaceful and eager to work by nature, a people of thinkers and scholars who are guided by the highest morality and have only been temporarily poisoned by foreign influences.[76]

While Krauss does not explain precisely *how* the German people were the true victors of the war, his claims are an early example of an Austrian 'stab in the back' myth clearly influenced by his German nationalist sympathies. Similar sentiments were voiced in the first postwar issue of the magazine of the Alpine Association, which were linked to revanchist rhetoric against Italy.[77] The idea of illegitimate military defeat was furthered and expanded in militaristic publications. A key example of this was the series entitled *Im Felde unbesiegt* (Undefeated in the Field) in which the legitimate defeat of the Central Powers was challenged. The 1923 volume was dedicated to Austria. In the book former officers detailed the heroic deeds of their regiments during the war. It was edited by former General Major Hugo Kerchnawe and was greeted enthusiastically by the right wing, militarist press:

> We must thank the editor of the volume as well as the publisher for bringing this volume to the market in spite of all economic difficulties. [...] Everywhere where there were victories, German Austrians stood in the front lines. They shed more blood than any other nation of the old Empire.[78]

This theme was continued in the introduction of the book. According to Kerchnawe the Habsburg armed forces were 'led by overwhelming German officers, trained in a German ethos and filled with a German soldierly spirit.'[79] Once these German credentials had been established, he began to outline the heroic deeds of an army which was equal to all other forces in 'loyalty to

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[76] Alfred Krauss, 'Das Selbstbestimmungsrecht Deutschösterreichs,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* August 1920.
[77] Ralph Rotte 'Politische Ideologies und alpinistische Ideale: Die Wahrnehmung des Krieges gegen Italien im Deutschen und Österreichischen Alpenverein, 1915 – 1918,' in Kuprian and Überegger, p. 143.
[78] 'Buchbesprechung: Im Felde unbesiegt. Erlebnisse im Weltkrieg, erzählt von Mitkämpfern, 3. Band Österreich,' *Der Wehrbund* (April 1924).
[79] Hugo Kerchnawe *Im Felde unbesiegt: Österreich* (Munich: J.F. Lehmanns Verlag, 1923), p. 3

their emperor and *Heimat*' but was 'unparalleled in terms of humble self-sacrifice.'[80] Kerchnawe's introduction made two clear, linked assertions; the army had been a German institution and it had fought bravely and successfully. The elements of an Austrian version of a 'stab in the back' myth were present here. The army was expunged of guilt for the outcome of the war along with the German peoples of the empire.

This book was not the only example of this kind of literature. Other militarist works responded to criticisms of the performance of the Habsburg armies. *Österreich-Ungarns Heer und Flotte im Weltkrieg,* published in Innsbruck in 1924 included contributions from former Habsburg officers praising the performances of Austro-Hungarian land and sea forces during the war.[81] This book also received a rapturous review in *Der Wehrbund*:

> The main aim of the book is to appropriately prize the heroic deeds of the former imperial army and especially the behaviour of the German regiments on land and water against Prussian superiority. [...] Every comrade who fought with the Austro-Hungarian land or sea forces, and who was convinced of the heroism of the imperial army based on their own experiences, must buy this book![82]

As well as developing the Austrian version of the 'stab in the back' myth this book also responded to German criticisms of the weaknesses and failures of the Habsburg war effort. The books endeavoured to defend the *overall* performance of the imperial (or more specifically the German elements of the imperial) forces. The books were aimed at former combatants and particularly officers, whose image of the conflict was reinforced by the publications. For many former officers, who were disillusioned with their situations in the new state the past, and particularly attempts to preserve an appropriate image of the past, became extremely important.[83] Additionally, the authors of such books hoped to awaken a pride in the 'great deeds' of the imperial armies in a younger generation of potential soldiers.

The idea of an illegitimate defeat of the Habsburg armed forces was also voiced by memoirists as 'a number of writers made statements to the

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[80] Ibid.
[81] *Österreich-Ungarns Heer und Flotte im Weltkrieg* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1924).
[82] 'Buchbesprechungen,' *Der Wehrbund,* May 1924 .
[83] Melichar, p. 52.

effect that, in fact, the war was not lost by the military.'[84] Ernst Rüdiger Starhemberg, at the time of the world war an aristocratic *Fähnrich* and later, following a period of National Socialism, a Heimwehr leader, recalled his amazement at Habsburg defeat in his post Second World War memoirs:

> Those who have never experienced the destruction of their Fatherland [...] cannot comprehend the bitter rage that gripped the young soldiers of a centuries-old victorious army that had also been victorious in its recent battles but had to endure a ignominious demise, in spite of all the sacrifices and all the victories. [...] It was unbearable to us that an army which had fought heroically and victoriously until its final days could dissolve in such an inglorious way.[85]

Starhemberg refused to acknowledge shortcomings or defeats of the army and as such his outrage at the defeat of a 'victorious' army was all the greater. The idea that the 'victorious' army was defeated by illegitimate means was expressed more clearly by other memoir authors. For German nationalist propagators of an Austrian 'stab in the back' myth, the betrayers of the military were the non-German nationalities of the empire. In particular, the alleged role played by the desertion of non-German imperial troops at the end of the war was highlighted by military commanders to explain the final collapse of the army. In his book 'The Collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire' Edmund Glaise-Horstenau described how, at the end of October 1918, Austrian troops continued to fight bravely despite the failure of Croat and Bosnian troops to report as reinforcements and the reluctance of Magyar troops to continue defending land outside Hungary.[86] According to Glaise-Horstenau it was only when the 'bravest of the brave,' the Tyrolese imperial *Jäger* troops, and the regiments of Upper Austria and Salzburg were faced with the 'wild jubilations' of Hungarian troops returning home that they lost the will to fight and accepted the end of the war.[87] This interpretation of the collapse of the army was also in evidence in German nationalist publications where the

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[84] Romsics, p. 28
[85] Starhemberg , pp. 38-40.
[86] Edmund Glaise-Horstenau *The Collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire'* (London: J.M. Dent, 1930), pp. 245-6.
[87] Ibid. p. 250.

achievements of the German-Austrian troops in a war in which a 'substantial section of the population sided with the enemy' were repeatedly highlighted.[88]

Carl von Bardolff, a close advisor of Franz Ferdinand who became chief of staff of the Second Army during the world war, offered a more complex explanation for the failure. His memoirs, written in 1938 after he had joined the Nazi party and become a Reichstag deputy, described the pain of defeat for the soldiers who had fought bravely and above all praised the sacrifices and achievements of the German Austrian soldiers in spite of the material and numerical superiority of the enemy.[89] Alongside the implied criticism of the non-German nationalities of the empire, Bardolff singled out other groups. It was the 'Jewish-Marxists' who reaped the rewards of defeat by sweeping aside the remains of the old empire and army and sharing out the 'bounty' with the Christian Socials and Nationalists.[90] Further, Emperor Karl did not escape Bardolff's ire, as he claimed that, although Karl could not have been expected to change the course of the war, he acted irresponsibly by sacrificing his own people to the enemy powers.[91] The blame for the catastrophic outcome of the war lay with the Emperor, the non-German nationalities of the empire, Jews, left-wing politicians and other political groups. The accounts of higher officer apportioned blame to different groups but always exculpated the officer corps from any blame.[92]

Bardolff's scapegoating of Jews and Social Democrats unsurprisingly echoes the German and particularly the National Socialist version of the 'stab in the back' myth. Others in Austria also offered this interpretation of defeat. At a meeting of the Anti-Semitic League in 1921, which was attended by a delegation from the Front Fighters' Association as well as other civilian groups from Austria this interpretation was unambiguously advanced:

> The German people were robbed of the fruits of their heroic achievements in battle over four years by betrayal. The cause of this betrayal was the Jewish spirit, which caused the degeneration of the power of the German people. The Entente victory was only due to the

[88] See for example Prof Paul Puntschart, 'Der Friede und die Zukunft des deutschen Volkes,' *Deutsches Vaterland,* September 1919.
[89] Bardolff, p. 347.
[90] Ibid., p. 344
[91] Ibid., p. 338
[92] Melichar, p. 80.

> negative Jewish influences on the German people. The aim of this association is to find ways to remove the damaging Jewish influence.[93]

This meeting was followed by a larger public gathering outside Vienna Town Hall, attended by approximately eight thousand people, at which speeches addressed the 'Jewish question from a National Socialist standpoint.' At this later meeting a further speaker claimed that 'the world war was an enterprise of Jewish finance' and that the 'war offices were staffed by Jews while German youth was bleeding to death in the trenches.'[94]

Similarly, Social Democrats were targets for those who subscribed to the 'stab in the back' myth. According to 'a victim of the war' writing in *Der Wehrbund,* the blame for the military collapse of the Habsburg armies lay with the Social Democrat leadership:

> The silent heroes resting under the earth still bear witness to this betrayal. It was the socialist 'leaders' of the home front who, by their demoralising work, delivered whole defenceless brigades and divisions into the arms of the enemy.[95]

According to this anonymous correspondent it was the Social Democrat leadership who undermined the military effort, rather than the nationalist agitation identified in earlier examples. The impact of the German 'stab in the back' myth on the author is clear.

Finally, it is important to note that allegations that military performances of the Central Powers were undermined by other forces did not come exclusively from the right. *Der freie Soldat* carried an article taken from the German *Reichsbanner* newspaper which described the culpability of German heavy industry in the defeat of the army. The article finished with the claim that 'at the very time when the fighting troops were engaged in their most difficult defensive battles, German steel exports were flourishing, bringing massive profits to heavy industry. Germany paid the price for this in dead soldiers.'[96] This article is evidence not only of a left-wing version of a 'stab in the back' myth but also the influence of the German debate on the myth

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[93] AdR, ÖStA, BMfHW, Abteilung 1, carton 922, (14 - 7), Zahl 568, Police report on Antisemitenbund meeting, 14 March 1921.
[94] AdR, ÖstA, BMfHW, Abteilung 1, carton 922, (14 - 7/3) Zl. 573, Police report on post meeting activities, 18 March 1921.
[95] Ein Kriegsopfer, 'Nach 10 Jahren,' *Der Wehrbund,* August 1924
[96] 'Zur Dolchstosslegende,' *Der freie Soldat,* January 1924.

exerted on Austria. It is clear that an Austrian variation of the 'stab in the back' myth developed in the First Republic. The German version of the myth, which appears to have had a considerable impact particularly on right-wing groups in Austria, was complemented by allegations directed towards the non-German nationalities of the Empire. The circumstances of the Austrian war effort and defeat meant the myth never gained the prominence or uniformity of the German myth, yet it still remained a convincing interpretation for Austrian failure in the world war for many former combatants. For former soldiers seeking to salvage pride in their wartime performances, the 'stab in the back myth' offered an appealing explanation of defeat.

Whether they subscribed to a version of the 'stab in the back' myth or simply glorified the experience of war, books defending the military prowess of the old army, such as the early volumes of *Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg* (Austria-Hungary's Last War), the official Austrian history of the world war, continued to appear in the 1920s and 1930s. This trend was worrying for Social Democrats who repeatedly voiced opposition to these works. Interestingly, it was not the glorification of the achievements of soldiers which angered Social Democrats:

> We understand the need to create a memorial to the soldierly efficiency of the brave warriors of all the nations of Austria-Hungary from 1914 to 1918. What we object to is the spirit of 'objectivity', that is never anything but an attempt to preserve the monarchist spirit of the old army.[97]

Again it was the glorification of the Habsburg military, rather than military *per se*, which was the subject of criticism. Others on the left made more general criticisms of Austrian militarism. Following a remembrance ceremony for the Italian soldiers buried at the Mauthausen cemetery in Lower Austria, the Social Democrat *Tagblatt* newspaper in Linz reflected on the differences in discussion of the war between elite groups in Italy and Austria. 'Not all Austrians, but certainly the ruling classes, constantly relive the black-and-gold glory days at their reunions. They celebrate famous victories which eventually led to a decisive defeat, while the rest of the world is filled with a longing for

[97] 'ÖSterreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg, 1914 – 1918,' *Der freie Soldat,* 1 December 1929.

peace.'[98] The irony of the celebration of victories in the aftermath of defeat did not go unnoticed in interwar Austria.

The veneration of the war in military histories was complemented by a similar process in veterans' and militarist publications. Officers also wrote pieces for civilian publications and gave public speeches around Austria to broaden the appeal of their image of the war.[99] A standard example of this rhetoric came from a right-wing veterans' publication in 1928:

> Above all we Austrians have cause to look back with pride on our military past. Was the old Austrian army not an army which was counted among the best in the world, an army which achieved wonders of bravery despite technical disadvantages and numerical shortfalls?'[100]

The heroism of the Habsburg armies was constantly reiterated in right-wing and militarist publications. In 1922 in *Der Wehrbund* it was argued that 'the Austrian, without distinction of class, race and confession, has always been a soldier. The world war is the best evidence of this truth.'[101] The author emphasised not only the positive, unifying effects of the old military but also its long history in Austria.

As the memory of the horrors of war faded, members of civil society began to echo these themes. For example, in 1930 the former Chancellor, Dr Ignaz Seipel, praised the deeds of the imperial army:

> Our debt of gratitude to the victims of the World War is not diminished because their bloodshed did not result in the prize of victory. We are thankful to them for the piece of the old Fatherland that we still have. It is their bravery and loyalty which allowed us to create a new Fatherland.[102]

Although Seipel acknowledged the eventual defeat of the imperial armies, he ascribed the creation of the new state of Austria to the deeds of the Habsburg military while overlooking their role in the loss of the empire.[103] The constant reiteration of claims of Habsburg military glory had exerted its influence on the wider discussion of war by the 1930s.

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[98] 'Das Friedensfest in Mauthausen,' *Linzer soz. demo. Tagblatt,* 31 May 1924.
[99] Melichar, pp. 62 - 63.
[100] 'Vom Sinn der Traditionspflege,' *Der gute Kamerad,* October 1928.
[101] 'Unsere Organisation,' *Der Wehrbund,* August 1922.
[102] 'Zum Volkstrauertag,' *Der Plenny*, March 1930
[103] Military defeat played a crucial role in the Austrian revolution. See Botz (1976), p. 27.

The experience of war was also obscured by its romanticised presentation in popular novels. For example, *From Front to Front* by Robert Bertold, a soldier who served in both the imperial and republican armies, told the tale of an Austrian officer, captured on the Russian Front, who escaped captivity and made a daring dash around the globe to rejoin his regiment and participate in fighting on the Italian Front.[104] The veterans' publication *Der Landsturm* recommended this book to its readers as follows:

> This book must be read; from its first to its last line it is more truthfully and captivatingly written than almost any other book of a similar content. Especially for us front soldiers this book is a lasting memory of what we experienced, of our eternal heroic deeds. It is also a memorial for our descendants of the limitless patriotic love, quiet heroism and sense of duty of wartime.[105]

The book, a traditional adventure story with a wartime setting, was described as reflecting the 'truth' of war, although its plot was far-fetched and far removed from the real experiences of any of the potential audience. It is important to note that while great works by Kraus and Remarque offered condemnation of the brutality of war, popular novels by men such as Berthold continued to present an adventurous, glorious image.

By the 1930s narratives of the glory of particularly the German section of the Habsburg armed forces had moved from being a marginal narrative voiced by former officers to wider acceptance in Austrian civil society. However, it was not until the start of the *Ständestaat* that these ideas were adopted by the Austrian government as the official interpretation of the experience of war, partly in an attempt to forge a distinct Austrian identity based on the wartime heroism.[106] The Austrian *Heldendenkmal* project is the best example of the expression of a militaristic interpretation of the world war during the *Ständestaat* as the unveiling ceremony, structure and fundraising process for the memorial were all dominated by the glorification of the military. The original competition for proposals for the memorial, issued in 1933, made the aim of 'proclaiming the splendour of the old army' an integral part of the

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[104] Robert Berthold, *Vom Front zu Front* (1933).
[105] 'Ein neues Buch,' *Der Landsturm,* April-May-June 1933.
[106] Werner Suppanz, *„Die grosse Tat will grosse Erben": Der Ersten Weltkrieg im Alpenraum in den Gedächtniskonstruktionen des „autoritären Ständestaates"* in Überegger and Kuprian p. 441.

project.[107] This idea was central to the whole project, as evidenced by the words of the new Chancellor Schuschnigg in the commemorative *Heldendenkmal* publication:

> One of the most precious gems from the old empire that I have inherited from my unforgettable predecessor [Dollfuss] is admiration and grateful recognition of the superb achievements of our old army, navy and *Landwehr*. I myself served as an officer in the k.u.k. army and witnessed the lives and deaths of our heroes in the world war. As the son of an old Austrian military family it was obvious to me that in the postwar period the old Austrian soldierly virtues would have to return to a position of honour, both to act as an example for our youth and to permit the army to receive the thanks it deserves.[108]

The ceremony and the memorial itself were based on two firm assumptions about war in evidence of this quote; war could be a positive experience and Austria had a glorious military past, which should be celebrated. These ideas were repeatedly echoed throughout the memorial publication. General Major Zehner, the new defence minister, discussed the 'achievements of the old army on innumerable battlefields over its centuries of existence.'[109] His emphasis was on the whole legacy of the army reaching back far beyond the start of the world war. Carl Vaugoin continued in a similar vein, praising the pride the Austrians should feel in the military deeds of their ancestors and fellow fighters.[110] Images of the illustrious deeds of the army throughout the ages followed these opening statements by the leading politicians of the *Ständestaat*. A poem by the former officer and prize winning poet Franz Karl Ginzkey was commissioned for the *Heldendenkmal* unveiling ceremony. It was read by the actor Wilhelm Klitsch and contained the following verse:

> You battled for years against the odds
> And your enemies grew in numbers day by day
> Your heads are crowned with eternal wreaths of victory
> Although you were defeated.[111]

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[107] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Heldendenkmal, carton 302, Wettbewerb.
[108] Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales, *Gedenkschrift anlässlich der Weihe des österreichischen Heldendenkmales am 9. September 1934* (Vienna: 1934), p.4.
[109] Ibid., p. 6
[110] Ibid., p. 8
[111] Franz Karl Ginzkey, 'Prolog,' Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines österreichischen Heldendenkmales, p. 9.

The poem echoed the general sentiments of the occasion; that the eventual defeat of the imperial armies did not undermine their achievements.

Military values were an integral part of the location and fabric of the memorial. The *Äussere Burgtor* was originally built as a memorial to a victory at the Battle of the Nations at Leipzig in October 1813. According to Dankl, the decision to adapt the *Burgtor* as a world war memorial was made because of the pre-existing link between the structure and the celebration of victory.[112] A further factor in this decision was the proximity to the statues of the victorious military leaders Prince Eugen of Savoy and Archduke Karl in the *Heldenplatz*.[113] Militarism was central to the adaptation of the memorial. Eight figures, each 1.10 metre high, representing soldierly virtues were planned for inclusion in the memorial.[114] A further twenty-four images of soldiers from the Thirty Years War, the campaigns of Prince Eugen, the wars of Maria Theresa, the wars of liberation against Napoleon, Radetzky's campaigns and the World War were planned to complete the tribute to the old army.[115] Above these figures a battle frieze and figures of St Michael and St George 'as patrons of masculine readiness to fight,' were planned.[116] To counter these positive images of soldierly virtues and heroic deeds the memorial contained only one image of a sleeping soldier in the crypt.

The fund raising process for the *Heldendenkmal* project had also relied on the glorification of the military. The central committee, based in Vienna, had sent out a call for the formation of local groups to support the creation of a memorial to 'the memory of the glorious deeds of the Austrian troops.'[117] The committee believed the glory of the old army, rather than the remembrance of the fallen of the world war, would encourage participation and support for their work. In January 1934 a fund raising evening for the project, an 'Evening of Honour for the Heroes of the World War' took place in the Great Hall of the Hofburg palace in central Vienna. The evening, described as a 'great step in popularising the idea of a *Heldendenkmal*' by the

[112] Generaloberst Graf Dankl, 'Festrede,' ibid., p. 15.
[113] Bundespräsident Miklas, ibid., p. 20.
[114] Generalmajor Lauppert, ibid., p. 51.
[115] Wilhelm Frass, ibid., p. 70
[116] Generalmajor Lauppert, ibid., p. 51.
[117] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Heldendenkmal, carton 303, open letter, Vereingung zur Errichtung eines Heldendenkmals in Wien, 1934.

committee, included dramatic speeches about battles, victories and deaths in the old army, and was attended by veterans in their imperial uniforms.[118] This was one of a planned series of events which relived the glory days of the war to raise money for the *Heldendenkmal.* Marcel Halfon, a Viennese lawyer, proposed a massive military tattoo to mark the unveiling of the *Heldendenkmal* and raise further funds. *In deinem Lager ist Österreich,* taken from a poem by Franz Grillparzer, was the title of the event which was planned for September 1934. The event would coincide with the Viennese trade fair weeks and the organisers hoped each performance would be attended by 70,000 locals, domestic and international tourists.[119] The main attraction was to be a series of staged battles from Austria's history, performed by members of the army and paramilitary organisations. A canon of glorious victories from Austria's past was proposed, including the battles with the Saracens in the Holy Land, Prince Eugen's battles in Belgrade, the role of Prince Rüdiger Starhemberg in the ending of the Turkish siege in 1683, Archduke Karl and his victory over the French at Aspern, Admiral Tegethoff and his victorious naval battle at Custozza, and 'heroic deeds of the World War.'[120] Images of the world war were included in the canon of Austrian military victories; no distinction was made between the historical victories and the recent conflict which ended in millions of deaths and catastrophic defeat. In fact the event never got beyond the planning stage, because of the fears of the fund-raising committee that the spectacle would fail to generate any income due to a lack of public interest.

One of the features of the proposed military tattoo was its reverence for military leaders and their role in military success. A set of stamps featuring great Austrian military leaders, also a proposal for raising money for the *Heldendenkmal* project, continued this theme. The stamps included the image of Archduke Karl, as well as leaders from earlier eras such as Admiral Tegetthoff and Field Marshal Radetzky.[121] Again due to financial constraints

[118] Heldendenkmal p. 78.
[119] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Heldendenkmal, carton 302, proposal 'Stadionschau In Deinem Lager ist Österreich' Marcel Halfon.
[120] Ibid.
[121] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Heldendenkmal, carton 302. Carl Rädler to Heldendenkmalkommittee, 5 May 1933.

the stamps were not produced but they are further evidence of the reverence for the military in the fund-raising attempts.

One event which got beyond the planning stage was a show at the *Hohe Warte* stadium in the nineteenth district of Vienna, which coincided with unveiling of the *Heldendenkmal* on 8 September 1934. The event celebrated three hundred years of Austria with a specific focus on Austria's 'heroes and leaders.' During the ceremony the images of leaders, especially military leaders, from Austria's past were projected onto a large screen. The purpose of this was to 'raise the heart beat of every Austrian who lays eyes on them.'[122] A firework display concluded this celebration of the military and the past. These events, all connected to the *Heldendenkmal* project reflected the increased militarisation of Austrian political culture under the *Ständestaat* and in particular the public reverence of military 'victories' and leaders. The unsuccessful outcome of the war and the mass death and destruction it left in its wake were entirely absent.

The militaristic tone of the *Heldendenkmal* celebrations affected other fundraising attempts. By 1934 the victorious, glorified image of the Habsburg armed forces was widespread. In their annual fundraising appeal the Austrian Black Cross called for contributions to preserve the graves of 'the soldiers of the great old army, who could not be defeated in battle!'[123] The foundations for the glorification of the military under the *Ständestaat* were laid by the proliferation of works of fiction, history, memoir and veterans' publications which advanced a glorious interpretation of war in the 1920s and particularly into the 1930s. However in the next section, we shall see how, through the localised activities of veterans' associations, glorious images of individual battles and regiments were also promoted throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

Battles, regiments and individuals

While Austria lacked a battle that reached the iconic status of Zborow in Czechoslovakia, a process of the mythologisation of certain wartime events

[122] ÖStA, AdR, BMfLV, Heldendenkmal, carton 305. Vereinigung zur Errichtung eines Österreichischen Heldendenkmals, press conference, 28 August 1934.
[123] ÖSK, *Gedenk- und Werbeblatt des Kuratoriums zur Erhaltung und Pflege der Kriegsgräber in Steiermark,* 1934.

and institutions from Austria's wartime past certainly played an important role in postwar discussion and commemoration. In order to understand the origin and purpose of regimental commemoration days, a brief discussion of the relationship between the imperial armed forces, the *Volkswehr* and the *Bundesheer* is necessary. Following the collapse of the imperial armed forces the *Volkswehr* was created. It existed from 1918 to 1920 and was a short term invention created to secure Austria and to ensure a smooth transition to peace. One of the aims of the *Volkswehr* was to break the personnel and ideological links between the imperial and republican armies. To this end, institutions such as soldiers' representatives and military commissioners were introduced. In 1920 the *Volkswehr* was replaced with the *Bundesheer*, a small professional army that never reached the maximum size laid down in the Treaty of St Germain. The new Defence Minister Carl Vaugoin was determined to 'depoliticise' (in reality repoliticise to the right) the *Bundesheer*.

From 1923 the new army was charged with maintaining the traditions of the old army and to this end links were established between new regiments and 'predecessor' (imperial army and *Landwehr*) regiments. These connections were embodied in regimental commemoration days. A day, chosen in memory of an important battle or engagement from the regiment's imperial past, was adopted and marked annually by members past and present. As the regimental commemoration days were not instigated until five years after the end of the world war, the memory of the realities of the conflict had faded and the idealised, mythologised versions presented in these ceremonies was easier for participants to accept. Regimental commemoration days had two linked aims; to relive the glory of an important victory from the regiment's past and to remember members of the regiment who had fallen during the world war. A link was established between the fallen of the world war and a 'victory.'

In fact not every regimental commemoration day recalled a battle of the world war. Earlier key Austrian military victories were also commemorated. The Alpine *Jäger* Battalion Nr 10 (Graz), charged with maintaining the traditions of the Styrian regiments Nr 27 and 47 and the Field *Jäger* Battalion Nr 9, celebrated their regimental day on 23 March to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Novara. At Novara, Radetzky had defeated the armies of King

Charles Albert of Piedmont-Sardinia following his incursion into Lombardy in March 1849. This incursion ended with an undoubtedly important victory.[124] Similarly, the Battle of Aspern was also marked by annual commemoration ceremonies at Aspern, near Vienna. The Battle of Aspern took place from in September 1809 and was particularly significant, both as the first defeat for Napoleon on a battle field and as a rare example of an unaided and unambiguous Austrian victory.[125] Although these ceremonies recalled nineteenth century victories, their form and tone were similar to the ceremonies, which marked battles of the world war.[126] The events began with a militarist, celebratory section during which officers described the events of the battle to the gathered postwar troops and veterans' associations. In the second, solemn section a field mass was celebrated in memory of the fallen of the regiment. Although the focus of these events were nineteenth century battles, the fallen remembered in the second half of the ceremony were undoubtedly the victims of the world war.

The majority of battles commemorated during regimental remembrance days were from the world war. They conformed to the pattern of a battle celebration followed by a remembrance ceremony for the fallen. By marking 'victorious' battles from the world war the regimental commemoration days contributed to the public glorification of the experience of war and the image of the prowess of the Habsburg armed forces. The Bicycle Battalion Nr 2 (Vienna based, successor unit of the Field *Jäger* Battalion Nr 21) celebrated its regimental commemoration day annually on 7 October to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Koryto (1915). The fighting at Koryto had been part of the disastrous Austro-Hungarian 'black and yellow' offensive against Russia.[127] The ultimate failure of the offensive was not reflected in the commemoration ceremony. In 1924 the ceremony was opened by a speech

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[124] Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire* (London: University of California Press, 1974), p. 252.

[125] Although a lack of resources prevented Austria from capitalising on its victory it was still 'Austria's finest hour.' Kann, p. 223.

[126] See for example the programme for the Novara celebrations ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs 1925, carton, 1968 (25 – 4/2) Zl. 17145, Kommando der Brigade Nr 5 to BMfHW, undated; for Aspern ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A , carton 2496, (75 - 1/3) Zl. 23761, Kameradschaft des ehemaligen Infantry Regiments Nr 8 to 2. Brigadekommando, 9 May 1928.

[127] Rauchensteiner (1993), pp. 294 - 295.

from an officer of the successor regiment who outlined the heroic deeds of the regiment during the battle.[128] A remembrance ceremony for all the fallen and a concert by the regimental band followed. Although the event was organised by the Club of the Former 21st *Jäger*, the veterans' association worked in close cooperation with the postwar army. Both these groups were interested in promoting and celebrating a heroic image of the military performance of the Habsburg armed forces during the world war. The veterans welcomed the opportunity to receive public recognition for their wartime successes and the postwar army was keen to take the opportunity to improve the image of the armed forces among the Austrian people.[129]

Battles from early in the war were the most popular choices as regimental commemoration days. The Second Battle of the First Infantry Regiment celebrated the fighting around the Pilica River in November 1914.[130] The Field *Jäger* Batallion Nr 1 based in Eisenstadt also marked an incident from early on the war, the Battle of Polichna on 23 August 1914.[131] The fighting at Polichna preceded the Battle of Krasnik, which was an 'unspectacular' Habsburg victory, but an important boost to morale in light of the defeat of Habsburg troops in the Balkans.[132] The Battle of Lemberg that followed these engagements was the subject of the regimental commemoration day of the Viennese Infantry Regiment Nr 2.[133] By commemorating early battles, successor regiments and veterans' associations were seeking to recapture the faith and enthusiasm of the start of the war and distance themselves from the catastrophic defeat that was the ultimate result of the conflict.

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[128] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1766, (75 – 1/3), Zl. 7653, Klub der ehemaliger 21er Jäger to BMfHW, 18 September 1924.
[129] At the end of the Great War the reputation of the army and particularly of the officer corps had been destroyed. See Melichar, p. 54.
[130] See for example ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs, carton 1766, (75 – 1/3), Zl. 6477, Einundzwanziger Schützen- und Landsturmbund to BMfHW and Ortskommando, 5 November 1924.
[131] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs A , carton 1968, (75 – 1/3), Zl. 53973. Ortskommando Graz to BMfHW, 21 November 1925.
[132] Rauchensteiner (1993), p. 135.
[133] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3549 (9 – 7/1), Zl. 9001, Kameradschafstbund 'Einzer Schützen' to BMfHW (25 July 1933)

Most regimental remembrance days were organised by comradeship associations in cooperation with the *Bundesheer.*[134] This cooperation was actively encouraged by the military authorities.[135] Yet the extent to which these ceremonies had an impact beyond those members of veterans' associations and the postwar army, who directly participated in the events is difficult to establish. There is evidence that while early regimental remembrance days were viewed as internal military events, during the 1920s and 1930s they rose in importance and public profile. For example, in 1925 there were allegations that *Bundesheer* officers were seeking to prevent public access to the park where the Polichna celebrations of the Field *Jäger* Battalion Nr 1 based (Eisenstadt) were taking place.[136] While the officers involved denied these allegations, it was clear that in 1925 the event was aimed at an 'internal', military audience. By 1932 the organisation of the ceremony had been taken on by the 'Comradeship Association of Members of the Former Infantry Regiment Nr 76' in cooperation with the successor regiment. A plaque to the fallen of the regiment was unveiled and speeches were made by representatives of the veterans' association and the military.[137] The decision to unveil the memorial, which was paid for with funds raised by the regimental association and the local community, during the regimental remembrance day undoubtedly widened participation at the event.

A memorial plaque for the fallen of the regiment was also unveiled at the 1928 regimental remembrance day of the Alpine Jäger Regiment Nr. 7 (Linz). The initiative was spear headed by the *Hessenkameradschaftsbünden* veterans' association but received the full support of the *Bundesheer.* The ceremony was divided into the two sections, with the memorial unveiling and remembrance ceremony open to the public and the battle celebration open

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[134]For example the Pilica celebration was organised by a veterans' association as early as 1924. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs, carton 1766, (75 – 1/3) Zl. 6477, Einundzwanziger Schützen- und Landsturmbund to BMfHW and Ortskommando, 5 November 1924.

[135] When asking for permission for the participation of a delegation of his troop in the Pilica commemoration ceremony in 1931, the commander of the Second Battalion of the First Infantry Regiment stressed the potential positive effects on the civilian population, rather than the sense of indebtedness or honour towards the fallen. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, A carton 3147, (54 – 3/1) Zl. 37651, Kommando der II Brigade to BMfHW, undated.

[136] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 1968 (75 – 1/3) Zl. 53973, Ortskommando Graz to BMfHW, 21 November 1925.

[137] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton (45 - 5/1) Zl. 10343, Kameradschaftsbund der Angehörigen des ehemaligen IR Nr 76 to BMfHW, 23 April 1932.

only to members of the *Bundesheer* and the veterans' association.[138] While the military authorities were keen for the general public to engage in the remembrance ceremony, the section which glorified the regimental performance in the battle remained an internal event. The glorification of the performance of the Habsburg military during battle was important to the members of veterans' association but not considered appropriate for the families of the fallen also in attendance at the ceremony.

By the 1930s regimental remembrance days were larger events that involved a wider cross section of society. The Infantry Regiment Nr 1 (Payerbach) marked the fighting of the Second *Gebirgsregiment* on Zugna Torta, part of the Italian campaign. In 1932 the ceremony began with a field mass led by the military curate Dr Maurer, followed by a speech from the local commanding officer about the meaning of the day and ended with a wreath laying ceremony at the local memorial.[139] The event was attended by a wide range of civilian and military dignitaries and organisations including local government officials from Payerbach and nearby Reichenau, world war veterans (mainly officers) of the predecessor regiment from Vienna, Lower Austria and Styria, the Comradeship Association of former Warriors from Payerbach and Reichenau, the Shooting Association of Reichenau, the Payerbach, Reichenau and Küb fire brigades, the *Deutscher Turnverein* of Reichenau and delegations of the *Heimatschutz* from Payerbach, Reichenau, Gloggnitz and Wiener Neustadt and 'other interested members of the public.'[140] While the events remained relatively localised and small scale, they had certainly begun to exert a wider influence beyond direct members of the military and veterans' associations by the 1930s.

The aims of the regimental remembrance days were not supported by all in the army. The *Bundesheer* was divided between former imperial officers who prized the traditions of the old army and the majority of new officers and men who were influenced by the ideas of Social Democracy. Some of these left wing soldiers rejected the practice of regimental remembrance days. For

[138] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2502, (85 - 3/5) Zl. 27651, Notes on Monte San Gabriele Feier, 22 August 1928.
[139] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3404, (45 – 6/1) Zl. 11492, Ortskommando Payerbach to BMfHW, 23 May 1932.
[140] Ibid.

example controversy surrounded the regimental day of the Fifth Infantry Regiment. The regiment had inherited the traditions of the imperial Infantry Regiment Freiherr von Bollrass Nr 84 and celebrated the fighting around Sapanov. According to *Der freie Soldat* the whole regimental commemoration day was a 'desecration of the dead.'[141] This protest was based on two assumptions. Firstly, that the regular soldiers of the new regiment had been coerced into participation at an event which even many of the officers regarded as 'nonsense' (*Klimbim*) and a 'farce' (*Würsteltheater*).[142] Secondly, the memory of the fallen of the regiment was not the centre of the commemoration ceremony; rather, the speeches of the officers during the event glossed over the experience of battle and focused instead on flattering the Defence Minister who was present at the ceremony.[143] In this interpretation regimental remembrance days were ceremonies imposed 'from above' on an unwilling postwar army. As well as this criticism of the ceremony itself, the article continued by offering a personal condemnation of the officers involved and in particular their right to offer comment on the war. Lieutenant Colonel Scheufler, was 'not capable of commanding even the simplest manoeuvre.' The regimental commander of the Fifth Infantry Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Adasiewicz, 'only knew of the events at Sapanov by hearsay' and 'quickly became bored of discussing the fallen of the regiment.' The author went to special pains to emphasise that another officer, Stromek, who presented a bunch of flowers to the Defence Minister at the end of the ceremony was not only 'a baptised Jew' but was also engaged to teach dancing to the officers' wives until 1935.[144] It was not the glorification of the Battle of Sapanov that outraged the author but rather the perceived appropriation of the event by officers of the peace-time army, who did not have the experience or ability to perform in war, to the detriment of the memory of the fallen soldiers.

As noted above, battles from early in the war were popular choices for these commemoration days. In some cases attempts to change the date of a regimental commemoration day were made. This indicates that for at least

[141] 'Die Totenschändung von '84',' *Der freie Soldat,* 1 August 1928.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.

some of the members of the postwar army and the veterans' associations involved in organising the days, the choice of battle to commemorate was taken seriously. In 1933 the Vorarlberg Mortar Battery was successful in altering its commemoration day from the 15 May to 23 April. They achieved this change by making an impassioned plea to the Defence Ministry in which they outlined the achievements of their predecessor regiment in the fighting during the battles for the Col di Lana on the Dolomite Front:

> The battles for this 2463 meter mountain are amongst the bloodiest and most tenacious on the whole Tyrol front. The enemy attacked the mountain ninety-nine times, yet they failed in man to man, open conflict, to take the mountain. The enemy losses were enormous. The Italians called the Col di Lana the 'Mountain of Blood' for good reason. [...] For the batteries of the Static Artillery fighting for the Col di Lana 23 April was perhaps the most difficult, yet also the most successful day in the World War, a day of splendour in the truest sense of the word. The achievements of these batteries were of decisive importance in the defence of the mountain and prevented the intended Italian breakthrough on the Dolomite Front. An Italian breakthrough towards North Tyrol was prevented.[145]

Many elements of a battle myth are in evidence here; the emphasis on individual achievement in hand to hand combat, showing the military superiority of the Austrian troops in unmediated conflict and the stress on this manoeuvre as a key event in the war. That the change to the regimental day was not made until 1933, is further evidence for the increasing importance of these days in the 1930s.

Left-wing condemnation of these events was linked to their increasing popularity. In 1932 an article in *Der freie Soldat* was extremely critical of the celebration of the Battle of Duninow, 15 July 1915, the regimental remembrance day of the Dragonner Regiment Nr 3. The ceremony was denounced as a 'glorification of the battle' and the cry of 'the victory was ours!' which completed the ceremony was mocked.[146] In particular, the author condemned one of the key features of the annual speech making:

> The young soldiers are told a great number of stories about the attacks made by the '*Sachsendragoner,*' led by Colonel Pichler von Tennenberg. [They are told that] it was his thirst for action and that of

[145] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3404, (45 - 6/1) Zl. 3022. Vorarlberg Minenwerferbatterie to BMfHW, undated.
[146] 'Tradition: Eine merkwürdige Geschichte des Schwadron 2' *Der freie Soldat: Auf Vorposten, Schulstunden des freien Soldaten,* July/August 1932.

the officers in general that inspired the troops and carried them with them into battle.[147]

The author of the article then challenged this depiction of the battle, using the account of the former *Sachsendragoner* Johann Fenz. According to Fenz's account, the attacks in mid July 1915 came from the Russian side; there were no Austrian offensives at this time. Fenz described the terror of six to ten hours of Russian bombardments, the screams of the soldiers in their trenches and the loss of 240 of the 600 men remaining in his regiment.[148] By 1932 *Der freie Soldat* was challenging the celebration of battles during the regimental remembrance days. Both the principle of the glorification of battle and the details offered during the ceremonies were disputed.

The battle which came closest to achieving the mythical status of Zborow in Czechoslovakia or Langemarck or Verdun in Germany was the Battle of Caporetto (the Twelth Battle of the Isonzo). The desperate military situation of Austria after the Eleventh Battle of the Isonzo and the deteriorating domestic situation made the victory all the more important and surprising.[149] The victory was an important boost to Austrian morale and as well as securing gains in territory and prisoners, Austrian forces also captured materials which were important in sustaining their war effort.[150] The press was instrumental in creating and spreading the myth of the 'miracle of Karfreit (Caporetto)' in the immediate aftermath of the battle and Archduke Eugen publicly rejoiced in its 'brilliant results.'[151] Yet some features of the battle, such as the importance of German support and the use of poison gas against the Italian troops were overlooked in the celebration of this 'Austrian victory.'[152] Additionally, the failure of the Habsburg armed forces to capitalise

[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Manfred Rauchensteiner 'Einleitung' in Manfred Rauchensteiner (ed.) *Waffentreue: Die 12. Isonzoschlacht 1917: Begleitband zur Ausstellung des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* (Vienna: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, 2007), p. 6.
[150] Ibid, pp. 8 – 9.
[151] Marie-Theres Egyed 'Die Kriegsberichterstattung' in Rauchensteiner, p. 65; Cyril Falls *Caporetto 1917* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), p. 65.
[152] See for example Franz Felberbauer 'Die 12. Isonzoschlacht: Der Operationsplan und seine Durchführung' in Rauchensteiner pp. 15, 21 – 22 and Felix Radax 'Giftgas und das ‚Wunder von Karfreit' in ibid, p. 49.

on their success and the resultant lack of long term impact were entirely overlooked in the commemoration of this famous victory.

The Carinthian Alpine *Jäger* Regiment Nr 11, which had inherited the traditions of the First Infantry Regiment and the First *Gebirgschützen* 'remembered the armed deeds' of these regiments as well as the fallen on the annual anniversary of the Battle of Caporetto. In 1932 the fifteenth anniversary of the battle was marked by concerts from the military band of the successor regiment, followed by a field mass and speeches from regimental commanders about the importance of the victory.[153] Caporetto had an importance beyond regimental remembrance days. The battle was memorialised by both Austrians and Italians in the interwar period.[154] Yet it was the work of one individual that did most to forge the heroic, victorious image of the battle. General Alfred Krauss, one of the battle commanders, described the 'Miracle of Caparetto' in his 1926 monograph. The book was written partly in response to a German account of the battle which, according to Krauss, overlooked the importance of Austrian participation. The aim of the work was to 'show that German heroism does not recognise state boundaries.'[155] According to Krauss the battle was a particularly good example of this for two reasons; firstly, the conflict with Italy was clearly the result of Italian rapaciousness so Austria was blameless and secondly, the bravery and achievements of the imperial troops showed that their failings were not down to them but to external factors.[156] Krauss' entire account of the battle glorifies the performance of the German Austrian troops. He claimed that the success was achieved despite the betrayal of Rumanian and Czech officers, who crossed the lines to inform the Italians of the imperial plans.[157] According to Krauss, the miracle in the title referred not to the Austrian victory, which was the result of hard work, talent and bravery, but the Italian defeat in light of all the material factors which were stacked up in their

[153] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3404 (45 – 6/1) Zl. 26893, Kärntner Alpinejägerregiment Nr 11 to BMfHW, 15 October 1932.
[154] Stefan Wedrac, 'Die Toten – ihre Friedhöfen und Denkmäler,' in Rauchensteiner (ed.), pp. 106 – 107.
[155] Alfred Krauss, *Das 'Wunder von Karfreit' im besonderen der Durchbruch bei Flitsch und die Bezwingung des Tagliamento* (Munich: J F Lehmanns Verlag, 1926), p. 3.
[156] Ibid., p. 7.
[157] Ibid., p. 10.

favour.[158] Krauss' description of the Battle of Caporetto had all the elements of a classic battle myth in extreme form. In his interpretation, despite a 'stab in the back' from unreliable elements and massive material shortcomings, the bravery, skill and professionalism of German Austrian troops caused the defeat of the Italians – a feat so surprising and unexpected that it qualified as a miracle.

During regimental remembrance days and, in the case of Caporetto, in memorials and books, Austrian 'successes' during individual battles were celebrated. The writing of regimental histories was another means by which the experience of war was glorified and suffering and failure were obscured. While regimental remembrance days used the 'victory' in a specific battle to celebrate the experience of war, regimental histories offered a longer term perspective on the role of a discreet section of the armed forces during the world war.

Histories of imperial regiments were published throughout the 1920s and especially during the 1930s. They were written by former officers who had served in the world war and were generally financed and published privately by regimental associations. The books took a standard form; a traditional, military history description of the wartime deeds of the regiment focussing on the world war, illustrated with many photographs of the troops. The histories were aimed at former members of a regiment. The St Pölten *Schützenregiment* Nr 21 regimental history contained an insert which made this audience explicit; it was the duty of all former comrades to read the history but also to purchase their own copy and in doing so to raise funds for the regimental association.[159] The idea of a regimental history as a product of a community of veterans was made explicit by the author of the history of the *Weisse Dragoner* who paid tribute to the work of all his former comrades who had participated in the production of the work.[160] Many books contained

[158] Ibid., p. 11.
[159] Insert in Major Anton Sichelstiel, *Das k.k. Schützenregiment St. Pölten Nr 21, Seine Friedens- und Kriegsgeschichte* (Vienna: Einunzwanziger Schützen- und Landsturmbund, 1930).
[160] Alfred Freiherr von Winzor (Im Auftrag des Offiziersverbandes des ehemaligen k.u.k. Dragoner-Regimentes Nr 15), *Weisse Dragoner im Weltkrieg: Die Geschichte des k u k Dragoner-Regimentes Erzherzog Joseph Nr 15* (Vienna: Selbstverlag, 1935), p. 7

photographs contributed by former members of the regiment, which further reinforced the sense of the books as the product of a community of veterans.

The former officers who wrote regimental histories were amateur historians with clear purpose in their work; to record the wartime experiences of their regiment in order to preserve an *appropriate* record of their wartime achievements.[161] In the introduction to the history of the Tyrolean *Kaiserjäger*, the former regimental commander General Verdross welcomed the book as a 'memorial of honour to the incomparable heroic deeds' of the brave *Kaiserjäger.* The sense of the book as a memorial was echoed by the author, Guido Jakoncig, in his introduction. He suggested that it was the duty of those front fighters who had survived the war to preserve the memory of those who had not.[162] In fact, the need to produce an appropriate record of the war was taken further in this regimental history. The production of the book was overseen by a committee which 'improved' sections in which the sources did not give the correct impression of the war. In effect the committee censored the book.[163] Further, the book aimed to encourage those who had been part of the regiment to relive their experiences and the next generation to understand the sacrifices of their fathers.[164] The sense of a regimental history as a memorial was also expressed in the history of the *Schützenregiment* Nr 21 of St Pölten. The book was dedicated to the memory of those 'brave Lower Austrians who sacrificed everything for their beloved Fatherland.'[165] In the introduction the author, Major Anton Sichelstiel, expressed the fear that 'much is being forgotten that deserves to be immortalised.'[166]

The introduction of the history of the *Schützenregiment* Nr 1 from Vienna also set out a clear aim for the book:

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[161] The officers' organisation of the *Kaiserjäger* had a specific policy of recording the history of the regiment but also of monitoring the work of others who wrote on the regiment. See Eisterer, p. 116.
[162] Guido Jakoncig, *Tiroler Kaiserjäger im Weltkrieg: Eine Regimentsgeschichte in Bildern* (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1931), p. Vii.
[163] Eisterer, p. 120.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Anton Sichelstiel, *Das k.k Schützenregiment St. Pölten Nr 21: Seine Friedens- und Kriegsgeschichte* (Vienna: Einundzwanziger Schützen- und Landsturmbund, 1930), p. 1.
[166] Sichelstiel, p. 5.

> This short regimental history should help all *Einserschützen* recall the difficult and great time of the world war and fill them with a new sense of pride in the wonderful deeds of the regiment and also with thanks for those wartime comrades who left with them and did not return. [...] This is the aim of the publication; to look back on the many experiences that the war brought; to process them for the benefit of all; to look back on and correctly judge the events of the war from a peacetime perspective and to win back respect for our achievements and our abilities.[167]

Again, the idea of preserving the correct or appropriate memory of war was voiced by the author of the history. At seventy-seven pages, this was a relatively short, chronological account of the deeds of the regiment during the world war. The authors of the book hoped that their example would spur others on to create a fuller, more comprehensive regimental history.

The history of the *Weisse Dragoner,* which contained a detailed chronological account of the regiment during the war as well as casualty and honour lists, had similar aims. In the introduction to the book, the long serving commander of the regiment, former General Major Alfred von Brosch made this explicit:

> The *Weisse Dragoner* regiment proved itself to be a worthy part of Austria's great history. [...] This history of the *Weisse Dragoner* will prove to be a loving reminder on those times of brave and successful activity for all former regimental comrades. For their descendents the book will illustrate the glory of the impeccable behaviour of the fifteenth *Dragoner* during this difficult time of splendour.[168]

The history of the *Schützen* Regiment Nr 3 in Graz aimed to illustrate the bravery, sacrifice, endurance, reliability, skill and hard work of the regiment during the war.[169] Underlying these histories was the belief that the deeds of the soldiers in the world war were being forgotten. Further, while acknowledging that difficult times were experienced during the war, the authors offered an overwhelming positive picture of the activities of their regiment during the war, stressing their heroism and glory and above all the success of their actions.

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[167] Karl Klumpner and Josef Hellrigl *Das Schützenregiment Wien Nr 1 im Weltkrieg: Kurze kalendarische Übersicht* (Vienna: Selbstverlag des Kameradschaftsbundes des Einser-Schützen), p. 3 - 4.
[168] Winzor, p. 7
[169] Herman Strohschneider *Das Schützenregiment Graz Nr 3 und der steirische Landsturm im Weltkrieg, 1914 - 1918 II. Band* (Graz: Stiasnys Söhne, 1933), p. 3

As well as a common purpose, the books shared many common narratives on the war. One major theme was the triumph of the spirit of the regiment over external problems which were beyond their control. The Tyrolean regimental history made the reasonable assertion that it was essential to understand the conditions under which troops fought in order to judge their performance. In line with this, the author concluded that the Austro-Hungarian armed forces lagged behind in 'weaponry, technical equipment and numbers of fighters' but had the highest 'moral values.'[170] Facts and figures detailing the inferiority of the Austrian equipment were presented to substantiate these claims. Eschewing the realities of modern industrialised warfare Jackonig claimed that 'the missing fire power and the lack of equipment had to be compensated for by the spirit of the troops and the moral values of the Austrian fighters.'[171] In the history of the Viennese *Schützenregiment* the spirit of the whole Austrian people at the start of the war was praised with a description of the rapturous scenes that accompanied trains on their departure from Vienna in 1914.[172] The authors of this history also highlighted the material disadvantages faced by Austria. Retreats, such as that of the Second Battalion on the Russian front in early June 1916, and the retreat of a battalion during the Battle of Luck, were ascribed to an 'enemy of overwhelming strength.'[173] Defeats in 1918 were put down to 'the dramatic worsening of our material situation.'[174]

Another very prominent theme was the success of the Austrian armed forces. The military prowess and success of the whole Austro-Hungarian fighting force was praised in the Tyrolean history:

> That the k. u. k. army, faced with the technical and numerical superiority of the enemy, prevented the enemy entering its territory and on every battlefield proved itself to be equal or often superior to other armies is an achievement that cannot be praised too highly. It was not the enemy that wrested the weapons from the hands of the proud army, it was an overwhelming stroke of fate.[175]

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[170] Jackoncig, p. ix
[171] Ibid., p. x
[172] Ibid. ,p. 13
[173] Klumpner and Hellrigl, p. 41, 46
[174] Ibid., p. 72
[175] Jackoncig, p. x.

The regimental publication echoed the claim that the armed forces had been undefeated in the field. Yet the author and audience of the publication had a specific link to the regiments of Tyrol and this was also addressed in the publication. While claiming that the officer corps, with its glorious tradition, iron discipline and uniform training, held the army together until it was released from its oath by Emperor Karl, the author acknowledged that some units, 'due to their national composition' were not entirely reliable.[176] The discrepancy between the army 'undefeated on the field of honour' and the existence of unreliable national units was explained by the performance of 'the sons of the German Alps, [...] the Tyrolean *Kaiserjäger.*'[177] It was these troops who, despite the acknowledged material hardships and shortages of the last year of the war, maintained their 'fighting spirit' in attack and defence.[178] The order to withdraw on 1 November 1918 was reluctantly followed by the troops, who 'would have preferred to obey an order to attack.'[179] Those who were taken prisoner by Italian forces 'through no fault of their own' were forced, 'with tears in their eyes,' to surrender following 'forty months of undefeated resistance.'[180]

The Viennese *Schützenregiment* history was a longer, more detailed account and examined individual regimental 'victories.' For example, the conduct of the regiment during the Eleventh Battle of the Isonzo was praised by the author:

> The enemy did not break through, despite his violent exertions. The unique tenacity and constant sacrifice of our heroic troops meant that they had to contest every tiny piece of ground. [...] This battlefield was unfamiliar to the Viennese *Schützenregiment,* which had come from the gradually calming Eastern Front directly into the hell of the Eleventh Battle of the Isonzo. The unbroken soldiery spirit and the impressive skill of the Viennese regiment were illustrated by the speed at which they found their bearings. Within days of their arrival they were beating the unknown enemy in victorious defensive engagements and gutsy counter-attacks.[181]

[176] Ibid., p. xii.
[177] Ibid., p. xii.
[178] Ibid., p. xxxvi.
[179] Ibid., p. xxxvii.
[180] Ibid., p. xxxvii.
[181] Klumpner and Hellrigl, p. 64.

Similar praise was heaped on their performance in other battles, again contrasting the material difficulties experienced by the troops with their ability to triumph despite this adversity. The history of the *Schützenregiment* Nr 3 in Graz also offered many specific examples of victories achieved by the regiment. In the introduction three examples, all from the Italian front, were outlined by former General Major Rudolf Müller, the last commander of one of the divisions of the regiment.[182] Further articles by other divisional commanders offered the details of these glorious battles. Former General Major Otto Ellison-Nidlef described the spring offensive in 1916 in Tyrol as follows:

> Strong and bold, never overhasty, never unsteady or hesitant, not shying away from any difficulty or obstacle, both regiments achieved a series of victories by constant forward pressure, which were incomparable in the history of our old, glorious army.[183]

General Major Merten offered similar praise for the defensive performance of the troops during the Third and Fourth Isonzo Battles and during the Battle of Caporetto.[184]

Interestingly, the *Weisse Dragoner* history was one of the few that acknowledged that at the end of the war the soldiers were 'tired' and 'distressed' and explicitly stated that the 'war was lost - the consequences had to be borne.'[185] Yet this history also found positive outcomes from the military performance of the Habsburg military forces. Firstly, 'the narrow (*engste*) *Heimat,* the German Alpine Lands, were spared the horrors of occupation by the enemy.'[186] This account then traced the regiment into the postwar period after it was disbanded. The second positive outcome of the war was found here. The history recounted how first officers then soldiers had formed regimental associations, created a memorial for the fallen *Dragoner* in the Karlskirche in Vienna and built their relationship with their successor regiment and celebrated their regimental commemoration day on 21 August.[187] The work of the former members of the regiment in preserving the memory of the

[182] Rudolf Müller, 'Vorworte' in Strohschneider, p. 3.
[183] Otto Ellison-Nidlef in Strohschneider, p. 5.
[184] Merten in Strohschneider, p. 6.
[185] Winzor, p. 212.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.

fallen and the traditions of the old regiment was held up as a triumph as great as allowing the preservation of the integrity of Austrian soil.

The history of the St. Pölten *Schützenregiment* Nr 21 offered perhaps the clearest summary of the narrative of success and victory which dominated regimental histories:

> In the k.k. Landwehr- later Schützenregiment we find one of the best and most reliable of all Austrian troops. At all times and in all places, at every opportunity, in accordance with their oath, the soldiers fulfilled their difficult and often bloody duties unflinchingly and valiantly. Wherever special achievements were needed that was where the regiment was deployed. It never failed to do its best for the honour of the military, for the people and the *Heimat* and in loyalty to the beloved Monarch.[188]

The troop was portrayed as exceptional and glorious; the contrast between the performance of this regiment and other, less reliable regiments was implicit.

The images of war offered by regimental remembrance days and regimental histories were similar. Both offered narratives of individual bravery, glory and triumph over adversity. Yet while regimental remembrance days developed from being an internal, military event into occasions which involved veterans' associations but also other associations and individuals, regimental histories were restricted to reconfirming the impressions of a narrow group who engaged with the texts.

A final form of public glorification of war which it is important to consider is the commemoration of the lives of important military leaders. After military models changed from a professional army to 'citizen soldiers' after the French Revolution and particularly following the experience of mass death during the world war, the sacrifices of individual soldiers rather than the commanders of armies were commemorated.[189] Although this trend was also observable in Austria, the achievements of high ranking commanders continued to receive much greater attention than those of ordinary soldiers and officers. The most important imperial commander, Field Marshal Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, is an important case study in this process.

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[188] Sichelstiel, p. 13.

[189] See for example Reinhart Koselleck 'Einleitung' in Reinhart Koselleck and Michael Jeismann (Hg.), *Der politische Totenkult: Kriegerdenkmaler in der Moderne* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1994), p. 14.

Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf was the most important Austro-Hungarian commander of the world war.[190] Conrad died on 25 August 1925 in Germany and, despite his claims in his bitter postwar reflections that he wanted to be buried in a pauper's grave, his funeral was a lavish, high-profile affair.[191] On its return to Vienna, Conrad's body was met by a delegation of civilian and military dignitaries as well as veterans' associations.[192] Despite Social Democrat opposition, Conrad received a state funeral at government expense, which took place on 2 September 1925 and was attended by large numbers of high ranking former officers and uniformed veterans' associations who marched around the Ringstrasse in Vienna as part of the ceremony.[193] While Christian Social, German Nationalist and former imperial civilian and military elites praised Conrad as a military commander and a man, Social Democrats mocked the public outpouring of grief. From 26 to 28 August 1925 military festivities, including the oath-taking ceremony for new recruits and a shooting competition, were taking place Berg Isel in Tyrol. When the news of Conrad's death reached the officers in charge of the ceremony on the afternoon of 28 August the event was suspended and black mourning flags were raised all over the Berg Isel complex.[194] The *Volkszeitung,* a left wing newspaper based in Innsbruck, described these actions with great scorn:

> If certain officers are prepared to abandon their duties towards the Republic at the news of the death of an old k.u.k. General and reveal their allegiances to the monarchy, what will happen when the Republic calls its soldiers to its defence? Therefore we advise these officers, if their 'tradition' is more important to them than anything else, to accept their pensions from the Republic so that they can enjoy their traditional, monarchist views in peace![195]

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[190] For a discussion of Conrad's personal and military life see Lawrence Sondhaus, *Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf: Architect of the Apocalypse* (Boston: Humanities Press, 2000), particularly chapters five to eight.
[191] Kurt Peball (ed.), *Conrad von Hötzendorf: Private Aufzeichnungen, erste Veröffentlichungen aus den Papieren des k.u.k. General-Stabs Chef* (Vienna: Amalthea, 1977) p. 59.
[192] Sondhaus, p. 230.
[193] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, Abteilungen 1,2,4, Abteilungen Präs, Rechtsbüro 1, 1925 carton 1990, (75/2/2), Zl. 42624 , August 1925. See Sondhaus for a detailed description of Conrad's funeral: Sondhaus pp. 230 – 236.
[194] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW Kanzleistelle A, Abteilungen 1,2,4, Abteilungen Präs, Rechtsbüro 1, 1925 carton 1990 (75/2/2) Zl. 42624, 7 September 1925.
[195] 'Wenn ein k.k. Feldmarschall stirbt,' *Volkszeitung* (29 August 1925).

As well as being further evidence of the left wing anti-monarchism discussed in the previous chapter, this article also shows the reaction against the glorification of former imperial army commanders.

The debate between left and right about the status and importance of Conrad predated his death. In 1921 approximately two hundred officers and former officers joined Conrad at Berg Isel in Tyrol to celebrate his fiftieth year as an officer. According to the *Innsbrucker Nachrichten* Colonel Dankl delivered a commemorative address in which he praised Conrad's prowess as a soldier and as a commander and honoured his peace and war time achievements.[196] The furious response of the *Volkszeitung* to this event is indicative of Conrad's polarising character. A front page article initially made the point that, as Conrad was no longer an officer, the celebration should never have taken place. Further, the author was scornful of all the former officers who 'have the cheek to have celebrations and behave as though they were enjoying the spoils of victory after the defeat, the ignominy and the devastation.' Finally, the author argued that 'our' Conrad was the main instigator of the world catastrophe.'[197] The contrast between the image of Conrad on the left and the right is further illustrated by the response to his publications. In 1924, prompted by left wing criticism of the fourth volume of Conrad's military memoirs, the editors of the *Wehrbund* newspaper leapt to Conrad's defence. They argued that despite his 'bad luck' Conrad was one of the greatest soldiers Austria had ever produced and that any attack on him was an insult to Austrian pride.[198]

Conrad continued to be a significant and controversial figure after his death. The Austrian Officers' Association set up a committee to raise money to create a 'worthy' grave for Conrad as a mark of respect for his achievements as a man and a leader. Although the fund was a private initiative, it received support from the Defence Ministry, which gave permission for military bands to give a series of fund-raising concerts to support the fund. The ministry justified the use of military bands for this

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[196] 'Eine Ehrung des Feldmarshalls Conrad: Anlässlich seines 50jährigen Offiziersjubiläums' *Innsbrucker Nachrichten,* 5 August 1921.
[197] 'Die 'Verdienste' Hötzendorfs,' *Volkszeitung,* 9 August 1921.
[198] 'FM Conrads Anteil an der Kriegsschuld: Erwiderung auf eine Kritik' *Der Wehrbund,* January 1924.

purpose by highlighting the 'great services the late Field Marshal offered to his people and his fatherland.'[199] The importance of Conrad in the postwar commemoration of the war for the Defence Ministry was confirmed by the prominence of Conrad's grave in the annual military All Souls commemoration ceremony. On 2 November 1928 Carl Vaugoin began the day's activity by laying a wreath on Conrad's grave in the Hietzing cemetery and delivering a commemorative address as part of a ceremony to honour the late field marshal. Following his speech the military chaplain Karl Koci blessed the land where Conrad's new grave was to be erected. It was only after the completion of this ceremony, dedicated exclusively to Conrad, that the defence minister and his party left to attend the ceremony for all the fallen soldiers of the world war at the Karlskirche in central Vienna.[200] By the following year Conrad's new grave had been completed and the Austrian Officers' Association organised a reburial ceremony to transfer the body to its new tomb. This ceremony was attended by high ranking politicians, including the president of Austria and Ignaz Seipel, officers associations, representatives of the police and the army, as well as representatives of the Hungarian and German military.[201] Annual ceremonies at this new grave continued to open the military All Souls' Day commemoration ceremonies.[202] Although in his lifetime Conrad had been very a controversial figure, he was glorified as the embodiment of Austrian military prowess and celebrated after his death. Romsics goes as far as to suggest that Conrad was granted a 'quasi-mythical position in the historical consciousness of the surviving 'losers.''[203]

Regimental remembrance days, regimental histories and the celebration of Conrad are all important examples of how the experience of war continued to be glorified in the postwar period. Although there was

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[199] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2483 (50 – 1/3) Zl. 15814, Österreichischer Offiziersverband to BMfHW, 26 March 1928.
[200] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2496 (75 – 1) Zl. 19361, Bundespolizeidirektion Wien to BMfHW, 2 November 1928.
[201] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2692 (25 – 6) Zl. 57644, BMfHW to Stadtkommando Wien, undated.
[202] For example the 1931 military All Souls Day commemoration ceremony took the same form as the 1928 ceremony, beginning with a ceremony at Conrad's grave. ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3158, (75 – 3/1), Zl. 24152, Stadtkommando Tagesbefehl Nr 66, 22 October 1931.
[203] Romsics, p. 29.

opposition to the heroic narrative, former officers were deeply committed to perpetuating their vision of war. The number, variety and profile of these images were successful in maintaining the public facade of a glorious Austrian military tradition and war effort. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, postwar violence was integrated into this discourse.

Postwar victories

The commemoration of the world war as a conflict that lasted from 1914 to 1918 had the potential to mask the continuation of violence in the postwar period. In the immediate aftermath of war, fighting continued on the Carinthian border between the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Austria. In 1921 violence erupted in the disputed territory of the Burgenland or *Deutsch Westungarn* as it was known before its incorporation into Austria. Internal tensions came to a head and violence broke out in Vienna in 1927 and again in 1934, when pressures erupted into civil war. These four major incidents of internal and external postwar violence are important in revealing the volatile climate of postwar Austria. More importantly, the commemoration of postwar violence was intimately linked to the commemoration of the world war. Although the postwar external conflicts were tiny relative to preceding violence, they were the subject of a disproportionate level of attention. In the First Austrian Republic, a state born of military defeat, the focus on postwar victories could restore or reinforce faith in Austrian military capacity and establish a link between the world war and victory.

The *Abwehrkampf* (defensive campaign) in Carinthia had the highest profile of the postwar conflicts. The province of Carinthia in south east Austria had a mixed German and Slovene population. At the end of the war the Slovene cabinet of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was keen to bring Carinthia as far as possible under Slovene control.[204] Yugoslav troops and irregular units advanced into Carinthia and engaged in combat with local militias, early *Heimwehr* groupings in the area and regiments of the new *Volkswehr*. By the ceasefire in June 1919 214 Carinthia Germans had been

[204] Thomas M. Barker, *The Slovene Minority of Carinthia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 97

killed and 800 were wounded.[205] According to the Treaty of St Germain, the fate of Carinthia was to be decided by a plebiscite, the date of which was later fixed for 10 October 1920. The military battle was then followed by a ferocious propaganda battle. The pro-Austrian propaganda stressed the economic interrelationship of the whole Klagenfurt area, the unity and natural beauty of Carinthia and the democratic structure of the Austrian Republic compared to the 'half feudal, half dictatorial, monarchical structure' of Yugoslavia.[206] At the plebiscite, 59.04% of voters (including about ten thousand Slovenes) opted for Austria and this date, as we saw in chapter two, became very important as the focus of annual commemoration ceremonies in Carinthia. For Thomas M. Barker the historical importance of the *Abwehrkampf* lay in the involvement of an American delegation in the ceasefire negotiations and the resultant modification of the American position at the Paris Peace Conference. Yet he also acknowledges the 'sociopsychologically necessary mythologising function' of the events of the *Abwehrkampf*.[207]

The key figure in shaping the German (particularly nationalist) image of the *Abwehrkampf* and plebiscite was Martin Wütte, head of the Carinthian provincial archives. He provided a heroic account of the violence which was submitted as evidence in the plebiscite negotiations and was the source of much of the pro-German propaganda. As such, Wütte, had a semi-official status as a commentator who sought to shape events. He stressed the historical continuities of Carinthia as a geographical unit and in particular the long history of cooperation between Germans and Slovenes in the area. According to Wütte, the Slovenes had been civilised by the influence of the much more advanced German culture over centuries; their attachment had always been to the province not to the other Slovenes outside the borders of Carinthia.[208] The Slovenes of Carinthia allegedly had no interest in nationalism, which was only advocated and promoted by a very small number of priests.[209] The construction of the *Abwehrkampf* as a victorious Carinthian

[205] Two hundred and fifty three Yugoslav combatants had also been killed. Ibid., p. 109.
[206] Ibid., p. 150
[207] Ibid., p. 109
[208] Martin Wütte *Kärntens Freiheitskampf* (Klagenfurt: Ferdinand Kleinmayr, 1922), p. 7 – 9.
[209] Ibid., p. 12.

battle against outside intervention was central to Wütte's account. However, what is particularly interesting is Wütte's interpretation of the role of Slovenes. According to him, at the end of the conflict the relations between Germans and German-friendly Slovenes (the *Windisch* as he termed them) had been strengthened by the battle and success. Yet the conflict had caused a breach between the Germans and the South Slav-leaning Slovenes.[210] In this vein the *Windisch* (an artificially constructed ethnic group) were included on the side of the victors in plebiscite and battle commemorations, while the 'national' Slovenes were excluded as enemies and the defeated. In practice the distinction between national Slovenes and *Windisch* was non-existent, meaning that Slovenes fitted uncomfortably into Wütte's heroic *Abwehrkampf* narrative.

A battle with a more personal, less official voice, came from Josef Friedrich Perkonig who published a collection of 'reports from the Carinthian freedom fight' in 1935 entitled *Kärnten, mein Leben für dich!* (Carinthia, my life for you!)[211] In light of its date and publication in Germany, it is unsurprising that this collection had a German nationalist slant. In his introduction to the battle accounts, Perkonig characterised the battle for Carinthia as evidence of the love of *Heimat* shared by all Carinthians:

> The Carinthians raised themselves up in a massive storm and battled until June 1919 for their freedom. During this bitter time they spilt a great deal of blood for their *Heimat*; it was a holy people's war, like the battle of the people of Tyrol under Andreas Hofer in 1809 against the soldiers of the Emperor Napoleon.[212]

Yet for Perkonig the battles had a meaning far beyond Carinthia. He argued that the 10 October 1920 should be a day of remembrance for 'all, who speak the German tongue' and a spur for them to declare their willingness to sacrifice their lives for their *Heimat*.[213] It was the relatively very small-scale, but successful military operation in Carinthia that was a symbol of the struggle of all the German people rather than the experience of the world war.

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[210] Ibid., p.191.
[211] Josef Friedrich Perkonig, *Kärnten, mein Leben für Dich!* (Berlin: Verlag Grenze und Ausland, 1935)
[212] Ibid., p. 6.
[213] Ibid.

The remainder of the collection was made up of short eye witness accounts of battles from the campaign. However, these accounts vary in a number of important ways from the regimental histories discussed above. Although many of the tropes of bravery and sacrifice are present in these accounts, the struggle is also depicted as one of a whole people against a perfidious enemy, rather than a professional, efficient military force admirably fulfilling its duty. One important difference between these depictions of battles of the world war and of the postwar Carinthian fighting was in the role of women. As discussed in chapter one, the experience of combat in the world war was characterised as an exclusively male experience, marked by unique bonds of fraternity forged in battle. Yet the role of women (along with older men and children) in combat was stressed in Perkonig's accounts of the *Abwehkampf*. For example, the story of Grete Schoderböck, a Carinthian woman who had defended a former soldier from a punishment meted out by the South Slav occupation forces, received a prison sentence as punishment for this act. She later served as a nurse and was killed in an aerial bombardment of *Völkermarkt*. The inscription on her grave stone described her as a 'heroine of our *Heimat*.'[214] An account of a battle near Hainburg described how, following the death of a local man, Lukas Klemen, a 'peasant girl' described only as Christina, took up his weapons and began firing on the enemy.[215] The emphasis on the female participation served two purposes: to construct the battle as a struggle of the *people* of Carinthia and to illustrate the brutality of the South Slav forces, who did not shy away from attacking civilians. Wütte mentioned the support offered by women and children to illustrate the unity of Carinthia but did not go as far as to describe incidents of direct female participation in combat. His remained a more traditional heroic battle account.

Although the interpretations of events advanced by Jackonig and particularly by Wütte was, and to some extent still is, the dominant narrative on the *Abwehrkampf*, a different perspective was advanced by the Social Democrat press based in Vienna, who stressed the participation of the

[214] Ibid., pp. 12 – 14.
[215] Ibid., p. 18.

professional *Volkswehr* units in the campaign.[216] The participation of the Carinthian people was subordinated to the achievements of the professional military units from Vienna, Lower Austria and Carinthia which arrived to support the irregular formations already engaged in combat.

Written accounts were not the only way in which the *Abwehrkampf* was marked. The anniversary of the plebiscite was marked by commemorative events and memorials throughout Carinthia. In many cases the world war and the postwar violence in Carinthia were closely linked. For example, the memorial in Arnoldstein, Carinthia, unveiled in July 1929 was dedicated to the members of the community who fell during the world war and the fallen Carinthian 'freedom fighters'.[217] The tenth anniversary of the Carinthian plebiscite was a particular catalyst for the creation of memorials. The Carinthia *Heimatbund* based in Klagenfurt funded and unveiled a memorial in Radsberg that was dedicated to the fallen soldiers of the world war and those who fell in the *Abwehrkampf* in 1930. The impetus for the construction of the memorial was the tenth anniversary of the plebiscite 'victory;' although the memorial was dedicated to the fallen soldiers of both conflicts, it was the 'victorious' fallen of the *Abwehrkampf* who were the focus of the memorial.[218] In St Paul im Lavanttal the local war memorial, unveiled in 1932, commemorated only those men (and school pupils) who had fallen during the *Abwehrkampf,* to the exclusion of those men who had fallen during the much larger, more devastating world war.[219] Even commemoration ceremonies which were not prompted by 10 October, such as commemoration ceremony for the fallen soldiers of the world war and the *Abwehrkampf* in Völkermarkt in August 1933, made explicit links between the two events.

The discussion and commemoration of the plebiscite in Carinthia was complex. Wütte and Perkonig stressed the uniqueness and the success of the conflict, which was at once a victory for the province and for the Austrian people. Yet links were often made between the postwar conflict and the world

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[216] 'Die Kärntner Abwehrkämpfe' *Der freie Soldat,* 1 September 1919.
[217] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, A, carton 2692, Zl. 66541, (25 – 4), Kärntner Feldjägerbaon zu Rad Nr 5 to BMfHW, 16 July 1929.
[218] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2922, Zl. (54 – 3/1), Zl. 87793, Kärntner Heimatbund to BMfHW, 24 November 1930.
[219] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2935, (75 – 4/4), Zl. 11695, Kärntner Alpenjägerregiment Nr 11 to BMfHW, 11 May 1932.

war in war memorials and commemorative days. The most obvious reason for this is that for many who participated in the conflict, the distinction between fighting in the world war and fighting in the *Abwehrkampf* was not clear. Soldiers who had been fighting alongside Slovene troops quickly switched to fighting against them. Further, small communities did not have the resources to build two separate structures, one dedicated to the fallen of the world war and one to the fallen of the *Abwehrkampf.* But finally, by commemorating the fallen of the two conflicts simultaneously it was possible for the people of Carinthia to establish a link between the experience of the world war and the triumph of the plebiscite. However, the situation was more complex for the Slovenes of Carinthia, who were forced to celebrate the 'German victory' while mourning their war dead, meaning that they were excluded from the sense of triumph and victory.

The symbolic importance of the successful *Abwehrkampf* extended beyond Carinthia. Although the anniversary of the plebiscite was not an official public holiday, in 1928 the office of the *Bundeskanzler* suggested to the defence ministry that, given 'the importance of the day for Carinthia and the whole Republic' the defence ministry should follow the example of the provincial government in Carinthia and treat the day as a public holiday.[220] It was undoubtedly the positive outcome of the conflict which enabled the events in Carinthia to assume national importance.

The armed struggle that took place in 1921 for the possession of *Deutsch Westungarn,* latterly the Burgenland, a province officially integrated into Austria in 1921, received markedly less public attention. While the fallen of the *Abwehrkampf* received local and national attention and glory, those men who fell in the conflict with Hungary initially received little recognition. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Republic, *Der freie Soldat* remarked on this disregard:

> The soldiers of the Republic are filled with bitterness, when we see that no one discusses the difficult days of 1921, that no official office can be bothered to make the effort to devote even a few words to the memory of the brave fighters of that time.[221]

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[220] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 2480, 1928, (34 - 4) Zl. 29372, Bundeskanzleramt to BMfHW, 4 June 1928.
[221] 'Im memoriam,' *Der freie Soldat,* 12 November 1928.

Continuing, the author of the piece compared the massive number of battle commemoration ceremonies for former Habsburg regiments with the failure to mark the contribution of the *Bundesheer* soldiers in the Burgenland. In fact the claims that no official ceremony commemorated the sacrifice of the soldiers who fell at Kirchschlag were not entirely accurate. A small delegation of soldiers from the Fifth Infantry Regiment visited the graves annually and in 1928 it was decided to send a large detachment, accompanied by a regimental band to mark the visit.[222] However, this ceremony was clearly on a much smaller scale than commemorations of the Carinthian plebiscite and the regimental commemoration days discussed previously. Undoubtedly this was partly a result of the small scale of the Kirchschlag conflict, which lasted only one day and resulted in only ten Austrian casualties. However, by its tenth anniversary Kirchschlag was receiving wider interest and being interpreted as an Austrian, patriotic victory. A local publication approached the commander of the Fifth Infantry Regiment, Colonel Orestes Adasiewicz, to front an initiative to build a memorial to the fallen of Kirchschlag.[223] Adasiewicz headed a committee supported by the *Gemeinderat* in Kirchschlag, and following local fundraising a memorial to the fallen was unveiled on the tenth anniversary of the battle.[224] At the unveiling ceremony Adasiewicz, a speech addressed partly to the absent Hungarian enemy, offered a patriotic, victorious interpretation of the battle:

> No, you cannot take our German land, you brothers of yesterday and enemies of today! The little piece of German soil remaining to us following the cruel peace cannot be abandoned! [...] [The fallen soldiers] protected the soil of our *Heimat* with their bodies, did their duty to their people and Fatherland with the blood of their hearts.[225]

Complaints of a lack of attention for the fallen of Kirchschlag made in 1928 were clearly obsolete by the tenth anniversary of the battle. The larger scale commemorative events that had been instigated in 1931 were maintained in the following year. A deputation of the Fifth Infantry Regiment, headed by the

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[222] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Präs, carton 2496, 1928, (75 - 1/3) Zl. 53103, Amtserinnerung, 27 October 1928.
[223] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, A, carton 3147, 1931, (54 - 3/1) Zl. 43761, Bote aus der Bucklingen Welt, Schriftleitung Kirchschlag to Oberst Orestes Adasiewicz, 1 June 1931.
[224] 'Ein Gruss an die vor Kirchschlag gefallenen Helden des 5. Regiments,' *Der Wehrbund,* July 1931.
[225] Ibid.

regimental commander, led a ceremony at the town war memorial for the fallen of Kirchschlag, followed by a visit to their graves at the local cemetery.[226] The 'victorious' fallen of Kirchschlag were the focus of the ceremony, but, as the location of the event was the local memorial dedicated to the fallen of the world war, a link was established between the 'victors' of Kirchschlag and the fallen of the world war. On a much smaller, local level the commemoration of the postwar victory at Kirchschlag served a similar purpose to the focus on the Carinthian violence.

Postwar 'victories' in domestic Austrian battles were more complex. The battles in Carinthia and Burgenland could be commemorated as unambiguous victories, as the defeated enemies were external opponents who remained outside the state, or, in the case of Slovenes in Carinthia, a small rural minority. While the internal conflicts that marred Austria in 1927 and 1934 could not be commemorated in this unifying way, the deaths of those who fell in these internal, postwar conflicts were marked differently by the rival sides in the conflicts.

In 1927 conflict at a march in Schattendorf, a village in Lower Austria, led to the killing of a war invalid and a child by members of the *Heimwehr*. On 15 July a court delivered a 'not guilty' verdict at the trial of the murderers. An incendiary article in the *Arbeiter Zeitung* led to uncontrolled street protests of up to two hundred thousand workers. The Justice Palace was set alight and in response the security forces opened fire on the crowd of workers, killing eighty-nine. The Social Democrats attempted to organise general strikes in response but these were broken by the Heimwehr and the weakness of the workers' movement was revealed.[227] The violence of 15 July 1927 had great resonance in popular culture; literary texts responded to the fears of arson and left wing violence and the events were the subject of polemical debate between Ignaz Seipel and Otto Bauer in parliament. The casualties of the conflict came from the left and were commemorated as fallen members of this group. This image, an example of Social Democrat commemoration published in *Der freie Soldat* on the first anniversary of the 1927 violence, was

[226] ÖStA, AdR, BMfHW, Kanzleistelle A, carton 3354, Zl. 24406, (11 – 1/1), Regimental commander, Fifth IR to BMfHW, 7 November 1932.
[227] Hanisch (1994), p. 288.

clearly marked by a sense of sadness, with images of women and children grieving at a coffin of the victims of the July violence.

Figure 4.4. *Der freie Soldat*, 15 July 1928.

Yet behind the grieving figures, the marching army of the proletariat is clearly visible. While the tragedy of the deaths of those men and women who died during the conflict was the focus of the anniversary, the strength of the working people was reasserted and their willingness to repeat their defensive feats of 1927 was strongly present in background. A speech by the Social Democrat politician Wilhelm Ellenbogen delivered at the graves of the '15 and 16 July fallen' was printed below the image. This speech began with a lament for the political fighters but also for the uninvolved victims of the conflict. Yet the sense of menace embodied by the marching soldiers in the image was also present in the commemorative address. In particular, the deaths of the fallen were constructed as sacrifices for justice and Ellenbogen stressed the readiness of the 'party and the trade unions' as well as the mass of the people to emulate the example of the fallen and repeat their sacrifices for justice.[228] The fallen were commemorated as victims of a class conflict and mourned as social democrats and members of the working class. Despite the tragedy of the deaths of the workers during the protests, the commemoration of these victims took place in a primarily political context.

[228] Wilhelm Ellenbogen, 'Dem Gedenken der 90 Juli Toten, 15. und 16. Juli 1927, Grabrede,' *Der freie Soldat,* 15 July 1928.

1934 was another bloody year in the history of Austria; fighting between Social Democrats and the forces of the *Ständestaat* in Vienna in February and the attempted National Socialist coup which led to further violence in the provinces in July 1934 cost hundreds of lives. As the Social Democrats and the National Socialists were both outlawed following the 1934 violence, conflicting interpretations of these conflicts were no longer permissible. Those who fell fighting for the Ständestaat were commemorated as having 'died for the Fatherland.' For example, the form of the death notices clearly echoed those of the world war as the names of the fallen were published in black lined boxes in national newspapers.

Memorials dedicated to the fallen of 1934 were created by the Fatherland Front. In October 1934 the local Fatherland Front organisations in Spital am Pyhrn, Upper Austria, and Liezen, Styria built and unveiled a memorial 'to the heroes of the Pyhrn Pass who sacrificed their lives for the freedom of Austria.'[229] The Office of the Federal Chancellor provided funds for the construction of official memorials to 'the fallen heroes of the executive in 1934, from their grateful Fatherland' in Vienna, Graz and Linz.[230] The prominent memorials constructed to the fallen in 1934 undoubtedly offered some comfort to the relatives of those members of the official executive who died. However, as with the memorialisation of the 1927 fallen, the memorials did not commemorate all who fell during this conflict. The primary purpose of these memorials was political and the fallen workers (and national socialists) were not marked or commemorated.

During the world war the Habsburg military forces failed to cover themselves in glory and their defeat was decisive and crushing. Some reacted to the horrific experience by rejecting war entirely. In particular, striking condemnations of conflict came from important cultural figures. However, cultural pacifism could not offer a programme or a societal base for a pacifist movement. The natural home of a broad-based, influential pacifist movement would have been the Social Democrat party. Yet the violent climate of postwar Austria and the rise of paramilitary organisations on the left

[229] AdR, ÖStA, BMfHW, A, carton 3884, (75 – ½), Zl. 4322, Vaterländische Front, Ortsgruppe Spital am Pyhrn to BMfHW, 17 September 1934.
[230] AdR, ÖStA, BMfHW, A, carton 3884, (75 – 1/3), Zl. 7634, BKA (Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit) to BMfHW, 17 October 1934.

and right undermined Social Democrat pacifism and meant that anti-war rhetoric had a hollow ring.

The glorification of the military went hand in hand with the failure of pacifism. The image of war was controlled by veterans' organisations and particularly by former officers. Militarist publications and memoirs constantly reiterated the heroic performance of the Habsburg armed forces and particularly the achievements of the German troops. An Austrian version of a 'stab in the back myth' developed, although it never reached the currency of the myth in Germany. General statements about Austrian heroism were echoed and refined in regimental histories, regimental remembrance days and the celebration of the life of Conrad. Although the glorification of the experience of war did not resonant with all Austrians, events such as regimental remembrance days increased in prominence throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s. The events, which were originally organised by the military, were taken up by veterans' organisations and attended by larger numbers and a greater variety of people. The control which former officers and veterans' groups exerted over the writing of histories and the organisation of events meant that an 'appropriate' version of events was presented publicly. The image of a glorious, victorious, Austrian military force was furthered by the regular commemoration of 'victories' and the reliving of events from the world war. By the time the Austrian *Heldendenkmal* was unveiled, the defeat of the Habsburg armed forces was almost entirely overlooked in the celebration of military victories and prowess that was to become central to the political culture of the *Ständestaat*.

The end of the war did not spell the end of violence in Austria, with internal and external threats to peace and security. Austrian 'victories' in external postwar conflicts received a disproportionate amount of attention and allowed a link to be made between death in the world war and triumph. However, for groups such as the Slovenes of Carinthia, who were the 'losers' in the conflict, this experience could be more divisive than unifying as they were excluded from the sense of triumph. Internal conflicts were even more divisive. The 1927 violence was commemorated by the left as a warning of the potential for resistance. The government fallen of the 1934 civil wars were

commemorated as heroes of the Fatherland, while the national socialist and social democrat casualties were exempt from the commemoration process.

As we saw in the introduction to this chapter, the experience of defeat did not mean the end of militarism in postwar states. In fact, myths of victory developed which obscured both the horrors of war and the ultimate failure of the armed struggle. On the background of the Austrian experience of war and peace this chapter has shown that a similar process occurred in Austria. While no myth as strong as the 'stab in the back' myth in Germany or the celebration of Zborow a variety of publications and events ensured that a heroic narrative of war retained its power in Austria.

Conclusion

This thesis opened with the suggestion, made at the unveiling of the *Heldendenkmal,* that Austrians had failed to recognise and commemorate the sacrifices of the fallen in the First Republic. However, as the following chapters have illustrated, a massive number of tributes were constructed. Commemoration ceremonies and publications reflected on the history and meaning of the conflict and its practical legacy presented a significant challenge to the new state. Even if Austrians had wished to leave the experience of war firmly in the past, it would not have been possible. In reality a massive number of veterans of the conflict, as well as the bereaved and politicians of various parties felt the need to offer comment. Despite the prominence of the conflict during the First Republic, it is clear that attempts to commemorate the sacrifices of the fallen soldiers and the achievements of those who survived did not satisfy all and as late as 1934 there was still a perception that the experience had not been adequately marked.

On one level this is perhaps unsurprising. The relatives of the fallen and soldiers who had endured five years of conflict which led to the loss of a European empire and the creation of a new state beset by economic, social and political problems, were unlikely to feel that their sacrifices had been recognised by the creation of a physical memorial when their day-to-day existence was not secured. The challenge of supporting the victims of the conflict was too great for the new state. The economic crises that rocked it had a particularly adverse effect on those whose existence was already threatened by their wartime injuries or the loss of the families' primary bread-winner.

Yet the practical failure to improve the lives of the fallen sufficiently does not, by itself, explain the feeling among some veterans that their sacrifices had not been recognised. Until 1934 no 'national memorial' was built in the capital and the construction of the *Heldendenkmal* was only assured once democracy had ended and the major opposition parties in Austria had been banned. This points to one of the key problems in the process of commemorating the conflict; a lack of unity within the state meant that no interpretation of the conflict could satisfy all Austrians. Set against this

failure to find a unifying interpretation of the conflict, are the many different meanings found for the experience of war. While Austrians could not reach agreement on the legacy of the conflict, the majority did not accept that the sacrifices of wartime had been in vain. Rather, a massive range of interpretations of the conflict were advanced during the First Republic. Memorials had complex layers of meaning.

By examining the commemoration of the conflict thematically, this thesis has drawn out the different meanings assigned to the conflict and interpretations of the sacrifices made, both between commemorating groups and within them. However, it is worth briefly exploring some commonalities within the processes of commemoration that have not been explicitly articulated during the various chapters. One shared theme of commemoration has been explored throughout the whole thesis: the search for meaning. Although the answers to the question of why the soldiers of the empire had fought and died varied greatly and were often contradictory, those involved in commemoration were united by a conscious or unconscious desire to find answers. A second commonality was the emphasis on creating a physical reminder of the conflict. Although, as we have seen, the memorials contained a variety of symbols and took a range of forms dependant on the financial means and the ideology of the groups who constructed them, they shared a common feature. Whether they were additions or adaptations to existing memorials or new constructions they did not serve any practical purpose beyond acting as a permanent marker of the experience of war or of the fallen. Municipal buildings were not dedicated to the fallen, neither were temporary structures erected.

This emphasis on permanence in the physical markers of the war was carried into the rituals of commemoration, which also aimed to perpetuate or reinvigorate the memory of the conflict. Despite the variety of 'memories' that were evoked, the events shared this common theme. Further, the forms of commemoration rituals were relatively similar and unchanging compared to the meanings of war explored during these ceremonies. Most included some element of solemn remembrance of the fallen and commemorative addresses from prominent members of an organisation, a local community, a political party, the armed forces or a combination of these. They also, especially after

the immediate postwar years, often included a celebratory element during which memories of the conflict were relived in a more festive atmosphere. The similarities in the forms of commemoration notwithstanding, it has been the divergence in the 'meanings' assigned to the conflict that has been the central subject of this thesis.

In the first chapter, we saw how many of the veterans who chose to participate in the veterans' movement were keen to stress the importance and unique character of wartime comradeship. They felt that the experiences of wartime bonding could be used to heal rifts in the postwar state. However, the veterans' movement was beset by division, mirroring the lines of conflict in society and reflecting the variety of reactions to the experiences of war. In other cases the experience of war was commemorated in the context of the peacetime lives of the fallen.

In chapter two we saw that the majority of memorials in Austria were constructed in local communities. The construction projects were instigated by members of communities and it was the sacrifices of the fallen of a particular town or village which were marked on war memorials. These memorials were deeply rooted in a sense of place and reflected an understanding that the war had been a conflict fought in the name of a specific *Heimat* or Fatherland. This larger entity could have various meanings and be interpreted in a variety of ways, including a region, the new Austrian Republic, a Greater German nation or the imperial 'fatherland' of the past.

In chapter three the fate of one of the pillars of the Empire, the Habsburg dynasty, was examined. While the dynasty had been an important point of identification during the war, at the end of the conflict it rapidly became a target of attack by the left. The dynasty never regained real political significance but during the 1920s and particularly in the 1930s, the war was again reinterpreted by some as a conflict fought in the name of the Habsburgs, while others mourned members of the imperial family as victims of the conflict.

The central argument of the fourth chapter is that the experience of war did not result in widespread pacifism in Austria, but rather that the increasing instability of the interwar years meant that militarism remained a prominent force. Some former soldiers and particularly former officers were keen to

defend the prowess of the Habsburg armies and of their particular regiments, and in doing so placed the blame for defeat away form the German elements of the Habsburg armed forces. Despite the ultimate heavy defeat of Habsburg forces, a range of wartime 'victories' were celebrated during the First Republic.

The final section examines the role of religion in commemorating the fallen and comprehending the experiences of war. In Austria the rituals and symbolism of Catholicism were crucial in giving meaning to the conflict but their dominance was not accepted by all and did not go unchallenged.

By assessing a wide range of responses to the conflict, this thesis has shown that, despite the failure of the development of a clear, 'national' understanding of the conflict, the legacy of the world war was crucial in the new state. The small Republic that emerged from the ruins of the old empire appeared to share little with its ancestor at first sight. However, as the chapters have shown, traditional ideas were central to understanding the conflict, even in the new state.

This thesis has examined the commemoration of the world war until twenty years after the outbreak of the conflict and the institution of a new form of government in Austria. The next twenty years would bring massive changes to the state; the *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany, the Second World War and the period of occupation that led up to the establishment of the Second Republic in 1955. The effect of these changes, and particularly the unprecedented horrors of the Holocaust, on commemoration and discussion of the world war in Austria remains an area with many opportunities for new research. However, as this study has shown, even before these monumental events shaped the memory of the earlier conflict, the world war was a topic importance and controversy during the First Republic.

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